HELEN THERESE BERG FISH
Teachers' Perspectives of Shared Governance After a 10-Year Implementation in a
      Georgia Primary School
(Under the direction of JO ROBERTS BLASE)

Scant empirical work on the problems, benefits, and key issues related to teacher involvement in decision-making and governance continued to exist in 2000. The literature did not offer in-depth, comprehensive information about the long-term effects of Shared Governance on teachers' lives and on the schools that were implementing it. Previous research considered only three years of application of this governance system.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up of Allen's (1993) work at a primary school in central Georgia to uncover the teachers' perspectives regarding Shared Governance 10 years after its implementation. This single school case study utilized in-depth, open-ended interviews, group discussions, artifact collection, researcher's memos, and observations. It described the teachers' perceptions of change within themselves and in the governance structure of the primary school between 1990 and 2000.

The teachers' perspectives revealed positive changes in several areas, including: (1) development of teachers' professionalism through the use of teacher voice, (2) enhancement of teacher self-confidence from initially negative to positive, and (3) more direct interactions of the teachers with staff and students as isolated, competitive teachers became leaders that shared knowledge with other staff, schools, and districts. This shared governance initiative produced long-term positive results for teachers, administrators, and students. The study also noted that a supportive principal was needed for Shared Governance to survive. These findings led to the following recommendations for this primary school: (1) Make continued, positive change through use of the Shared Governance structure, (2) expand teacher professionalism though use of teacher voice,

and (3) validate supportive administrators. Recommendations for further study include teachers' perspectives in other settings (urban or at other grade levels) and perspectives of other school members (students, principals, and parents). This study is significant because it both initiated the needed research on teachers' beliefs about the long-term effects of Shared Governance and it followed up on one specific school's experience, which had been studied 10 years earlier.

INDEX WORDS: Empowerment, Perspective, Primary School, Principal,

Restructuring, Restructured School, Shared Governance,

Supervisory Practices, Voice.

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AFTER A TEN YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

IN A GEORGIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

by

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Love, Prayers, and Best Wishes from Helen Therese Berg Fish

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Throughout the 20th century, controversy has surrounded the governance of

schools. Currently, many educators believe that students and teachers are best served

when teachers lead school reform, as opposed to administrators' decisions driving school

reform (Blase & Blase, 1994, 1997; Firestone & Bader, 1992; Gitlin, 1990, 1992;

Walsey, 1991). The practice of state departments and central office personnel making the

decisions that others are to implement is gradually being replaced by principals and

teachers making decisions at the level of implementation (Glickman, 1992; Kreisburg,

1992). American schools have moved toward Shared Governance [An alteration in

organizational patterns such as decision-making that influence and stimulate school

improvement (Malen & Ogawa, 1988)] and teacher empowerment predominantly in the

last two decades.

However, Dewey (1916) reminds us that the ideas and ideals envisioned in

sharing the governance of organizations began with the Greek civilization. Dewey (1901)

also noted that although reforms sound good in theory, reforms based on existing

standards would be only temporary. Dewey's comments suggest that the evolving nature

of education is permanent. Thus, Shared Governance is a new approach that merits study

as a change vehicle. Understanding the nature of reform is complex, multi-faceted, and

not easily understood. Dewey believed that to understand the basic ideals of democracy

(Dayton and Glickman, 1994), we must be open "[as] the things of the spirit do not lend

themselves easily to exact quantitative measurement" (Dewey, 1901, p. 340). Shared Governance encourages such openness.

A qualitative approach, rather than a quantitative approach, was utilized to do a follow-up examination of Allen's (1993) study. Specifically, this study was a follow-up examination of the perspectives of change in the teachers who implemented Shared Governance structures over a 10-year period in a primary school.

Change is inherent in Shared Governance schools. An abundance of literature on reform analyzes the complexity of change (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Hopkins, 1937). Change has been examined in relation to organizational meaning (Barth, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1991), micro-politics (Ball, 1987; Blase, 1988), organizational culture (Hargraves, 1994), professional learning (Lieberman, 1996; Senge, 1990), and leadership (Blase & Blase, 1997; Crump, 1993).

Although there is an extensive research base on change (Fullan, 1991; Louis & Miles, 1990), there are very few in-depth studies examining how schools change and teachers' perspectives change over a period of time. There are even fewer long-term studies of change in innovative schools such as in the League of Professional Schools (Allen, 1993; Fink, 1998).

The decades of the 1980s and 1990s were recognized for unprecedented efforts in many states to improve the quality of public education. The reforms of the early 1980s attempted to improve schools by enhancing efficiency. That wave of reform was characterized as being overly bureaucratic, prescriptive, and ineffective (Chubb & Moe, 1986; Cuban, 1988). During these two decades, other forms of school governance, variously defined as Shared Governance, site-based management, and teacher

empowerment, were being implemented in several American schools (Campbell,

Fleming, Newell, & Bennion, 1987). Shared Governance promoted teacher

empowerment which was defined by Melenyzer (1990) as

> the opportunity and confidence to act upon one's ideas and to influence the way
>
> one performs in one's profession. True empowerment leads to increased
>
> professionalism as teachers assume responsibility for and an involvement in the
>
> decision-making process. (p.16)

Melenyzer (1990) believed that when teachers are given the opportunity to lead, they

influence others to assume responsibility in the decision-making process.

Reform, however, has been criticized due to its limited research base (e.g.,

Conley, 1991). Allen (1993) identified the scant empirical work on the problems,

benefits, and key issues related to teacher involvement in decision-making and

governance. Allen (1993) noted that the literature does not offer in-depth, comprehensive

information about how Shared Governance is being implemented in schools and how

teachers' lives are affected by it. A review of the literature conducted 10 years after

Allen's study confirms that this void in the literature still exists. Correspondingly, there is

a lack of in-depth studies on how such schools develop and change over time (Fink,

1998). Although several studies of the Shared Governance movement in schools have

raised questions such as "Will it work?" and "Will it foster long-term, positive effects?"

nevertheless, studies designed to track changes over time are still, for the most part,

lacking.

If Shared Governance is to endure, the processes that forward it need to be studied

over time. Through such inquiry it may become possible to move beyond the rhetoric of

Shared Governance by seeing the long-term benefits to teacher professionalism and satisfaction as well as other factors such as student achievement.

American public education is undergoing organizational restructuring. This restructuring frequently involves changes in decision-making structures and leadership at the school level (Blase & Blase, 1997). Despite the fact that organizational restructuring appeared to be the primary educational reform of the 1990s, research on shared leadership, although expanding, still remains limited (Allen, 1993). Specifically, there is a need for further research on the long-term effects of Shared Governance on teachers and their practices.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

This study addressed the long-term effects of Shared Governance based on teachers' perspectives of their involvement in school decision-making over a 10-year period. Limited research has focused on the long-term effect of Shared Governance on teachers. Furthermore, there is no research on Shared Governance that spans a 10-year period of implementation. It is anticipated that answers to the research questions of this study will contribute to an understanding of whether teachers in a school that implemented Shared Governance retain their optimism for those ideals or revert to their earlier patterns that did not foster Shared Governance. Hopefully, a deeper understanding of the Shared Governance process as it evolved over time might provide insight into factors that assisted in sustaining positive change in schools.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' perspectives of change within themselves as well as in the governance structure of a primary school where Shared

Governance was implemented 10 years earlier. The study is a follow-up one that focused

on the experiences of the teachers who worked in the Wilson County Primary School

(pseudonym, hereafter referred to as WCPS) from 1990-2000, as it transitioned from a

traditional structure to a Shared Governance structure. The study examined the ways in

which teachers viewed the concept of Shared Governance and compared teachers' current

perspectives with those reported in Allen's (1993) original study. Allen concluded that

voice was the core category of the teachers' perspectives of a positive experience in a

Shared Governance school.

Follow-up questions to Allen's (1993) study were developed from the data.

Allen reported that several identifiable factors (e.g., voice) contributed to the

advancement or retreat of Shared Governance principles. He concluded that the teachers'

perspectives of their school's implementation of Shared Governance consisted of a series

of opportunities for them to have a voice in school decision-making regarding curricular

and instructional issues. The researcher wanted to determine if the same factors identified

10 years earlier were still present and if other factors emerged. Of particular interest were

the following questions: 1) Will voice again be identified as the core category or will a

different category emerge that facilitates Shared Governance? 2) Will the same six

properties of voice emerge or will new ones emanate? 3) How do teachers' current

perspectives of Shared Governance within a primary school compare to their perspectives

10 years previous?

Using open-ended interviews and observations, the researcher documented and

analyzed the complexity of the circumstances that evolved. The data from the comparison

of the teachers' perspectives from 10 years before to those of 2000 might improve the

educational knowledge base, as it is the first long-term, follow-up study to be conducted on teachers' perspectives of Shared Governance.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

Two general research questions guided the replication of Allen's original case study of Shared Governance in a primary school:

Research Question 1: What are teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance in a school where Shared Governance has been implemented for 10 years?

Research Question 2: What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from teachers working in a school that has implemented Shared Governance for 10 years?

In recorded interviews, the researcher asked each Wilson County Primary School (WCPS) teacher four questions, used with permission from Allen's (1993) study:

1. What does Shared Governance at WCPS mean to you?

2. What do you do that is related to Shared Governance?

3. How does it feel to be in a school that is implementing Shared Governance?

4. What do you think about WCPS implementing Shared Governance?

Data from the interview questions and the researcher's field notes were analyzed and compared to Allen's 1993 results.

<div align="center">Elements Guiding the Study of Shared Governance</div>

The elements guiding the educational restructuring of the 1980s and the 1990s included organizational restructuring in industry and the inevitability of conflict. These elements were considered when studying Shared Governance. For example, the impact of Walter Deming and Lee Iacocca on the automotive industry extended to governmental,

political, and educational arenas (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). The positive changes in the

way such restructured industrial organizations operated make it appealing to examine

change within education (Blase & Blase, 1997). In education, restructuring refers to a

wide range of programs designed to decentralize decision-making and to foster Shared

Governance (Tye, 1987).

The second element for the study of restructuring is conflict. Restructuring may

call for central office personnel, principals, and teachers to function in different roles,

causing conflict. School-based decision-making encourages reflection and criticism, a

possible cause of conflict (Blase & Blase, 1997; Katz & Lawyer, 1993). It is essential to

review the roles of supervisors, principals, and teachers in Shared Governance schools in

order to develop a framework that minimizes conflict and supports restructuring efforts.

Viewing conflict as an integral part of change, and handling it in a professional manner

results in orderly progress; otherwise, the Shared Governance movement is likely to be

just another short-lived educational reform (e.g., Fullan, 1993; Sarason, 1971).

Nature of the Study

This study utilized qualitative research methods in order to determine:

(a) If teachers' feelings, thoughts and behaviors have changed over the past 10

years, and, if so, how and why they have changed.

(b) Whether or not Allen's (1993) major influences on these perspectives were

still influential to the teachers in this setting.

Allen identified eight major influences involved in Shared Governance: (1) teacher's

background, (2) content of the issue, (3) characteristics of the audience, (4) general

structure of job responsibilities, (5) context of the specific situation, (6) perspective of

the role of the principal, (7) amount of information teacher has about the issue, and (8)

teacher's personal circumstances.

    (c) If teachers' perspectives of the conditions that facilitated or impeded their

        expressions of voice in the school changed.

<div align="center">Assumptions</div>

1. Schools associated with the League of Professional Schools are actually

    involved with Shared Governance.

2. The identified teachers will accurately describe their role in school voice.

3. The selected sample includes teachers that represent the larger population of

    teachers associated with the League of Professional Schools.

4. Each of the participants will answer all the questions to the best of her ability.

5. Each of the participants will feel free to answer without fear of reprisal, as the

    school and teachers will remain confidential.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

For purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

Empowerment The opportunities a person has for autonomy, choice, responsibility, and

authority; the most critical aspect of empowerment is teacher "voice" (Lightfoot, 1983).

Sprague (1992) defined voice in relation to empowerment:

> Empowerment is defined as enabling teachers who have been silenced to speak;
>
> as helping them to develop a sense of agency, become challengers, and take
>
> initiatives; and as investing them with the right to participate in the determination
>
> of school goals and policies and to exercise professional judgment about what and
>
> how to teach. (p. 199)

Perspective An ordered view of one's world—what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature. It is an order of things remembered and expected as well as things actually perceived; an organized conception of what is plausible and what is possible. It constitutes the matrix through which one perceives his environment (Manis & Meltzer, 1969).

Primary school An elementary school that includes grades kindergarten through third grade.

Principal An individual who is the designated site administrator.

Restructuring A "program designed to foster decentralized decision making and site based management" (Tye, 1987, p.10).

Restructured school An elementary, middle, or high school that is involved in site-based decision making and Shared Governance. The restructured school in this study was selected from those schools associated with the League of Professional Schools and in the same one in which Allen (1993) conducted his study.

Shared Governance An alteration in organizational patterns such as decision-making that influence and stimulate school improvement (Malen & Ogawa, 1988).

Supervisory practices Supervisory practices are defined in terms of the following twelve dimensions identified by Pajak and Blase (1989): community relations, staff development, communication (including voice), curriculum, instructional program, service to teachers, observation and conferencing, problem solving, motivating and organizing, and personal development.

Things Everything that humans can recognize (e.g., other people, physical objects, mores), as defined by Blumer (1969).

<u>Voice</u> Teachers have the right to share (verbally or written) the lessons they have learned about schooling. Voice is enhanced by the opportunity to reflect on the underlying assumptions about teaching and learning (Gitlin, 1990) without fear of reprisal in order to facilitate empowerment (Kreisberg, 1992).

Delimitation

The sample of this study was limited to the teachers working in a primary school with 10 years of the "Shared Governance experience" as described in Allen's (1993) study.

Limitations

1. The researcher used instruments developed by Allen (1993) in his research at the primary school under investigation.

2. The researcher interviewed the subjects without collaboration.

3. The use of a representative sample suggests only that variables are related and does not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship.

4. If voice is determined to be the core category, then no factors other than the dimension of voice will be addressed even though they might be significant to the restructuring of schools (one example is student achievement).

5. All the teachers at WCPS were women; therefore, no males were interviewed.

Significance of the Study

There is a need to determine what educators believe about the long-term effects of Shared Governance. Conley (1991) and Blase and Blase (1997) warned that such reforms are being pushed forward without a firm base of research to direct it. Furthermore, Conley (1991) stated that more studies were needed to uncover the details of what

happens in schools when teachers are given the freedom to make decisions about their work. She also suggested that there is a need for more information on voice.

Allen (1993) states that related literature does not provide in-depth, comprehensive information about the nature of implementing school restructuring at the primary school level. Furthermore, Allen notes that there needs to be a greater understanding of the factors that contribute to the long-term success of teachers exercising leadership in a Shared Governance program.

The target for this study was a primary school in central Georgia where restructuring began 10 years earlier, and the research focused on the nature of teacher experiences within this effort. It was the researcher's expectation to identify factors that contributed to the rise, stabilization, and/or decline of the school's movement through Shared Governance.

<div align="center">Organization of the Remainder of the Study</div>

Chapter 2 provides a review of the related literature. This review includes an overview of democratic governance of schools, conditions and parameters of Shared Governance, teachers' perspectives regarding inclusion in decision-making, decision-making situations desired by teachers, the effects of Shared Governance on teachers, and teacher voice. Chapter 3 delineates the methodology utilized to collect and analyze the data. The findings of the study appear in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the summary and the implications of this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up study of Allen's (1993) work on Shared Governance at a League of Professional Schools site, Wilson County Primary School, a K-2 school located in central Georgia. Specifically, the researcher sought to uncover the perspectives regarding Shared Governance 10 years after Allen's (1993) study.

The review of literature includes empirical research on the following topics:

(A) Democratic governance of schools

(B) Conditions and parameters of Shared Governance

(C) Teachers' perspectives regarding inclusion in decision-making

(D) Decision-making situations desired by teachers

(E) Effects of Shared Governance on teachers

(F) Teachers' voice

Democratic Governance of Schools

Central to the concept of democratic governance in American schools are strong norms (i.e., the value of each individual in society), collective beliefs in the democratic way of life (i.e., equal rights, free choice, laws created by the people, for the people), shared values (i.e., all children can learn), a focus on teaching, a focus on the school's mission, and the use of action research (Calhoun, 1991, 1994) and other forms of data

collection and analysis to make decisions in collaboration with teachers, parents, and students (Blase & Blase, 1997). Relatedly, Glickman (1993) described various aspects of school governance and accompanying educational impacts, including zero impact decisions (e.g., sunshine fund, parking spaces), minimal-impact decisions (e.g., textbook adoption, parent programs), core-impact decisions (e.g., curriculum, staff development), and comprehensive-impact decisions (e.g., school budget, hiring of personnel).

Teacher Empowerment

A basic foundation for Shared Governance and school restructuring is teacher empowerment. According to Stone (1995), empowerment grants an individual the ability to direct his or her own life. Scott (1996) stated that traditionally teachers and children have not been empowered in schools. Glickman (1990) also noted that teachers and children had little to say in the decision-making process. Furthermore, he noted that when experienced teachers became empowered, they found their work to be more invigorating.

Several educational theorists focusing on Shared Governance (i.e., shared decision-making and site-based management) have reported that teacher empowerment is essential to Shared Governance initiatives (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1997). These theorists include Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley and Bauer (1990), Bredeson (1994), Lightfoot (1986), and Short and Rinehart (1992).

Lightfoot (1986) described empowerment as a way of fostering "the opportunities a person has for autonomy, responsibility, choice, and authority" (p. 9). The participant is actively involved in seizing opportunities and assuming authority, and this process includes the critical aspect of teacher voice. Lightfoot (1986) asserted that the Effective Schools literature defined "school effectiveness" too narrowly and "neglects the voices,

perspectives and wisdom of school people" who need "power to speak ... [in order to] reveal the dynamics of their achievements" (p. 13). Bredeson (1994) believed that empowerment was related to teacher readiness to assume more autonomy and responsibility incrementally so that trust and morale could be built.

Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley and Bauer (1990) linked teacher decision-making authority and teacher commitment to school goals, teacher morale, and teacher job satisfaction. They noted that teachers who felt empowered by having a voice in the decision-making process worked harder toward goals and felt greater job satisfaction. Hawley (1988) argued that empowerment was positively linked to student achievement.

Short and Rinehart (1992) believed that teacher empowerment enacted through participatory decision-making and coupled with professional development opportunities increased teacher impact on student achievement, autonomy, and self-efficacy. Empowerment makes it possible for individuals to take responsibility for their own growth regarding decision-making in their work. This belief reflects the premises that power is given and that participants can assume responsibility in a trusting atmosphere (Bredeson, 1994).

Problems of Teacher Empowerment

Kreisberg (1992), Tice (1992), and Allen and Glickman (1992) noted problems associated with empowerment. Kreisberg (1992) stressed the need to break the isolation that is common among teachers. Tice (1992) referred to Sprague's (1992) survey that attributed teachers' powerlessness in the workplace. Tice (1992) believed that the low status of teaching as a profession created the conditions that fostered resistance to technologizing, de-skilling, intensification (assignment to trivial tasks), and privatizing of

teaching (isolation from other teachers). According to Sprague (1992) teacher

empowerment can be attained through shared leadership and through gaining a

transformative vision of teachers' daily work with students.

Allen and Glickman (1992) noted that Shared Governance, which assumed

teacher empowerment, was an elusive, ongoing process with many pitfalls. Although

implementation of Shared Governance in a school was meant to give teachers a voice in

instruction and curricular decision-making, some teachers refrained from voicing their

opinions. Allen (1993) attributed such lack of interest to six factors that "blocked"

teachers from being empowered. These factors included: 1) the teacher's background, 2)

that issues are not of interest, 3) the invitation to participate is not viewed as sincere, 4)

information about the issues is insufficient, 5) the audience is intimidating, and 6) the

setting and the general structure of the workday is not considered conducive to

expressing one's thoughts. Allen noted that "these factors do not exhaust all possible

blocking factors" (p. 172).

Positive Aspects of Shared Governance

Calhoun and Allen (1994) found that Shared Governance initiatives had positive

effects on student academic achievement and behavior and on student experiences in the

learning environment. Etheridge and Hall (1991) found that teacher empowerment

contributed to improved student achievement scores in a relatively short time. The study

also revealed that if school-based decision-making was not implemented or if teachers

did not understand it, faculty retention and student learning were at risk.

Newmann (1995) examined student achievement with school restructuring, and

Etheridge and Hall (1995) found that a democratic leadership style led to increases in

student achievement. Elmore (1995) stated that empirical studies of structural change should not focus on a simple relationship between structure and student outcomes; rather, researchers should probe underneath the structures to discover what changes in teaching practice and student learning are involved. Such studies might then lead to more useful ideas about how structural change relates student outcomes by specifying what kinds of practice must be in place for these structures to work. Blase (1987) suggested that the teacher's perspective could add an additional dimension to effective school leadership.

Roberts and Dungan (1994) analyzed teachers' and students' perspectives of how participants became empowered in Shared Governance schools belonging to the Georgia-based League of Professional Schools. Roberts and Dungan (1994) and Calabrese et al. (1996) included descriptions of hands-on principals' leadership practices. Subjects reported increased communication quality and frequency in both horizontal and vertical communication in these schools. The researchers found that, although faculty morale and collegiality improved, student and parent participation was contrastingly weak. Furthermore, Blase and Blase (1999, 2000) extended the review of teacher perspectives regarding the instructional leadership of the principal and teacher development.

Zepeda (1999) reported that action research facilitates the collaborative, systematic inquiry that provides teachers and schools with a data-based approach for informed, ongoing decision-making. She noted several benefits of utilizing action research as staff development including "learning opportunities that do not attempt to influence teachers toward a predetermined point of view…[while]…utilizing data-driven decision-making" (p.108). Zepeda (1999) considered teachers as "action

researchers…[who can]… study their practices, with data guiding informed decisions as well as the future decisions they make regarding their practices" (p. 109).

McCarthy and Riner (1996) reinforced the concept that collaborative action research is a practice that can be used as a tool for staff development as it supports Shared Governance. Zepeda (1999) and McCarthy and Riner (1996) noted that action research provides an opportunity for teachers to work together to investigate and solve classroom problems, promote reflection, and support teachers in their efforts to inquire systematically on the issues they confront both in and out of the classroom.

Suleiman and Moore (1996) discussed the importance of teachers moving out of the traditional role of classroom managers and into leadership roles. The authors noted that real educational change and the empowerment of teachers as leaders occurred when teachers as leaders were viewed as: 1) active researchers in their classrooms, 2) participants in the transformation of the school culture, and 3) collaborators with other schools involved in school-based management for implementing problem-solving strategies.

Trust as an underlying theme for empowerment was noted in two studies that spanned from the primary grades to the collegiate level. Blase et al. (1995) pointed out that much time is necessary for the establishment of trust, cooperation, and a shared vision between schools and universities as they work to build Shared Governance communities. Trani (1997) called for a "broader model of Shared Governance" (p. 18) wherein policy decisions will reside with presidents, trustees, and faculty members–all who were closest to implementing decisions.

Several researchers in the past two decades have studied the nature of Shared Governance, and how teacher empowerment supports its goals. However, longitudinal studies have not been conducted. A longitudinal study of a Shared Governance site will enhance understanding of teachers' experiences.

Conditions and Parameters of Shared Governance

The conditions and parameters of Shared Governance are chronologically presented in this section. Studies completed before 1990 described teachers' levels of involvement across three factors: (1) stages in the decision-making process, (e.g., teachers' desire to lead while remaining a classroom teacher), (2) critical issues and significant progress of the schools, and (3) key elements that influenced teachers' perspectives of success. Research conducted since Allen's 1993 study focused on the negative aspects of principal reward, new responsibilities for teachers and administrators, complex tasks performed by teachers in collegial groups, choices that affect learning, and the complexity of augmenting Shared Governance principles in school settings.

Early Studies on Shared Governance

Crockenberg and Clark (1979) noted that teachers' level of involvement in decisions depended on the issue, the degree to which it affected their professional interests, and their willingness to take the risks involved in assuming responsibility for their decisions. Crockenberg and Clark (1979) identified five levels of involvement, which included 1) giving recommendations, 2) providing information, 3) consulting with the principal, 4) giving approval or rejection regarding decisions, and 5) giving authorization to make decisions. Teachers usually operated in the first three levels, and the level chosen depended on the issue that was being decided (Crockenberg & Clark,

1979). Similarly, Conway (1976) found that the teachers' participation in decision-making and the type of issues involved were key factors in their satisfaction with shared decision-making. He suggested that teachers be monitored closely so that positive conditions for their participation would correspond with their desire to be involved in decision-making.

Duke, Showers, and Imber's (1980) and Imber and Neidt's (1990) studies added the influence of stages in the decision-making process as a prerequisite of successful Shared Governance. Teachers in this study emphasized their desire to be involved in the formative stage of the decision-making process (Jenson, 1986) rather than simply to be asked to choose between pre-selected options.

Diercks, Dillard, McElliott, Morgan, Schultz, Tipps, and Wallentine's (1988) study added to the knowledge base about conditions that encouraged teacher involvement in decision-making. Additional time for collaboration (Cliff et al., 1992) was essential, and teachers reported that they needed leadership training, skill development, and specific areas of inservice such as in budget, school law, and site-based management. Most participants in the study wanted to continue to be classroom teachers; however, they wanted to be given the opportunity to exert influence in the decision-making process on schoolwide issues as well.

A study conducted by the Virginia Education Association of Elementary School Principals and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory (1988) identified key elements surrounding participative decision-making projects that influenced whether teachers judged the project as successful. These elements included: (a) the school district's financial support for training in such areas as communication and release time, (b) a

comprehensive understanding of how the project will make a positive impact, (c)

involvement and strong commitment by teachers and administrators to the project, and

(d) an understanding of the necessary work involved in keeping a high interest level

among participants.

<div align="center">Later Studies on Shared Governance</div>

Several studies that evolved concurrently with or after Allen's (1993) study

revealed some negative effects of Shared Governance. For example, Blase (1990) stated

that some research revealed a negative correlation between the rewards of principals and

some positive reactions from teachers, i.e., some teachers did not want attention given to

them publicly by the principal. Blase further noted that control-oriented principals, while

protecting their political turf, created negative effects on teachers. He found that those

principals fostered the "assumptive worlds" (p. 140) that separated the work of

administrators from teachers.

Glickman (1991) asserted that the main task of restructuring is confronting

professional knowledge. However, he also observed that once confronted, teachers were

likely to demonstrate the courage to improve if they were supported. Glickman (1992)

noted that for Shared Governance to be effective in improving education in schools, both

teachers and administrators had to accept new responsibilities created by the Shared

Governance process. Glickman (1993) pointed out that education would not be

restructured until policy-makers were willing to redesign their own approaches for

facilitating positive educational improvement.

Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1988) and Wohlstetter et al. (1994) indicated that site-

based management would not improve school performance. Their studies noted that such

programs applied to schools before 1990 rarely decentralized significant portions of the

school budget (i.e., teachers controlled some areas of the budget as an important

parameter of Shared Governance), rarely provided substantial personnel authority

(teacher empowerment), were rarely comprehensive, and rarely improved student

achievement. Correspondingly, Smylie and Denny (1990) and Odden (1995) found that

few site-based management initiatives engaged teachers in curriculum (Tanner, 1988)

and instructional change, a factor that limited the effectiveness of restructuring efforts on

achievement.

Other researchers noted more positive results in Shared Governance initiatives.

Mohrman et al. (1995) suggested the following action options to accomplish positive

results in Shared Governance schools: (1) decentralize five key resources (power,

knowledge, skills, information, rewards), (2) create an instructional guidance system

which includes utilizing computers in the team, and (3) develop new roles for teachers,

principals, and community members. He believed that these options were linked with

positive changes in curriculum and instruction including teaching for understanding,

teaching problem solving to diverse students, and teaching an integrated, inter-

disciplinary curriculum. Moursund (1995) examined computer-related issues that can

facilitate Shared Governance.

Robertson, Wohlstetter, and Mohrman (1993) also noted similar positive effects

linked to the utilization of Shared Governance in schools. However, they noted that

designing and implementing school-based management programs in education presented

challenges (Marshall & Cawelti, 1993) that included the following:

(1) Decentralizing power and placing it in a school site council

(2) Finding time to engage in the added responsibility was a challenge

(3) Finding and using an accountability system with real consequences, sanctions, and rewards that would accurately measure system performance was difficult

(4) Sticking with a decentralized decision-making (Mohrman, Cooke, & Mohrman, 1978) plan, rather than adding a new layer of regulations (e.g., how decisions will be made) or returning to centralized governance was difficult.

Robertson, Wohlstetter, and Mohrman's (1995) study reinforced the need for long-term research on the effects of Shared Governance. Furthermore, Blase and Blase (1994) stated:

> Empirical research provides few detailed pictures of day-to-day dynamics of sharing governance of a school with empowered teachers. Absent in particular from the reported research are teachers' perspectives on the performance of successful facilitative leaders as well as the effects of that performance. Many other areas also need to be illuminated: organization, communication, and procedures in Shared Governance schools, the quality and degree of teacher involvement. (p. 2)

Shared Governance schools must have strong norms, collective beliefs, and values that reflect the notion that children can learn and that educators can provide school environments that support student achievement.

Blase and Blase (1997) discovered that teachers found "dignity in meaningful participation in school-wide decisions about teaching and learning" (p. 105). Furthermore, Blase and Blase (1994) stated that successful Shared Governance principals

utilized inherent as well as external rewards that teachers believed were valid, and that

the teachers felt rewarded and highly regarded.

<div align="center">Teachers' Perspectives Regarding Inclusion in Decision-Making</div>

This section reviewed teachers' perspectives of the extent that they want to be

included in the decision-making process and the consequences when teachers' needs to

be involved in decision-making are not met.

Teachers do not necessarily want to be involved in all decision-making within

schools; they tend to want involvement in decisions that directly affect their teaching.

Accordingly, Phillips (1996) found that Shared Governance as an educational philosophy

offered local school personnel an opportunity to share in decision-making and to improve

educational quality through local control. The study revealed that teachers felt a sense of

responsibility for the process of Shared Governance and although only 54% expressed an

interest in developing the school budget, 50% indicated an interest in being involved with

the recruiting and selection of new teachers. In contrast, 71% indicated that they were

willing to be held accountable for decisions made through a shared process (Phillips,

1996).

Several studies indicated that teachers deprived of the type of involvement that

they desired, experienced role ambiguity and dissatisfaction with the amount of influence

administrators had on their work. Clear and Seager (1971) maintained that teachers

expect independence in certain aspects of their work. Furthermore, they noted that

teachers had little acceptance of administrative influence in regard to decisions that

impact directly on students (i.e., use of curriculum guides, teaching techniques, and

disciplining students) and with issues dealing with several personal behaviors including how they dressed and how they conducted their personal lives.

Alutto and Belasco (1973) studied the types of roles teachers desired in the governance of schools and the effects on teachers when these expectations were not met. This study was the predecessor for similar studies conducted through the 1980s. Alutto and Belasco used closed-ended questionnaire surveys to gather data from 400 teachers. They analyzed the disparity between the amount of participation teachers desired versus the amount of participation they actually had. Alutto and Belasco concluded that while some teachers felt they were in a state of deprivation regarding the amount of involvement they had, many others did not consider themselves deprived. Furthermore, Alutto and Belasco noted that teachers who felt deprived in the amount of participation did not have lower commitment to the organization than other teachers did in the study, but they did feel that administrators exerted too much control. Finally, the researchers found that teacher satisfaction was not affected by the extent of their involvement but rather by the types of decisions in which they were asked to participate.

Schneider (1984) stated that teachers' interest and expertise was linked to the teachers' desire for involvement in decision-making. Schneider found that the greater interest teachers had in an issue, the more likely they felt that their level of involvement was too low. Eight years later, Rice and Schneider (1992) conducted a follow-up study and found that while teachers' involvement in decision-making had increased in some areas, teachers continued to feel left out of the decision-making process in some areas such as budget. Related studies noted by Allen (1993) included those by Benson and Malone (1987) and Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley, and Bauer (1990). These studies

found that when decisions affected individuals or the organization as a whole, decision-making played a part in determining if participation in decision-making affected job satisfaction, the ambiguity of roles and its resultant conflict, and commitment to organizational goals.

To avoid discrepancy in teachers' perspectives, Blase and Blase (1997) suggested that principals follow several guidelines when implementing Shared Governance. Blase and Blase recommended that principals:

(1) reflect on relevant basic assumptions (i.e., the school as a learning community where teachers and leaders exchange roles

(2) examine their beliefs about teaching (i.e., teachers' activities are non-routine and variable, and this requires innovation rather than standardization)

(3) reflect on the school's context before launching into Shared Governance activities (i.e., what factors might hinder or facilitate the initiation?)

(4) consider their own skills and knowledge as they relate to developing teacher skills, engaging in critical discussions and recognizing teachers as experts

(5) involve themselves as an equal with teachers, non-certified staff, parents, students, and other community members   (pp. 94-98)

Decision-Making Situations Desired by Teachers

This section reviewed the studies of decision-making that teachers desire based on their experiences. These situations include desired areas of control (instructional vs. administrative), teachers' collective control of a budget, or implementation of mentoring (Bey & Holmes, 1990) using special funds, collective decision vs. decisions made by

interdisciplinary teams, the importance of process, and the barriers to Shared Governance in the schools.

Crockenberg and Clark (1979) noted that when teachers were given the opportunity to choose the decision-making areas in which they wanted to be involved, they often choose areas that were instructional rather than administrative. Teachers (Blase, 1991) were concerned with the following leadership issues: instructional methods and grouping, curriculum, in-service training, faculty meetings, student discipline, and teacher personnel policies as well as budget- and classroom-related expenditures, roles of personnel including certified, classified personnel and support personnel, and finally, guidelines for teacher/parent relationships. Hart (1990) observed that principals and teachers found disparity on who owned the issues: teachers or principals. Consequently, negotiations were often required. Hart further noted that relevant issues varied from school to school. She concluded that schools have their own unique standards that affect how changes in leadership roles are accepted. Blase and Blase (2000) suggested what successful principals could do to resolve such issues.

Smylie, Brownlee-Conyers, and Crowson (1992) found that the process of how teachers were engaged in decision-making was important in implementing Shared Governance structures. They reported that teachers reacted positively when those making the decisions were responsive to the concerns of others and when they had input as well as influence on the decisions. They stated that "teachers' assessments of decision-making processes may be more important in teachers' actions than agreement with the substance of the decisions themselves" (p. 23). Karant (1989), Levinson (1984), and Lunsford (1995) also reported the importance of process of process in decision-making.

Phillips (1996) sought to determine whether teachers perceived that a structured teacher empowerment process had enhanced the teachers' development in the areas of professional growth, experience, leadership, decision-making, and professional practices. Major findings demonstrated that principals, with or without experience, perceived (a) teachers to be higher on a developmental continuum than the teachers perceived themselves to be and (b) that this disparity between principals' and teachers' views may be attributed to the tendency for teachers to have a goal and their self-perception of not having attained that goal.

Blase and Blase (1997) referred to an "illusion of teacher decision-making" (p.71) where control continues but becomes "invisible" because it is relegated to a particular group of teachers whom the principal views as subservient. Earlier, in a large study of school-based management, Malen and Owaga (1988) found that school councils were utilized by principals as an advisory group and were pro forma endorsers of the principal rather than problem-solving groups that had authority to make decisions. These are major barriers to Shared Governance.

There are many more studies of teachers' perspectives of their involvement than studies of actual practice or experience in Shared Governance schools. These few studies focused on actual experience and then generally produced illustrative images rather than longitudinal, in-depth analysis and theory. More long-term studies about how practice affects teachers' desires to be involved in decision-making situations are needed. The intent of this study was to broaden the research base in regard to long-term studies on teachers' perspectives about the Shared Governance process.

Effects of Shared Governance on Teachers

This section considers the effects shared decision-making have on teachers involved in initiatives to increase their role in decision-making. Studies regarding decision-making revealed both positive as well as negative results. Negative aspects that emerged included skepticism regarding the impact of involvement and certain common conditions that lead to failure to involve teachers and parents in the decision-making process. Positive aspects were found in regard to increased oral communication, ownership of decisions, empowerment (Lucas & Brown, 1991), open discussions, respect, job satisfaction, and higher morale.

Crockenberg and Clark (1979) found that, when utilizing shared decision-making, teachers and administrators began talking to each other in new ways. Teachers began to discuss issues, to engage in a free exchange of ideas, and to find common interests. The teachers is this study "perceived that their involvement in shared leadership would enhance their effectiveness and produce important benefits for the students" (p. 118).

Sickler (1988) stated that the experience of teachers working with other teachers resulted in gains of new respect for each other and in the establishment of new communication networks. These positive results were contrasted with Smylie and Denny (1990) who reported that teacher leaders experienced frustration when they defined their roles as lead teachers, but spent most of their time in meetings with administrators. These teachers indicated the most important thing they wanted to accomplish was to support their fellow teachers on a one-to-one basis; instead, they found that they spent most of their time in meetings working on schoolwide topics that had little to do with classroom practices.

Brown's study (1994), cited in Blase and Blase (1997), found that Shared

Governance was strongly related to:

1. Empowering the faculty as well as shared decision-making

2. Developing a shared mission where common purposes are identified, common
   goals are established, and shared values are developed

3. Ensuring more open discussion within collaborative work conditions. (p. 102)

The studies reviewed on the effects of Shared Governance produced a dichotomy of

findings. Problems that were encountered in Shared Governance initiatives included

teachers resenting those who accepted expanded roles, teachers creating an illusion of

involvement, teachers slipping into administrative roles rather than the intended

supportive roles, concerns about adequate time to fill the leadership and governance

roles, and skepticism about the lasting impact of teacher involvement. Emphasizing the

positive, Blase and Blase (1997) stated that "successful shared-governance principals

believe in backing off, facilitating the work of others, and building an inclusive school

community" (p. 31).

<center>Teacher Voice</center>

This final section reviews several factors that either advanced or retarded the

development of teacher voice. Gitlin (1990) defined the term "voice" as the vehicle that

allows teachers time to reflect on their beliefs about education and then to share the

lessons they have learned about schooling. He further noted that voice gives teachers "the

option for political action and protest rather than being limited to the physical and/or

psychological withdrawal from the school" (p. 460). Allen (1993) described five types of

voice including a voting voice, a clarifying voice, a delegated voice, a direct voice, and an individual final voice.

Barriers to Teacher Voice

Blase, Blase, Anderson, et al. (1995) described a range of barriers to teacher voice including the principal's challenge to "let go." In other work, Blase and Blase (1994) and Reitzug (1994) discovered that time is an essential element in promoting the development of teacher voice. Correspondingly, the literature on restructuring is replete with information on time problems (Allen, 1993; Blase & Blase, 1994; Bradley, 1992; Bredeson, 1989; Peterson & Warren, 1994; Reitzug, 1994). Teachers have traditionally been socialized into the norms of the educational bureaucracy and subordinate compliance to administrators (Blase, 1988; Lortie, 1975), and these norms create barriers to the development of teacher voice.

Malen and Ogawa (1988) attributed some of the failure of site-based decision-making by teachers to their deference to principals' authority and expertise (Blase, Blase, et al., 1995). Constraints from the central office, school board, or state standards, inadequate implementation planning, and problematic economic conditions, can hinder the implementation of Shared Governance.

Enhancing Teacher Voice

The major finding of Allen's (1993) study on Shared Governance was the importance of and implementation of voice. Although several studies implicitly suggested the role of voice in Shared Governance, none of them (other than Allen's) explicitly focused on voice. The following is a summary of the positive findings from research conducted on the concept of teacher voice.

Campbell, Fleming, Jackson, and Bennion (1987) found that the issue of the "correct role" of teachers in the governance of schools has been a controversial one for many years. Early in this century, Dewey (1916) advocated that teachers be allowed to take an operative role in the governance of schools. He believed that school administrators should work with teachers as equals.

However, Taylor (1967) and other educators that espoused scientific management techniques challenged such views. Taylor and Teddie (1992) disagreed with the position that tasks had one ideal way of being carried out, and that it was the administrator's responsibility to determine this best way, to prescribe to employees how they are to carry out the task, and to monitor the employee's adherence to set rules and regulations.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) study Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind was not an educational study; however, it offered insights about the development of teacher voice. The authors investigated how women acquire, process, and express information. They reported that "Again and again, women spoke of 'gaining a voice' " (p. 16). The authors concluded that voice was more than academic shorthand for a person's point of view:

Well after we were into our interview with women, we became aware that it is a metaphor that can apply to many aspects of women's experience and development…. We found that women repeatedly used the metaphor of voice to depict their intellectual and ethical development and that the development of a sense of voice, mind and self were intricately intertwined. (p. 18)

McDonald (1986) found that the voices of collaborating teachers included three

phases: 1) breaking the silence, 2) focusing collective voices for increased influence on school policies, and 3) realizing that expressing voice not only reflects a right to be heard but also affirms that teachers possess worthy information that should be heard.

Nias (1989) also reinforced the importance of teacher voice. She noted that initially teachers were interested in classroom survival issues, yet they eventually searched for greater influence outside the classroom. This situation would be realized when teachers were given opportunities to engage in conversations with other teachers and principals, to take an active role in setting school goals and policies, and to assume leadership roles in their schools. Both Nias (1989) and Gitlin, et al. (1992) stated that time was a predominant problem, and both found that teachers rarely have enough time to reflect on or give voice to their thoughts.

Kreisberg (1992) reported the importance of breaking the isolation in teachers' professional lives and noted that the configuration of the school day serves to silence teachers. Kreisberg's findings indicated that voice was at the center of teacher empowerment, stating that "empowerment is seen as a process that demands personal and institutional change. It is a personal transformation out of silence and submission that it is characterized by an authentic voice" (p. 18). Shared Governance, Kreisberg noted, could be the vehicle of breaking that silence.

Gitlin, et al. (1992) studied a group of teachers who exerted efforts to gain a voice in their profession. They collectively reflected on how teachers worked and implemented changes in their roles as teachers. The teachers were transformed from being passive workers near the bottom of the educational power structure to empowered professionals (Wasserman, 1991) who took the lead in their professionalism. One teacher's personal

documentation reflected this struggle for voice: she discussed forces that silenced her

(isolated classrooms, mandated curriculums, and required texts). Gitlan noted fears that

teachers had regarding voice: intimidation or ridicule of teachers who speak up at faculty

meetings, dictates from principals regarding what may or may not be discussed, or threats

of losing one's job for expressing anything contradicting the principal or school system.

Allen (1993) noted that two key elements were needed to define voice: a listening

audience and an audience that was directly involved in decision-making. Allen identified

five types of voice including "clarifying voice, voting voice, delegated voice, direct

voice, and individual-final voice" (p. 87). Furthermore, Allen (1993) reported that the

type of voice used by teachers was linked to a variety of variables which included the 1)

teacher's background, 2) content of the issue, 3) characteristics of the audience, 4) the

structure of the school day, 5) the context of the issue, 6) the teacher's perspective of the

principal's wishes, 7) the amount of information the teacher had about the issue, 8) the

teacher's personal circumstances, 9) the teacher's experiences with articulating a voice,

and 10) the amount of time, initiative, and risk involved in using a voice.

In summary, research on voice has detailed the teachers' desire for a voice in

schools and provided some insights into the effects that newly gained voice has had on

teachers (e.g., Allen, 1993; Gitlin, et al. 1992). To date, Allen's (1993) study is the only

research to provide a theoretical analysis as to how voice is interpreted by teachers and

how it affects their lives in a school that implemented Shared Governance.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This chapter reviewed the empirical research related to Shared Governance as it

narrows to the concept of voice. Shared Governance is a historically established ideal that

evolved from a Greek heritage and was proclaimed at the turn of the twentieth century by

Dewey (1902). It has subsequently been minimized by dissidents with different agendas

and in the last two decades has re-emerged as a vehicle for educational reform. Recent

research has identified several problems, benefits, and key issues reflected in Shared

Governance initiatives. However, beyond a lack of in-depth, comprehensive information

about how Shared Governance is being implemented in the schools, the related research

and literature do not reveal if and how Shared Governance affects teachers' lives over a

long period of time.

The study (spanning 10 years of Shared Governance implementation) examined

the long-term effects of Shared Governance on teachers' perspectives of Shared

Governance. This researcher believes that an increased understanding of the Shared

Governance process as it evolves over time will provide insight into factors that assist in

sustaining positive change in schools.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Introduction

This researcher recorded teachers' perspectives, feelings, thoughts, and behaviors related to working for 10 years in a Shared Governance primary school, with particular emphasis on teachers' expression of voice. The researcher also recorded teachers' perspectives of where the primary responsibility regarding the expression of voice lies (or other factors that emerge) that have influenced the teachers in the past 10 years (e.g., environmental factors that facilitate or impede their expression of voice in the primary school).

Symbolic Interaction Theory (Blumer, 1969) and *Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) provided the theoretical and methodological guidelines for this study. *Symbolic Interaction Theory* contended that people behave "as interpreting, defining, symbolic animals whose behavior can only be understood by having the researcher enter into the defining process" (Bogdan & Biklin, 1982, p. 33). This sense of entering into the participants' world with the intent to learn from them guided the study.

In writing about the proper scope and function of methodology, Blumer (1969) made the following points: (1) methodology embraces the entire scientific quest and is not merely some selected portion or aspect of that quest; (2) each part of the scientific quest as well as the complete scientific act, itself, has to fit the obdurate character of the empirical world under study and therefore, methods of study are subservient to that world

and should be subject to test by it; and (3) the experimental world under study and not some model of scientific inquiry provides the ultimate and decisive answer to the test. Because *Symbolic Interactionism* provided the theoretical and methodological framework for this study, methods were selected according to their ability to analyze the empirical world from a symbolic interactionist perspective. Blumer (1969) identified three basic premises of *Symbolic Interactionism*. What follows is a description of these premises along with methodological strategies for the current study that were consistent with the content of each of the premises.

<u>First Premise</u>

Blumer's first premise stated that "human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. Such things included everything that the human being may note in his world" (1969, p. 2). Allen selected methods that were useful in revealing what things teachers identify as relevant to Shared Governance and what meanings are given to these issues. The role of the original researcher (Allen, 1993) with WCPS was as a full participant. He was a nonvoting member of the School-wide Instructional Team (SIT) and, as such, it was expected that he would participate in helping the team decide how to proceed. With the beginning of the 1991-92 school year, his role officially changed. He explained to the team that his responsibilities with the Program for School Improvement no longer required him to work directly with the team. He then requested that he be allowed to continue attending meetings as a participant observer (Patton, 1989). He proposed that he would participate only when he was in a unique position to add to the process. The SIT members granted this request.

As a participant observer, Allen attended meetings and gatherings that provided an opportunity to observe interactions among the teachers (Appendix B). While observing these social interactions, he found corroborative evidence of the meanings of things identified while conducting interviews. Ideas for questions in subsequent rounds of interviews were also generated during these observations. Allen conducted informal conversational interviews, the method to be followed in the present study.

Correspondingly, this researcher utilized observation and open-ended interviewing as two of the methods of the present study. Patton (1989) stated that "The purpose of open-ended interviewing was ... to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. The assumption was that the perspective is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (p.196). Patton pointed out that interviewing provides information that may not be attainable through any other procedures: "We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world–we have to ask people questions about those things" (p.196).

Patton (1989) identified three basic types of open-ended interviews: (a) The informal conversational interview, (b) the general interview guide approach, and (c) the standardized open-ended interview.

The *informal conversational interview* was not planned and had the tone of conversation rather than an interview. The *general interview guide,* in contrast, occurred when the researcher had a general idea of what to ask but did not have a definite format that dictated how, when, and what kind of questions are asked. The *standardized open-ended interview* was a format in which the questions and their order were set before the interview takes place. The standardized open-ended interview, the most structured of the

three types, allowed easier and more accurate comparisons of responses between participants of the study.

In the present study, the initial interviews were conducted in the *general interview* mode. Allen's (1993) four questions were re-explored during the first round of interviews of this present study:

1. What does Shared Governance at WCPS mean to you?

2. What do you do that is related to Shared Governance?

3. How does it feel to be in a school that is implementing Shared Governance?

4. What do you think about WCPS implementing Shared Governance?

These questions were not necessarily asked in this order or verbatim in this replication and extension of Allen's original single-school case study. The nature and type of probes and follow-up questions flowed naturally through the course of the interviews, as logical openings occurred.

All participants were promised confidentiality. The Consent Form (Appendix A) was completed and signed by the participants. If the participant was not already familiar with the purpose of the interview and the study, the researcher provided that information. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher. To ensure that key information about the researcher's motivation and purpose was communicated to the participants, the researcher began the first round of interviews with this statement:

During this interview please assume that I know nothing about Shared

Governance; otherwise you may omit important details. The purpose of this

interview is for you to share your perspective of Shared Governance with me, not

to be evaluated by me. There is no right or wrong way for you to feel about

Shared Governance and your experiences with it. I want to know what is in your heart and mind. I do not have a hidden agenda as to what I am hoping to hear. I want you to help me understand what it is like to work in a school where Shared Governance procedures have been implemented. (Allen, 1993, pp. 42-43)

Teachers were given transcriptions of their initial interview and then called at an appointed time to discuss any changes or modifications of interpretation that they felt were needed in the transcription. This form of member-check (Amerson et al., 1994; Preissle, 1997) gave the teachers an additional opportunity to give voice to their opinions.

The second round of interviews was structured using the researcher's data from the first round of interviews. More information about the second-round interview questions was presented in the data analysis and theoretical sampling sections.

Second Premise

Blumer's second premise stated that meanings that people give to things are "derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows" (1969, p. 2). The methods identified in this study are consistent, not only with the content of Blumer's first premise but also with the content of his second premise. In this proposed study, as a replication of Allen's study, it similarly was not possible for the researcher to observe all of the social interactions that influenced the teachers' meaning of Shared Governance, and thus it was necessary to ask about them. Direct observation was also appropriate for the second premise. Unlike the participants' meanings in the first premise, it was possible to directly observe their social interactions. There were many different levels of observation ranging from full participation to uninvolved spectator. Different levels of observation employed both by Allen and the present researcher

depended on the situation and the needs of the researcher as well as the needs of the participants (Patton, 1989).

This researcher was not a member of the SIT but observed and/or participated at faculty meetings (for example, to introduce herself and outline the proposed research), SIT meetings, and social interactions, as she corroborated evidence of the meanings of things identified while conducting interviews. Furthermore, she met with the principal and superintendent. Thus, interpretations gathered during the interviews were reinforced in other observations, validating Blumer's second premise. While observing these social gatherings, this researcher sought corroborative evidence of the meanings of Shared Governance as identified while conducting interviews. Ideas for questions in subsequent rounds of interviews originated in these observations and the data from the first round of interviews.

Third Premise

Blumer's third premise stated that "meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (1969, p. 2). This premise enabled researcher to focus on individual teacher's understanding of the occurrences and interactions surrounding the Shared Governance endeavor. This researcher used artifact collection to provide information. Artifact collection (LeCompte, 1984) was a method appropriate to the symbolic interactionist framework and was one that provided information pertinent to all three premises. LeCompte wrote:

In addition to what they say and how they behave, human beings make and use things. The artifacts that result from this activity constitute data that indicate

people's sensations, experiences, and knowledge, and that connote opinions,

values, and feelings. (p.153)

By examining documents such as minutes of meetings, newspapers, notes, and

announcements that had relevance (direct or indirect) on the Shared Governance process

of WCPS, this researcher was better able to understand the meanings of the varied

interactions and their interpretations by the teachers in the school. Some documents

provided new information, yet others reinforced findings from other methods.

None of these methods were used in isolation or in a pre-determined manner. The

researcher did not conduct one interview to simply focus on the meaning of objects and

another interview to achieve clarity on the interpretation process, nor did she observe

social interactions first and then follow up with an observation designed to interpret

meanings. Instead, the researcher attempted to be sensitive to the full scope of data-

gathering prospects inherent in all contexts. On occasion, the researcher did go into the

field with a particular focus, but always remained open to any information that served to

sharpen her awareness of all pertinent areas. A spiral best represented these

methodological procedures, where one round of inquiry informed and directed the next.

This researcher selected methods and designs that were effective in revealing what things

teachers identified as relevant to Shared Governance and what meanings were given to

these issues, as they validated Blumer's three basic premises of *Symbolic Interactionism*.

This study used a *Case Study* to compare the teachers' perspectives at the

beginning of the Shared Governance experience and their perspectives 10 years later.

Case Study

Case studies were classified into the following five categories: 1) focused, single

subject, 2) resolution of conflict, 3) major issue, 4) concept application and laboratory-

based problems (Camp, 1996; Bieron & Dinan, 1997). This study utilized the first

category as it is focused on a single primary school. Most Shared Governance was carried

out at the building level; consequently, the study of Shared Governance bounded by a

single school's experience was consistent with the natural setting. The data sought by the

researcher were embedded in the context of the school; consequently, a case study was

the preferred type of research for this study (Merriam, 1988).

Yin (1987) wrote, "case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why'

questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when

the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon with some real-life context" (p. 13). This

study approximated these three criteria in that: 1) the researchers sought to understand

how Shared Governance was perceived by teachers, 2) the researcher had little influence

on how Shared Governance was implemented at WCPS, and 3) Shared Governance was a

contemporary phenomenon played out in the real world of WCPS.

In the design of any experiment, researchers attempt to hold constant as many

factors as possible. Ideally, each study holds resolute all variables except the ones under

systematic study. Factors that the researcher is not able to control are allowed to vary

randomly across the treatment conditions. Thus, randomization of these "so-called

nuisance factors is the major way that we obtain <u>internal validity</u>–that is, the elimination

of biases that, if present, might invalidate any conclusions we draw concerning the

manipulations in the experiment" (Keppel, 1991, p. 484). Thus, as many factors as

possible (such as wording of questions, room of interviews, time of interviews, etc.) were held constant and were the same as those in the original Allen study. To achieve an acceptable level of internal validity, the researcher restricted the conditions under which a given phenomenon was studied.

External validity was the degree to which the researcher generalized the findings beyond the present condition of testing: "Frequently a researcher will introduce a factor into an experiment solely in the hope of increasing external validity" (Keppel, 1991, p. 484). Thus, a different researcher increased the design's external validity.

<div align="center">Setting of the Study</div>

Wilson County Primary School (WCPS) was the only primary school located in a rural county in the southeastern portion of the United States. Allen (1993) found that WCPS served 635 students, of which 49% qualified for free or reduced price lunch. Thirty-eight percent of the school's students were minority children. Furthermore he found that there were 44 female kindergarten through second grade teachers at WCPS. The principal was male.

> During the 1988-1989 school year, the WCPS staff began meeting with staff members of the University of Georgia's Program for School Improvement (PSI) as they considered implementing a Shared Governance process over school-wide curricular and instructional decisions. In May of 1989, the WCPS staff voted unanimously, by secret ballot, to collaborate with PSI and to make a commitment to implementing a Shared Governance process. In August of 1989, 12 elected teacher representatives, the principal, and the researcher (a PSI staff member) spent two days writing the guidelines for the school's Shared Governance

initiative. This initiative was implemented the following fall when the staff,

following their newly written procedures, began identifying areas that they

collectively wanted to address. Throughout the remainder of the 1989-90 school

year and for the entire 1990-91 school year, WCPS followed its Shared

Governance process in planning, implementing, and evaluating school

improvement initiatives.

In May of 1991, the staff voted to join a newly organized branch of PSI,

the League of Professional Schools. In May of 1992, the staff voted to continue

the school's membership in the League for the 1992-93 school year. Thus, in

August of 1992, WCPS began its fourth year of Shared Governance. (p. 36)

The League representative who subsequently researched WCPS's Shared

Governance (Allen, 1993) had worked closely with the WCPS teachers since his initial

contact in 1989. He served as a nonvoting member of their governing council, the

School-wide Improvement Team (SIT), since it began in 1989; furthermore, he attended a

preponderance of meetings held by the WCPS staff pertaining to Shared Governance

from 1989 through 1993. Changes in the setting of the study from 1990 to 2000 were

ascertained during data collection.

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

<u>Introduction</u>

This study described the teachers' perspectives of the implementation of a Shared

Governance program in a primary school from 1988 – 2000. The study was conducted in

Wilson County Primary School (WCPS), a pseudonym for the real school. The

perspectives of WCPS teachers about the issues important to them in the school's Shared Governance initiative were the focus of this study.

The research replicated Allen's (1993) study using his research questions as well as the same setting, focus, premises, sampling techniques, data analysis methods, and bias considerations. The researcher kept a research diary that commenced in the fall of 2000, and continued as she analyzed the new results. Next, a comparison was made of the teachers' perspectives at the beginning and at the end of the 10-year period. Implications for future applications and future research were then based on the findings from this replication study.

The procedures utilized in this study included research questions, interview questions, data collecting methods, sampling, and data analysis.

Research Questions

Two questions guided the replication and extension of Allen's (1993) case study of a Shared Governance primary school. These include:

Research Question # 1: What are teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance in a school where Shared Governance has been implemented for 10 years?

Research Question #2: What feelings, thoughts and behaviors result from teachers working in a school that has implemented Shared Governance for 10 years?

Interview Questions

Answers to the following questions were recorded as the researcher asked each interviewed teacher from Wilson County Primary School (WCPS) these basic four questions from Allen's (1993, p. 41) original study:

1. What does Shared Governance at WCPS mean to you?

2. What do you do that is related to Shared Governance?

3. How does it feel to be in a school that is implementing Shared Governance?

4. What do you think about WCPS implementing Shared Governance?

When the data from the interview questions and the field notes of the researcher's observation were analyzed, the concept identified as the common thread of the teachers' collective meaning of Shared Governance emerged. This study compared it to Allen's (1993) results, which established voice as that common thread, or "core category" of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The following nine procedures comprised the method that was used to collect and later analyze data for examining the teachers' perspectives of Shared Governance:

1. Contacted Dr. Lew Allen, the original researcher of this topic, for insight regarding the retrospective visitation to the primary school. Allen stated that he would contact the principal to introduce this researcher.

2. This present researcher contacted (by phone and written correspondence) the superintendent and the principal of the primary school for permission to conduct research at the school and to interview the teachers. Permission was granted and the researcher noted their interest in the follow-up study.

3. Researched archives (Board meeting minutes, grade level meeting minutes, SIT meeting minutes, focus group meeting minutes, principal's end-of-year summary, newspapers, parent letters, etc) for pertinent data and to ascertain which teachers had taught during the 10 year time-span. Researcher hoped that five or more teachers would be eligible and willing to be interviewed. A majority of the original teachers (12 of the original 15 teachers in Allen's study) were determined to be eligible; they were also willing to be interviewed. The other three teachers left the school system due to retirement or family matters, such as a husband's transfer.

4. These 12 eligible teachers attended a full faculty meeting where the researcher was introduced to the staff. The researcher gave an overview of the study including the persons to be involved, approximate time involved teachers would spend, and reviewed questions from Allen's study that would be asked of the interviewees. She then answered other questions about the study.

5. Contacted the eligible group of teachers (those who had taught at WCPS since 1990 and who had participated in the original study) to establish a convenient time for them to be interviewed. Thus, purposeful sampling (Strauss, 1987) of all the teachers at WCPS was utilized to obtain the group of 12 eligible teachers.

6. Conducted in-depth interviews of each eligible teacher (i.e. those teachers who have been teaching at the primary school during the 10 year time-frame and who were also in Allen's [1993] original study). Tape-recorded the informal, conversational interviews, with tape recorder (Ives, 1995) from the

media center of WCPS. Used the general interview guide approach and the
interview questions from the original study with all of the eligible teachers.
This present researcher then precisely transcribed the tape-recorded interviews
of the12 eligible teachers.

7. Analyzed the data from the 12 teachers using the Repeated Measures Design
(Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) for a decade of change. Noted each thought or
concept observed during the research, whose sources included interviews,
group meetings with this present researcher, minutes of a variety of meetings
during the 10 years, media sources (including state, local, and school
newspapers), and other written sources such as letter from parents. Placed
each of these thoughts or concepts in individual cells of the EXCEL
spreadsheet. Over 1000 cells of information provided a flow pattern that
revealed these major categories: a) Benefits of Shared Governance (teachers,
parents, students, administrators, comparison to other schools, and ties to the
University; b) Four concerns of Shared Governance (time, SIT perceptions,
initiation period for the entire school initiative as well as for individual
teachers, and loss of principal), c) Voice (key elements, types and definitions,
levels of involvement, effects on teachers [tangible and intangible support as
well as consequences of use], factors in expressing, selection process),
principal's role, and d) Change [many more positive changes occurred than
negative concerns (for example, one predominant concern was the
apprehension that would accompany the loss of the present principal…i.e. the
position could be filled by a facilitator or a dictator)].

8. Presented each teacher with a transcript of her own interview and then

offered a choice of time periods for a second individual telephone interview

when she could privately discuss any additions or deletions to the transcript

she felt was needed. Only one minor change was called for, regarding one

teacher's concern with being remembered for the "tablecloths on the round

tables." This process served as a "member check" (Preissle, 1997). All other

teachers indicated agreement with the transcription as a true and accurate

depiction of their perspectives.

9. Conducted a group interview of all the eligible teachers to search for

additional in-depth meanings or interpretations of the data presented on the

EXCEL spreadsheet. Tape-recorded and transcribed the group interview. This

served as a second member check.

These procedures resulted in the transcription of the 12 individual teachers'

interviews as well as a transcription of the group interview; this process resulted in a

transcription of over one hundred pages.

In summary, open-ended interviews were the primary data collection method used

to acquire in-depth understandings and meanings that teachers in the school held for

Shared Governance. This study utilized two of the three types of open-ended interviews:

1) the *general interview guide* approach for the in-depth interviews with individual

teachers and (2) the *informal conversational interview* with the group interview.

Sampling

The concept of theoretical sampling guided the researcher's activities in gathering

data. Strauss (1987) notes:

Theoretical sampling is a means whereby the analyst decides <u>on analytic grounds</u> what data to collect next and where to find them. The basic question in theoretical sampling is: What groups or subgroups of populations, events, activities (to find varying dimensions, strategies, etc.) does one turn to next in data collection? And for what theoretical purpose? So, this process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory. (pp. 38-39)

Due to previous work with WCPS, Allen already had a working relationship with all 15 teachers, all of whom had served on the School-wide Instructional Team (SIT). Using these teachers' recommendations as to who would add a perspective different from theirs, the original researcher decided, based on previous observations in the school and most importantly the researcher's analysis of the interviews from the first 10 teachers, to select five more teachers for the 1993 interviews. At this point in his study, Allen had tentatively identified several categories and their properties. These teachers were selected to add to the theoretical relevance of these emergent categories and to seek further relevant categories. Following analysis of the data from the 15 teachers, no other teachers were identified who could add significant new perspectives to the study. These same 15 teachers were interviewed a second time after the first-round data were analyzed. This procedure resulted in 30 interviews completed by Allen in 1993.

As this present researcher interviewed teachers, she attended to Allen's (1993) original 28 categories and his analysis of the relationships that link them (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). She recorded any new categories and relationships that occurred as well as any information that could either discredit or broaden the understanding of the original categories. To accomplish this strategy, a network selection procedure that allowed

participants to refer the researcher to others (depending on the researcher's expressed desire) was followed (Geotz & LeCompte, 1984).

In this study, random sampling of all of the teachers who taught during that 10-year time-span and participated in the original study generated 12 teachers who were interviewed. These teachers were then re-visited in a member-check phone interview (Geotz & LeCompte, 1984), for a total of 24 individual interviews. This study was a replication and extension of Allen's original study, with an added degree of objectivity, as this researcher had no previous knowledge of the school or staff.

Data Analysis

The proposals derived from WCPS teachers' perspectives on Shared Governance were the goal of the data analysis. Analysis methods associated with *grounded theory* aided in the identification of these proposals. This theory "is discovered and formulated developmentally in close conjunction with intensive analysis of data" (Strauss, 1987, p. 23). Strauss asserted that, while some essential elements involved, no hard and fast rules apply to discovering *grounded theory*. He stated "It is a style of doing qualitative analysis that includes a number of distinct features, such as theoretical sampling, and certain methodological guidelines, such as the making of constant comparisons and the use of a coding paradigm, to ensure conceptual development and density" (1987, p. 5). In this present study, the use of an EXCEL spreadsheet visually and conceptually aided in the coding paradigm.

To make the analytic process that was followed in this study explicit, the following clarification was provided. Constas (1992) stated that such an explanation of the analytic process would help avoid "suspicion, naive acceptance, or outright dismissal

among a community of readers" (p. 266). Therefore, the following occurred during the analytic process: Following each interview, the researcher transcribed the tape recording of the session and also wrote various types of memos (Glaser, 1978). Memos included "theoretical propositions, conceptual statements, possible categories and their properties, possible relationship between categories and between categories and their properties, general and specific questions of the data, suggestions for follow-up questions, and exhortations for the researcher to be sensitive" (Allen, 1993, p. 51) to her biases.

An example of a memo by Allen (1993) written during his transcribing process included:

> Why was Ann so transformed by this? Hypothesis: Take a shy, quiet person, with low self-esteem, who has never been in a leadership position, who has been dominated by principals in the past, and put her in a leadership position, let her visit other places and be on equal footing with the principals, have her ideas be accepted by her peers and the principal and she will be greatly affected. Take a person who has been a leader, with high self-esteem, who is used to expressing her opinions and put her in similar circumstances and she will appreciate it, but she won't be transformed. (pp. 51-52)

Allen (1993) also stated that some memos were quite short: "Betty mentioned 'old Wilson County ways.' What are some of the old Wilson County ways?" (p. 52).

This researcher wrote similar memos during the entire process of the re-visitation study including during the write-up. These memos provided this researcher with an instrument to seize her reflections regarding the data, to conceptualize descriptive data, and to express concisely any future actions needed to carry out the study.

Using guidelines identified by Glaser and Strauss (1967), data was analyzed utilizing the following steps, thus extending Allen's (1993) study:

1. After the initial interviews had been conducted and transcribed, the transcripts of these interviews were analyzed (line by line), and the data was coded into conceptual categories following a process where each action, event, document, and comment of the participants was analyzed and placed into a category. This study utilized the 28 categories originally fractured from Allen's data. Some examples of these categories include: reasons for not being involved, time concerns, perspectives of SIT, being initiated, principal as superhuman, comparing WCPS with other schools, going with the flow, benefits of small groups, understanding the why, definition of empowerment, problems. The EXCEL spreadsheet efficiently organized the data.

2. As coding and analysis proceeded, this present researcher identified the tentative core category and a second round of interviews was completed. The second set of telephone interviews asked each teacher to make any corrections or editions to the transcription of her or his first interview. This served as a member check (Preissle, 1997) on the teacher's perspectives. Other questions that arose during the second round of open-ended interviews focused on providing more information about the core category (voice). This round provided more information for the researcher about the relationships between voice and the other categories that provisionally served as the properties of voice. When the second round of individual interviews were analyzed, the researcher ascertained that voice met the criteria for a core category, where it accounted for as much variation in the patterns of behavior with as few concepts as possible (Glaser, 1978).

3. Any emergent categories were synthesized with Allen's original categories and then combined into the properties of the tentative core category (voice). These properties of voice included, but were not limited to, Allen's (1993) 15 properties of voice: "being deprived of voice, declining voice, delegating voice, negotiating dissonance between desire for voice and actual voice, levels of voice, structure supporting voice, structure discouraging or eliminating voice, consequences of exercising a voice, personal history with voice, defining voice, boundaries of teachers' voice, principal's role, establishing or protecting a voice, and determining who should have a voice"(p. 50). Further analysis of the properties of voice led to Allen's (1993) six primary properties of voice including: "key elements, types, levels of involvement, effects on teachers, factors in expressing, and selected process" (p. 50).

4. After the teachers gave feedback about their individual transcript of their interview, a whole group discussion took place. At this time, the teachers collectively explained any categories that might have been missed and/or added more depth to the existing categories. Theoretical saturation occurred when this present researcher was no longer unearthing new information about a category (Strauss, 1987). For example, if no other reasons for not being involved were brought forth (than time constraints, etc) then the category was *saturated*. Glaser and Strauss (1967) elaborate:

> As he sees similar instances over and over again, the researcher becomes
>
> empirically confident that a category is saturated. He goes out of his way to look
>
> for groups that stretch diversity of data as far as possible, just to make certain that
>
> saturation is based on the widest possible range of data on the category. (p. 61)

Furthermore, Bloom (1987) stated that "While ... member's pronouncements on findings can not be treated as a test of validity, it should ... be clear that a member validation exercise can generate material that is highly pertinent to the researcher's analysis" (p.172).

5. This present researcher's core category reflected Allen's core category. Thus, voice was presented to the 12 eligible teachers at a group meeting as the core category. (Geotz & LeCompte, 1984) The researcher provided a written outline of the categories and the relationships between them. Next, the researcher discussed the outline. Members' oral responses to this outline were corroborated with the researcher's data and were observed for any resultant discrepancies.

If any SIT members were not at the meeting, the original researcher (Allen, 1993) asked the team members if they thought the school would benefit from all the teachers reacting to this write-up. They felt that the information was accurate and it was not necessary to ask the remainder of the staff to duplicate their efforts. In this present study, all the eligible teacher (the ones who had lived through it for 10 years) came to the meeting that discussed the outline. Subsequently, this present data was analyzed and compared to the findings of the Allen (1993) study.

In summary, since the researcher was the key methodological instrument in qualitative studies (Anderson, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Woods, 1986), investigating the case in some depth required methodology from three research traditions. The first was the historical aspect of the case, where all relevant documents were investigated. The second was an ethnographic approach that searched for factors during the interviews, observations, and outline that led to the evolution of change over the 10-

year period. The third research tradition, utilized as another important source of data, was the researcher's personal involvement in the events at the school as found in her memos and her research diary (Fink, 1998). The researcher's memos regarding these three methods assisted in keeping the researcher objective rather than subjective during the course of the study. As proposed categories, properties, and relationships were examined through further reflection on the memos and diary, and in light of additional data, some were discarded and some took shape and increased in their explanatory value.

As data from the individual and group interviews, observations, and outlines of the study evolved, Strauss' (1987) theoretical sampling guideline helped depict the relationships between the various identified categories and memos recorded. For example, the researcher noted a relationship between meetings held in pleasant surroundings and teachers speaking more frequently and in more depth. The researcher then went back through her notes to check for evidence of this relationship. She began by asking participants about it, and became sensitive to this relationship in her ongoing observations and memos. This helped reduce bias in the research.

<div align="center">Methodological and Researcher Bias</div>

The use of multiple methods to corroborate, refute, or add depth to the findings addressed the issue of methodological bias (Geotz & LeCompte, 1984). Regarding methodological triangulation, Denzin (1978) wrote that research methods are not impartial. Methods assumed a particular perspective of the empirical world and lead to different courses of action. The use of a diversity of methods addressed this source of bias. By conducting individual interviews, telephone interviews, group interviews, making observations, analyzing relevant documents, and giving participants opportunities

to react to the findings and conclusions in member checks, the researcher was able to compare data gathered by several different methods. The researcher's observations and memos confirmed such data sources as the interviews and the minutes of the SIT meetings.

Thus, following theoretical sampling guidelines and going only where the data led served as a barrier against researcher bias (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Decisions about who was interviewed and observed and what artifacts were scrutinized were made for analytical reasons. All categories and their relationships were derived directly from the data. For example, in following a network selection procedure described in the sampling section of this document the researcher asked teachers at the completion of each interview for names of teachers who could provide a different perspective. Thus, the researcher sought out negative cases until there were none to be found. Patton (1989) wrote that the failure to find strong documentation for negative cases increased the confidence in the researcher's conclusions. Seidman (1991) stated that multiple interviews over a passage of time, with a number of participants with whom to compare responses, confirm whether the participants' responses are valid. Formal interviews of the 12 teachers occurred on two separate occasions that were several weeks apart.

Furthermore, Seidman (1991) and Walcott's (1990) compositions about validity in qualitative research stressed the importance of utilizing a researcher who listened more and talked less. Therefore, this researcher stressed to the participants that her intentions were to learn from them, rather than to evaluate their efforts or judge whether or not their comprehension of Shared Governance was similar to hers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Field notes (memos) and interview transcripts were continually checked for behaviors on

the researcher's part that were subjective or evaluative, thus validating her commitment to non-judgmental observation.

Peshkin's (1988) suggested that the researchers should monitor their own subjectivity, not retrospectively, when the data had been collected and the analysis was complete, but while their research is in progress. Unless the researcher was aware of how her subjectivity may shape her inquiry and its outcomes, the study may become biased. When the researcher's feelings were aroused and subjectivity surfaced, the researcher wrote about these feelings and their sources in her field notes and research diary. Subsequently, she took actions to keep her subjectivity from distorting the data. For example, the researcher deliberately spent observation time with a variety of teachers rather than only with those who shared an enthusiasm for Shared Governance. In addition, the researcher asked the full range of eligible teachers for elucidation about the researcher's observations with a member check. Thus, the researcher deliberated on her own subjectivity toward Shared Governance and WCPS by keeping a research journal as the study progressed.

The following factors contributed to minimizing the researcher's subjectivity and bias: the use of a different researcher, the use of multiple methods (e.g. theoretical sampling, conducting multiple interviews, and memos) to collect data, and involving participants in reviewing the findings (member checks). The researcher continually examined her subjectivity during the study through the use of memos and a research diary. These contributed to an increased confidence that this study offered an accurate account of how Shared Governance was perceived at Wilson County Primary School.

Summary

The complex factors involved in Shared Governance were addressed in this re-visitation of a primary school. The proposed research was a case study focusing on teachers' perspectives of their long-term efforts at implementing Shared Governance processes. By utilizing open-ended interviews, observations, and memos this study allowed the complexity of the situation to unfold rather than having the participants respond to issues and concepts determined in an *a priori* manner. The researcher (a) reviewed the research that had been conducted on Shared Governance and teachers taking expanded roles in the governance of schools, (b) described the focus and setting of the study, (c) explained the methods used to collect and analyze the data, (d) delineated the theoretical base that guided the researcher, (e) described the findings of the study, (f) provided a conceptual description of the data, (g) explained the implications the findings have for educators interested in implementing and/or expanding Shared Governance in schools, and (h) explained the implications this study has for further research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to advance knowledge about teachers' perspectives

of Shared Governance after 10 years of implementation in a primary school. This follow-

up study compared the teachers' responses to the same research questions set forth by

Allen (1993) 10 years earlier. These research questions are

1) What are the teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the

    attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance

    in a school where Shared Governance has been implemented?

2) What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from teachers working in a

    school that has implemented Shared Governance for 10 years?

Specific design and findings will follow that relate to these two Research Questions.

A qualitative research design and methodology, utilizing a case study approach,

replicated and extended Allen's (1993) original case study of Shared Governance in a

primary school. The school site was a primary school in central Georgia, whose

population comprised kindergarten through third grade in 1990 and pre-K through second

grade in 2000. Teachers (15 in 1990 and 12 of these same teachers in 2000) were

interviewed utilizing the following open-ended questions:

1. What does Shared Governance at Wilson County Primary School

    (WCPS) mean to you?

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2. What do you do that is related to Shared Governance?

3. How does it feel to be in a school that is implementing Shared

    Governance?

4. What do you think about WCPS implementing Shared Governance?

    (Allen, 1993, p. 41)

Data from the interviews, member checks, and the researcher's field notes were

analyzed. Allen's (1993) analysis methods were replicated and then extended with an

EXCEL spreadsheet. Once more, voice emerged as the key concept or "common thread

holding together their collective meaning of Shared Governance" (Allen, 1993, p. 69). In

both studies, the teachers believed that the processes and procedures they implemented

under the mantle of Shared Governance had a purpose: to give teachers a voice in the

instructional life of the school. However, changes in the perspectives of teachers after 10

years were noted.

In 1990, the teachers' perspectives delineated the following aspects of voice:

(a) The types of voice (voting, clarifying, delegating, direct, individual-

    final)

(b) The definitions (actual versus desired)

(c) The key elements (audience that listens and influences)

(d) The levels of involvement (who should have it and teachers' personal

    history) needed to express different kinds of voice

(e) The effects on teachers when expressing different kinds of voice

(f) The factors that influenced the type of voice expressed

(g) The ongoing selection process

In contrast, these same teachers interviewed 10 years later were so comfortable and familiar with their own utilization of voice in the Shared Governance experience that they assumed their use of voice. They spent minimal time describing its types, definitions, elements, factors, effects, and levels of involvement, which had emerged in their 1990 interviews. Thus, 10 years later they focused on describing the results that their use of voice in Shared Governance actualized.

Therefore, this chapter is divided into five sections: (A) Demographics, (B) Past and Present Perspectives of Teachers, (C) Benefits and Concerns of Utilizing Shared Governance, (D) Theoretical Discussion, and (E) Summary.

<div align="center">Demographics</div>

As we enter the 21st century, the number of residents in Georgia has increased since 1990, making it the fourth fastest growing state in the United States. Agriculture production placed Georgia among the leaders in poultry, pecans, and peanuts as well as several other commodities (Boatright & Bachtel, 2000). Wilson County Primary School (WCPS) is located in a rural (agricultural and forestry) area of central Georgia. The school is situated in the county seat and is adjacent to an interstate highway. Several changes in the county, city, and the school itself have occurred during this decade.

Changes in the primary school also occurred over the 10-year period. The population of students rose from 635 in 1990 to 738 in 2000. This increase reflects the change in population in the county from 1900 (74 persons per square mile) to 2000 (101 persons per square mile). A similar 10.3 % change was observed in the town that housed both the county seat and the school (Boatright & Bachtel, 2000). This growth pattern reflects the status of Georgia as the fourth fastest growing state in the United States.

Race and ethnicity patterns also changed in the past 10 years. The county's African-American population was 1849 in 1990 (8.8%) and 2874 in 2000 (11.4%). The county's Hispanic population was 182 in 1990 (0.86%), and 412 in 2000 (1.63%). The county's White and other non-Hispanic population was 19,051 in 1990 (90.5%) and 22,162 in 2000 (87.9%). The overall gradual growth in county population is reflected in the gradual growth of respective ethnic groups.

WCPS is a Title 1 school where 49% qualified in 1990 for free or reduced lunch. In comparison, the percentage grew to 51% of the students who qualified in 2000. Patterns in public assistance in the total county reflect this gradual growth trend. The number of recipients of Medicaid was 4704 or 18.7% of the population in Wilson County. The number of recipients of food stamps in 1999 was 1859 or 7.4% of the population. These recipients emerged from 884 households (predominantly homes with small children). The caseloads of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families dropped from 286 in 1997 to 147 in 1999. Furthermore, in 1999, the recipients for the award of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families included 210 to White families, 76 to African-American families, and one to Other (Non-Hispanic) families. This demographic information was indicative of the changes in the county, city, and school.

The characteristics of this study's subject were located in the WCS district Certified Personnel Data. The CPD revealed 270 teachers in the system with an average salary of $38,621. The WCS certified staff had an average of 22 years of experience, while 63.3% had an advanced degree, 3.6% were minority, and 84.4% were female. Correspondingly, at WCPS there were 57 certified staff in the year 2000. Twelve of the 57 certified staff were eligible and elected to participate in interviews for this study.

Eligibility for participation in the present study meant that a) the teacher had taught at WCPS continually since 1990 and b) the teacher had participated in the original study. All 12 eligible teachers were individually interviewed. These interviews varied from 30 minutes to one hour in length. Demographics of the 12 eligible teachers (Appendix B) included that they were all female, they had taught at WCPS an average of 19 years, and their average total number of years taught was 21 years. Ninety-two (92) percent of the teachers has served on the SIT. Eighty-six (86) percent of the teachers interviewed in 1990 remained at WCPS in 2000. Thus, there was a small percentage of teacher turnover. Eighty-three (83) percent of the eligible teachers were classroom teachers. This composite of the WCPS teachers was similar to that in at least one other primary school.

Transcripts of the interviews were analyzed line by line and fractured into concepts encapsulated in the cells of the EXCEL spreadsheet. Each teacher was afforded confidentiality by utilizing the following key: within each cell, the first letter referred to the individually interviewed teacher (A through L); the subsequent numeral referred to the paragraph of the participant's transcript; and finally, the abbreviated key word(s) succinctly explained the concept expressed by that teacher. Other sources of information for data collection included minutes of faculty meetings (denoted by MF in a cell), city newspaper articles (N), *Panda Prints* (PP) for the school newspaper, and TM (team meeting notes). The spreadsheet of key concepts expressed by the eligible participants and observations by the researcher revealed trends that guided the answers to the research questions of this study.

In the following pages, references to the school and the teachers refer only to Wilson County Primary School (WCPS) and WCPS's teachers. Explanations and

conclusions refer to WCPS unless otherwise indicated. The previous paragraph's

explanation of codes was used to identify teacher responses as found in interviews, team

and faculty meeting notes, and city and school newspaper articles. These responses are

located in the EXCEL spreadsheet that encompasses all of the above data.

<div align="center">Past and Present Perspectives of Teachers</div>

This section compared the teachers' initial perspectives of Shared Governance

with their present perspectives in 2000. The source of those initial perspectives came

either from Allen's (1993) citations (denoted with parentheses) or from the teachers'

recollections of that initial stage from this present study's interviews, cited with brackets

[ ]. In this present study, three prominent domains emerged: organization, voice, and the

role of the principal. Furthermore, voice emerged as the core category in both studies.

Voice was crucial in the development of organization from chaos.

<u>Organization</u>

In 1990, teachers noted that "a common reaction when the idea of Shared

Governance was first introduced [1989] was that it would not work because it would be

so chaotic that people would not be able to agree on anything and, as a result, nothing

would be implemented" (Allen, 1993, p.75).

In stark contrast, in the current study several teachers discussed the large number

of positive, organized developments that had been implemented when teachers had a

voice. These positive developments were elaborated in the *Action Plan for the 90's: The

Ideal Primary School for Reducing Risks* developed and implemented by WCPS teachers.

This action plan is separated into sections and correlated with the following different

teachers' statements about positive, organized developments at WCPS.

Introduction: WCPS is involved with the University of Georgia's Program for School Improvement in a joint effort to develop a Shared Governance program for the school. The school established a formal Shared Governance operation during the 1989-1990 school year. The structure chosen by the faculty includes the election of representatives from each instructional planning team in the school to a School-wide Instructional Team (SIT). SIT is responsible (through the assistance and guidance of the entire faculty) for the identification of school-wide concerns and the development/implementation of solutions. Before any implementation can begin, the entire faculty (with an approval rate of 80%) must approve the plan of action developed. [PP]

This document presents the results of the first year's Shared Governance efforts – the development of a *Plan of Action*. During the 1989-1990 school year, the SIT and the faculty worked together to identify the elements that they felt would create the "Ideal Primary School for Reducing Risks." [PP]

The 1990 goals were listed in priority order according to the ratings given them by the faculty. The 2000 evaluation revealed that all of the 1990 goals had been achieved. These goals and their resultant accomplishments by 2000 included reduced class size, holistic curriculum, school nurse, parent training program, pre-school programming, continuous progress instruction, guidance counseling services, home liaison, parent volunteer support, parent feedback system, after-school programs, lead teacher, alternative classroom, more use of computers, and a free summer school program.

From this list of goals [PP], two were chosen for implementation during the 1990-1991 school year. By 2000, every 1990 goal was achieved as indicated in this study's

teachers' statements that follow each goal located in Appendix C. The following table

condenses the data on the 1990 WCPS Goals Set for the *Ideal Primary School.*

Ideal Primary School Goals	1990	2000
A. Reduce class size to 15 to 20 students with heterogeneous grouping	No	**Yes**
B. Provide school nurse services	No	**Yes**
C. Develop curriculum based on holistic principles, including real life applications	No	**Yes**
D. Provide a comprehensive parent training program	No	**Yes**
E. Provide preschool programming	No	**Yes**
F. Establish continuous progress instruction based on individual learning need/styles with clear expectations for improvement and challenges	No	**Yes**
G. Provide guidance counseling service on a full-time basis	No	**Yes**
H. Establish a home liaison person who would act as a contact source for home intervention and instruction	No	**Yes**
I. Increase parent volunteer support services	Yes	**Yes**
J. Establish a parent feedback system to get parents' opinions on how the school is doing in helping their children	No	**Yes**
K. Provide after-school programs for students (especially those students who do not have the money to take advantage of current community-based programs)	No	**Yes**
L. Provide a lead teacher who would be available to consult with teachers and/or provide direct instructional services (enrichment/remedial) to students at the request of teachers	No	**Yes**
M. Establish an alternative classroom (for temporary intervention) for behavioral problem students who are not responding to classroom structure (with a required parental involvement component)	No	**Yes**
N. Integrate use of computers in the school program as a real life experience/application (in preparation for the 21st century)	Yes	**Yes**

O. Establish a free summer school program for at-risk students to help eliminate some of the regression problems	No	**Yes**

Thus, Wilson County Primary School made several positive, organized advances in the areas selected in 1990 - 1991 as in "need of improvement." This was a stark contrast to the 1990 prediction of chaos. Furthermore, the teachers repeatedly stated that their use of voice in the Shared Governance process made many of these organized improvements possible.

Voice

A strong consensus of teachers—80% in the original study by Allen (1993) and 83% of the teachers in this present study (2001)— stressed the importance of having a voice in decisions, as well as having a listening audience that can directly influence decisions. These comments fell naturally into several categories, explored below.

In 1990, they discussed wanting to have "their opinions taken seriously, having their ideas respected, and having their comments given equal consideration" (Allen, 1993, p.71), whereas in 2000 teachers indicated that their feelings changed from controlled to professional, a perspective which included having a voice as indicated in these present day teachers' statements:

> Now I am treated like a professional …but before Shared Governance …You had no input. And your input wasn't needed…wasn't asked for…your knowledge or expertise did not matter. If you ever voiced it, it wasn't listened to…Teachers did not feel very empowered or very good about that part of their job. [I - 4]

> You feel like you have more control over what happens. You don't feel like it is "top-down" administration [as in Pre-SG]. But now we have a say so if

things aren't going the way they should or if you are not comfortable, you can always express that at a SIT meeting. We feel like our opinion is worth something. [H - 6]

It was nice when we started Shared Governance…to feel that we had a say and that it mattered about what we said. And someone actually listened to see what could be done about it. Our input mattered. It did a lot for me as far as how I felt about myself…as a teacher and a professional. Because so many times before Shared Governance …you were just told: "This is what you are going to do and this is how you are going to do it." Then you might go into your room and shut the door and do the things that you thought needed doing. Sometimes I thought you needed to hide what you thought was right. But with Shared Governance, it is really nice to have "What we said… mattered." And that we were considered professionals. [C - 2]

Initially, Allen (1993) noted a situation that the teachers considered was "the antithesis of having a voice about an issue" (p. 73). In discussing heterogeneous versus homogeneous grouping, a teacher in 1990 stated that "There have been things that we have set as goals that we really had no control over whatsoever…The 'Say So' was over in that Board Office" (p.73). In contrast, teachers who had taught throughout the 10 years of Shared Governance indicated that the Democratic process expedited decision making by teachers as seen in these statements:

We were grouped homogeneously and we wanted heterogeneous grouping…that was one of our main goals…and it wasn't until we got Shared Governance and we made our own decision and the whole staff voted on it…then it happened. [B - 2]

I was on the School-wide Instructional Team (SIT) that developed "Shared Governance." I think that we have done so much and have worked so hard to get this. …It makes me proud of the school. [B - 4]

There are a lot of things that have changed… Big differences… We have made changes since the time my children were here…even the whole system has made changes. I feel really good about my granddaughter being here… and our having a voice were the best things to facilitate change and I am glad that we have it. [B - 13]

Initially, the teachers felt that the board members and the central office were not "really listening to the teachers" (Allen, 1993, p.74). In contrast, after 10 years of Shared Governance, teachers explained that Central Office personnel (including the superintendent) would listen to the teacher and this made changes easier to accept.

We are very fortunate to have influence here in this school and even at the Superintendent's office. Our County Office is wonderful…I feel very confident that I could go over and talk to the superintendent and that my voice is heard with her. And that is why it is a great place to work. You don't feel like things are being done to you; rather a lot of change happens …but you are a part of that change process. It [Shared Governance] just makes change so much easier to accept and it makes good things happen. [A - 9]

Types of Voice, including voting, clarifying, delegating, direct, and individual-final were also important. Teachers' interviews (confirmed by observations of faculty meeting minutes, team meeting minutes, and newspapers, city and school) revealed that an 83% majority of the teachers felt that voice was of great importance in the Shared Governance

process. The teachers referred to voice and having a "say" interchangeably. They seldom referred to the specific types delineated in Allen's 1993 study, with the exception of the "Delegated Voice." Examples of their use of "delegated voice" occurred in team or faculty meetings, and in interviews when teachers discussed such issues as IN TECH, curriculum concepts, staff development, testing (GKAP, ITBS), task forces, involvement of parents and children. When teachers were asked, "How do you feel about things?" and "What's happening?" some of the numerous teachers' perspectives of delegated voice are indicated in the following statements:

It felt like we mattered, and we could vote. Like when we set everything up, things had to pass by an 80% vote. We had specific representatives… I represented 3 or 4 teachers. And we had every teacher represented. And then we were their voice. That is another thing that is different. A lot of times when you are in a big group, you have those two or three people who are going to speak out and always be heard. You have the others who are maybe not agreeing, but they are not gonna speak out. Instead they would "go with the flow" …and then you come out of the meeting, and you think that everyone is thinking the way that the one who was doing all the talking thinks. But everyone says "No, I didn't want to say anything because I thought I was the only one." Whereas with Shared Governance, we would go back with three or four teachers and everyone felt comfortable speaking their mind. Then that one person would go back and share with the smaller group (SIT)…this was better than just being in a big faculty meeting where two or three teachers, who are either very brave or very outspoken, had their input. A lot of times, certain things were looked at but it was just two or

three, and the rest just sat back quietly…too afraid to speak out in that situation. That was me. I am the one that would sit back a lot of times thinking, "Well this isn't what I want to do" Then you found out others didn't want it either! [C - 6]

Then I became a leader on the SIT, and it was nice when we started doing Shared Governance and the SIT and we had a voice. A lot of people had the opportunity in the past 10 years to take on a leadership role on the SIT. [C - 7]

It was a nice boost to be on the SIT. It makes you feel you are even more a part of it, and it's nice that everyone who wanted the opportunity could have it. You know there are some teachers who do not want it…and that is OK; but everyone who has wanted it, has had the opportunity. We had an official rotation at the beginning…three years, but it was staggered so that not everyone would go off at the same time. And I haven't rotated back on yet…I could if I want…the opportunity is there…that is good because changes occur. [C - 8]

Well, you feel like you have more control over what happens. You do not feel like it is "top-down" administration. But we have a "say so" if things aren't going the way that they should or even if you aren't comfortable, you can always express that in a SIT committee meeting. Everything is pretty much established now; but there were lots of bumps along the way. Yet, we always felt like we could go to our representative on the SIT committee and say "Listen, this is something that is neat that we ought to look at" or "This is something that is a concern." They would also come back with surveys that said, "How do you feel about so-and-so?" We feel like our opinion is worth something. [H - 6]

Shared Governance has helped us with SACS accreditation …it seems like they [SACS] are now using the same model that we have been using. It feels real good. I would hate to go back. Sometimes Dr. M. [Principal] tries real hard to delegate to us and sometimes we dump it right back on him. You know I teased him about that when we were coming back. You see, sometimes we need more information…and then he researches, and we do too…he has to get more involved because we delegated it right back to him. [I - 21]

I am looking forward to SIT meetings…they are always exciting to see what is going on and then you find out what information you have to go and find out for your team. [I - 28]

The other types of voice were seldom mentioned, but rather teachers spoke of voice in general terms as in these teachers' interview statements:

Voice means that if there is something that I think is really important, that I will be heard. And if enough of my peers think it is important too, then it will be addressed. [K - 5]

I teach as I normally would teach. But if there is some frustration with the curriculum, or with peer relationships, or if I feel that something is a deficiency for our students…I feel free to voice it. I feel that if I do voice it, it will be addressed. [K - 6]

Thus, the WCPS teachers had lengthy discussions about their use of voice but few words about voice definitions.

Levels of Involvement

Allen (1993) defined "involvement" as

The amount of time it takes to express a type of voice, the amount of initiative

required to express a type of voice, and the amount of potential risk of criticism

that must be assumed in order to express each type of voice. He described the role

of involvement in each type of voice. (p. 87)

The amount of time or the initiative that is needed to express a voice is referred to as the

level of involvement of voice. Similar to the previous section, the following types of

voice are related to their levels of involvement: voting voice, clarifying voice, delegated

voice, direct voice, and an individual-final voice.

Allen's (1993) study noted that a "Voting Voice requires little time or initiative to

exercise" (p. 87). Similarly in 2000, a teacher stated:

In the beginning it was nice to have your opinion asked for. I would notice that

some people looked to see how others were voting. Then, it was "They really

want to know what I feel and I do not have to feel like anyone else." They quickly

began to see that this voting process of being able to voice your opinion was

OK...It was thrilling to have the input in it. We knew it was going to work. [J - 4]

Allen's (1993) study noted that the "school did not provide unstructured time conducive

to regular contact with decision-makers" (p. 88). In contrast, after Shared Governance

was implemented, teachers stated that time was not a concern, as they became more

involved in Shared Governance:

In the beginning, the meetings were after the school day…now we have them

during the day…and we have scheduled, volunteers who cover our class…we

have released time to meet and we are also getting credits for it. We have come a

long way! [MF - 5]

In reference to a Clarifying Voice in 1990, "If a teacher wanted to talk with the

principal or a fellow teacher, she would, in most instances, need to take the time and

initiative to arrange for such a meeting" (Allen, 1993, p. 88). In contrast, with frequent

communication a two-way street, two teachers discussed communication with principals

and peer teachers in 2000:

Let me tell you about having a voice: I can remember where I was actually afraid

to tell my principal that I was expecting a baby. And I put if off for weeks.

Finally, I just had to go in…she was receptive but it was a big worry to tell her. In

contrast, today we do big time celebrating. It is not "How much time do you need

off?" Instead now he says, "We'll have a shower" and asks, "Is it a boy or girl?"

or "Picked a name?" We just really celebrate the new life that is coming into our

community. Hopefully, that will constitute future jobs. But the main thing is I am

not afraid to tell him! We have become like a family…It is really a good feeling.

There are a lot of things to smile about at this school. We have a voice, a

wonderful media center, support, and lots of supplies…we have everything going

for us. We are the "Cadillac" of schools! [E - 15]

We have tried different ways to give us a voice. As we grew, we thought it

was important to have small groups. Instead of meeting as a team…each group

was comprised of about four people…the idea was that we could readily give

more people a voice. So that they would be comfortable talking this way…so time

was no longer a problem. [MF - 5]

Delegated Voice was important to teachers both before and after Shared

Governance was implemented. However, in 1990, teachers felt that a delegated voice

"required teachers to accept more risks as well…. Expressing a delegated voice required

that she openly take a stance" (Allen, 1993, p. 90). A decade later the teachers'

perspectives of voicing opinions was quite the opposite as in these examples:

I can certainly say how our school is different before than it feels now. Before it

was very much dictatorial. Yes dictatorial…edicts came down and we did it. And

teachers followed through. [A - 5]

It was a different principal for the first 10 years that I was here. We were

very compliant. But there was not that "emotional buy-in" that all of the faculty

has today instead of just being told to do something…today you do it because you

want to do it! Because you are a part of the decision-making team. [A - 6]

We have no more fear…our biggest fear is that when this principal does

leave, you know when he retires, that we could get a new principal that might not

believe in Shared Governance. We have talked about that…you know "What are

we going to do?" And we have decided that our County Office now believes in

Shared Governance and so we, as a faculty, can stand united that we think the

person that they should hire would be a person that fits into our school, the way

that it functions now, because it functions very well. I have spoken to our

Superintendent, just teasingly about that and I think that she understands that we,

as a faculty, think and that we work together, and she doesn't want to stop that or

stymie that either. Hopefully, we do not have to worry about that for awhile, but

when we do, we'd like to stand united to continue Shared Governance![A -8]

Another type of voice, the "Direct Voice," had a formal structure during the 10 years of implementation which "required serving on the SIT" (Allen, 1993, p. 91). Greater flexibility in serving on the SIT (as well as in direct conversations) emerged by 2000 as noted in the following:

We began the whole process with Carl [Glickman]. That was real exciting. I started with Carl and then Lew [Allen] became sort of for us. He was part of the original study. And I was on that first SIT committee. We decided how many years we'd serve and how we would rotate off because we did not want the group that had been through all this to suddenly leave and the whole thing might fall apart. So we made rotations…. I think I served four years. So I was part of the "big part" [happily laughing]…you know getting it going. Figuring out what we wanted to work on and we were really excited about it! [I - 5]

I loved being on the SIT. I would do it again in a heartbeat…because I enjoy being part of the heartbeat. You know what is really going on. I like that…sharing it back with other people…those who choose not to be directly involved. But I chose to rotate off when I started my new job here. [I - 19]

A fifth type of voice, "Individual - Final Voice," was described by Allen's (1993) statement:

While the formal structure of the governance process states that a "faculty vote will be the final word on all major issues," and while the faculty has taken several such votes with no veto from the principal, teachers still equated the principal with having an "individual final-voice" on school-wide issues. (p. 93)

In contrast, in 2000, teachers described their own ability of having a final vote in their classrooms as well as over schoolwide issues:

Shared Governance is where teachers are given certain freedoms as to what they want to teach. Dr. M. never checks our planning book, but it is assumed that we will do the very best job we can. He comes in and out of our classrooms in a very non-threatening way. He never comes back and says "What is the purpose of teaching this?" …to me Shared Governance is like a Democracy…only rarely (on state-mandated matters) does he say, "This is the way we have to do it." [E - 2]

There were a couple of times [over the 10 years] that something was brought up before us as a faculty…like the POD system and the "School Within a School"…and both of them got voted down. We had a group that researched it and came to the faculty meeting with it…but it was about two or three votes short of passing. And he [principal] wanted it. He wanted it…I was waiting for it to come back…but it was voted down. Then about two years later it kind of reappeared…then the same thing happened again. We investigated it, and it was brought up for a vote and it got voted down again. But the people said, "OK." People were fine with that… there was no ill will…no retaliation, instead there was "This is how we live, This is what we do"…It is like living with no president for awhile [laughter…timeframe…just after the presidential election of 2000]. [FGM - 3]

Thus, the five types of voice discussed in Allen's 1993 study (including voting, clarifying, delegating, direct, individual-final) had varying levels of involvement over the 10 years with several positive outcomes by the year 2000.

Influential Factors in Accepting Voice

Both the 1990 and 2000 studies discussed the factors that were influential in accepting or rejecting a teacher's use of voice. These influential conditions included the teacher's background and personal circumstances and the amount of information the teacher has about an issue (content and context), structure in the school as related to the listening audience, and the role of the principal. The factors were not static and often interacted with each other. They were also individualized as to their effect on each teacher; i.e., one factor might have more effect on one teacher than on another teacher. Furthermore, as the professionalism of teachers evolved, the factors had varying degrees of effect on the teachers.

Teacher's Background and Personal Circumstances

In 1990, Allen found that "Teachers with backgrounds that supported and encouraged them to freely express their opinions are more likely to seek and accept high level types of voice" (p. 95). Similarly, in 2000, the teachers freely utilized high levels of voice (especially Delegated and Individual-Final Voice) as their school environment encouraged and supported them. The following teacher's words reflect this progression:

> I think that Shared Governance means a chance to voice my opinions. I don't
> think that teachers were listened to very much at the time it [Shared Governance]
> came about. It gave us a chance to voice our opinions. We met with him [Lew
> Allen] and came up with the criteria of what was "right" for our school. He didn't
> say a whole lot because he wanted us to shape the program to fit our needs. When
> we were getting off track, he would bring us back in. It was a chance for us…to
> decide what we needed. We decided that we needed 80% of the whole staff's

approval of whatever it was that we were trying to achieve. We did go through and choose the goals that we felt the school needed. We did an assessment of our needs. We decided which goals we wanted to strive for first and we just worked on a few at a time. In the beginning, Language Arts (especially Reading) was one of our main goals. We wanted to improve these skills and we worked through the different processes to get that. What we felt we needed, we researched and he [Allen] brought in research materials for us. [B - 1]

These were things we had been wanting for several years, but it wasn't happening until we got Shared Governance…. And we made our own decision and the whole staff voted on it. [B - 2]

The way it is working now is wonderful. We have made some changes since then…. because we felt they could better meet the children's' needs. I think it is one of the best things we have had for this school…. I know that it helped me and that it helped other teachers too … In schools that do not have this, [Shared Governance] I feel that they are missing out … Until they find out at conferences that we do this. We have talked to other teachers and they say "You do what?" Oh, it is really nice to be able to have a voice now. I guess that the main thing is that we have a Voice! And we feel like we are important! … That the administration cares about us. I think that that is one of the main things from this…that my opinion counts and that somebody cares what I think! [B - 3]

It makes me proud of the school. I think that we have done so much and we have worked so hard to get this. [B - 4]

This retiring teacher had seen the whole spectrum of years and related it to her own personal family in saying:

I feel really good about my granddaughter being here. We have made changes since my own children were here…even the whole system has made positive changes. This Shared Governance is one of the best things…a school is short-changed if they do not have it… because I feel who knows better what to teach than the teachers. It is almost like Governor Barnes is coming down on these things…but he had never taught… It rubs against the grain. I just feel… people need to have a voice in what is going on…Especially teachers. [B - 13]

It [Shared Governance] makes me proud of this school. It makes me feel important! And it can go a long way and keeps evolving. It has made a lot of improvements happen. This is my last year of teaching. I am retiring, and I did not want to be "Deadwood." I wanted to make a difference with the children. I feel I have improved as a classroom teacher because of Shared Governance. I have seen several teachers that retired and just kind of quit and gave up during their last year. But I wanted to be part of this, and I have worked hard. I don't want to inhibit learning; I want children to learn with me. I feel I will never be too old to learn something new. It is a growing process. Even when I retire, I want to still be a part of the school by volunteering or whatever I do. I want to feel that this is the best place possible for children. I won't hesitate to say that it is one of the best schools in the state. We have worked really hard …to get it a place to be proud of. And I think that Shared Governance is what got it started. Because it gave us a voice and a focus and we didn't have that at the beginning, when I first came here.

> There have been a lot of changes that I have seen through these years. But now
>
> we are working towards goals, and if we can focus on these goals, then we are
>
> headed in the right direction. [B - 15]

Amount of Information the Teacher Has about an Issue (Content and Context)

Both studies found that "the greater the teacher's interest in the content of a decision, the more likely the teacher will choose to express a high-level voice" (Allen, 1993, p. 100). The two studies framing the 10-year period found that teachers were consistently interested in what was happening in their own classrooms.

Allen's 1990 study stated that "teachers felt that their voices should be heard on issues dealing with teaching and not with the other issues surrounding teaching" (p. 100). In contrast, by 2000 this study found teachers immersed in school-wide issues. The following quotations reflect how teachers (after Shared Governance was implemented) were actively involved in issues inside and outside of their classrooms.

> Now…Shared Governance's focus is "What are we concentrating on? … And
>
> hopefully making that happen." Now we are working on the Strategic Plan …the
>
> Five-Year Plan in a "Shared Governance Way"…where people on different
>
> committees come together. I am working on the Steering Committee for the next
>
> five years … looking at the Mission Statement for the school and its beliefs…and
>
> if there is anything we want to change in that, he [principal] calls for people to
>
> participate. We work in a certain area that we selected and get people to work
>
> with us …There has to be input from everyone… So the review of our school has
>
> a real Shared Governance Focus! [I - 20]

I feel very confident that I could go over (to County Office) and talk to the Superintendent and that my Voice is heard with her as well. That is why this is a great place to work…a lot of changes happen …but you are a part of the change process. [A - 9]

I would highly recommend that if a school is interested in it [Shared Governance] that they are welcome to come and visit our school. I think that any faculty member that you ask (whether they are on the SIT or not) understands the way the process works and would be very positive towards Shared Governance. [A - 10]

In one decade, teachers emerged from their classroom cocoons to become professionals who were willing to take the lead on school issues, talk freely to administrators including Principals and the Superintendent, give workshops on various issues, and freely invite any teachers to their school to learn about Shared Governance.

Structure in the School as Relates to the Listening Audience

In 1990, a common feeling among teachers at WCPS was that the only teachers heard were the ones willing to aggressively pursue having a voice (Allen, 1993, p. 109):

Several teachers described how they were able to get along with dictatorial principals by making their own individual peace with him or her. The implementation of the governance structure formalized opportunities for all teachers to have a voice and de-emphasized the need for each individual teacher to create opportunities for voicing her thoughts…There were other structures in the school that discouraged teachers from expressing their voice. The work schedule of the school required teachers to be responsible for students for the

majority of the day, leaving little time for expressing high-level types of voice. When a teacher was asked if time was a factor in the type of voice that teachers accepted, she replied "a major factor." [MF – 2]

Shared Governance in the interviews of 2000 revealed a sharp contrast to 1990 perspectives: democratic versus dictatorial structure in the school and time as a solution versus a problem. Teachers not only had scheduled time for meetings but also felt secure and comfortable in speaking to administrators. Some examples include:

A suggestion for people thinking about going into Shared Governance was "Give yourself time." It doesn't take two or three years…I don't know when the magical thing came when it started to feel comfortable. It was not comfortable in the beginning. There were lots of meetings in the beginning, and that turned off a lot of people in a real hurry. But if you will just stick with it…long enough for it to become a way of life. [MF - 2]

Now, it (time) hasn't been a problem…for we have released time for meetings during the school day and we get SDU credits for it. We have come a long way! [MF - 5]

In regard to the structure of the school, one teacher expressed this idea:

I feel that in other schools where I have worked that it has been "supervisor" and I am just an "employee." I have always worked within that framework…and now since he is here, I feel I am still an employee, but I feel that "What I think is important." What I feel is important for the teachers or the students, I feel I am encouraged to speak out on issues that I feel are important. [K - 7]

He encourages us by the things he says and by the way he runs his

administration… He is a very intelligent man…a great humanitarian. He knows

every student in the school by their name. He knows a lot about their behaviors

and capacities. He works very hard and we are all working for the same goal. He

is doing more than his share. He knows the curriculum from Kindergarten through

Second Grade. He also participates in all of the team meetings. [K - 8]

Thus, during the 10 years of Shared Governance, complex issues (teachers having

a voice), as well as simple things in the structure (use of time) were supported and then

evolved because of the underlying beliefs of the principal and the role he assumed within

the school.

<u>Role of the Principal</u>

In 1990, the principal began to redistribute his power by involving teachers and

giving them various types of support while they endeavored to advance the progress of

the total school. He used increasing amounts of praise, visibility, and autonomy. This

strategy had a more positive effect on teachers than principals who used control did and

criticism did. Thus, 10 years later, the teachers repeatedly referred to the principal's

support of their own professionalism, including a well-established voice, with confidence

and optimism. In both studies—1990 and 2000— the role of the principal "was seen as

the reason why teachers at Wilson had opportunities to have a voice in the life of the

school" (Allen, 1993, p. 118).

However, in 1990, the teachers also felt that it was his (the principal's) idea to

explore ways to give teachers a voice, and they overwhelmingly agreed that the new

governance structure was "his doing." These two concepts in the initial study implied the

underlying power of the principal with such phrases as "he gives them a voice," and "the structure itself was his doing." Indeed, Allen (1993) indicated that the teachers viewed the "principal as more influential than the Shared Governance structure" (p. 118). The following teachers' interview statements reflect this view of the principal as the "absolute authority" [K].

> We have certain powers, but our powers are within certain parameters, so I feel like his role…[is to allow] us choices and then give us guidance and support in the choices that we make. [M]

> [Should the principal have the final voice in things?] I think that he should, but I think that what we're doing, where he is trying not to, is the best, but there are some things where he is going to have the final say. [F]

Thus, Dr. M. became an exemplary Shared Governance principal who redistributed his power by involving teachers and giving them various types of support while they endeavored to advance the total school. Therefore, 10 years later, the teachers repeatedly referred to their own professionalism including a well-established voice with confidence and optimism. Several examples of the principal sharing power and support (interlaced with the teachers' voice and professionalism) are indicated in the following statements by WPCS teachers.

> The first thing that you have to have to set up is a "Shared Governance" way of doing things is an administration that is open to your opinion…it has got to be somebody who will say "I'm not the say-all, do-all." I don't know everything; I am willing to listen to those people in the trenches…who work with children every day. And then he trusts our judgment. I think that that is the big thing. He

trusts us to say, "This is what we think kids should be able to do," He TRUSTS our opinion! We think it is a wonderful, wonderful place to work. [H - 7]

Way back when…when Lew [Allen] came in frequently, he sort of had to tell us "This is what Shared Governance is." But we already had a lot of the pieces in place because the principal then [Dr. M. had just started] was already letting us make a lot of decisions on our own. So then we had a school-wide committee …where he would take even little things into consideration…. The SIT is ongoing now…someone comes to our room and asks if we have any issues that need to be addressed? The SIT does not decide…we all do. It feels as if now, you have some say so…it is almost like you are a voter in your country…you have some input in what is going on in your country. [E - 4]

Here's what I think about implementing Shared Governance. I think that in some ways, that it is a lot for a principal, or an assistant principal or even a lead teacher…it is a lot for them to give up. And to lay it in a teacher's lap and say "Now you have the responsibility… and I am letting you handle it in your own way." I think that Shared Governance makes a person feel more professional …to me you are more receptive to doing a better job when you have a choice. [E - 12]

Oh and I think implementing Shared Governance from the teacher's perspective also takes a group of teachers that are willing to really work. It would be much easier to say, "This is what you will do this week." That's the kind of principal that is right there in front of you. But with Shared Governance, you are given some leeway …so you have got to stimulate some ideas. In essence, it takes digging down deep from your creativity. Sometimes you come up with creativity

that before you never even dreamed that you had. So that is what I really like about Shared Governance. We <u>never</u> have to ever be afraid of asking our principal something! I always feel that he is very, very open. There is not the feeling that they are up here [indicates with arms] on a pedestal and that we are down here… we are all in it…It is a balanced scale…so I think of this as one good perspective of Shared Governance. [E - 13]

Yet there must be balance between the principal and teachers in the Shared Governance process as summarized in this teacher's statement:

I think that the main, most important ingredient for Shared Governance in the beginning was that Dr. M. absolutely believes in us. He absolutely could let go and stand back! It might not have worked in other schools in this county because the principals could not let go. But he absolutely could "let go" and had faith in us to do that and that was a heady experience. And first you thought…"Oh yeah…that means that it will go along until we go against what he wants." He has never once imposed on us. The only one sticky wicket that I have seen in all of these 10 years was for about two years; a group worked on having the POD system …there was a feeling of being railroaded into that… But, it was shot down…rather than try to recycle it and try to beat a dead horse, they let it go and it's [POD system] not there. It was not what 80% of the faculty wanted. We have gone on from there. He could let go. [J - 3]

Thus this "process of expressing a voice" through SIT and voting dispensed the speculation made in 1990 that stated "It [Shared Governance] would last until the first

time the teachers made a decision that the principal did not like and then the whole thing would be over" (Allen, 1993, p.135).

<center>Benefits and Concerns of Utilizing Shared Governance</center>

This section is divided into two main parts: ideas relating to Research Question One and ideas relating to Research Question Two. Furthermore, Research Question One is subdivided into these areas: Benefits Prevail Over Concerns, Theoretical versus Actualized Voice, Status of Teachers, Time is Essential, Vision, Leadership Equal Responsibility, and the Role of the Principal. Research Question Two is subdivided into these areas: Evolving Yet Positive, Pride in Programs, Trust in the Principal, and Trust in Themselves. Each section relates positive aspects of shared governance. The summary interweaves the two research questions.

<u>Research Question One</u>

The first research question was: What are the teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance in a school where Shared Governance has been implemented for 10 years? More than 1,800 cells of information from a variety of sources combined to reveal the following patterns of the teachers' perspectives on the Excel spreadsheet.

<u>Benefits Prevail Over Concerns</u>

The benefits of Shared Governance prevailed over the concerns about Shared Governance in 2000. In 1990, the preponderance of work had been concerned with establishing Shared Governance and defining the issues of <u>voice</u>. A common thread that bound the teachers' collective meaning of Shared Governance was <u>voice</u> in both 1990 and in 2000. However, in 2000, the importance of the role of the principal emerged as an

important factor for the continuation of Shared Governance and voice. In 1990, the teachers felt that the principal was the "absolute authority" [K] but that he "invited them to accept a voice, and he was the one who had the final voice in most issues" (Allen, 1993, p.119). In contrast, the teachers in 2000 stated that even though the principal had a firm desire to have a POD system at WCPS, the teachers voted it down, as it did not reach the 80% level needed to pass. Thus, by 2000 the principal had established a proactive process of change, while establishing trust as an essential element. This dynamic process within a framework of trust is revealed in the following specific example of the benefits of Shared Governance:

> The first thing that you [need] is an administration that is open to your opinion…. And then he trusts our judgement! I think that that is the big thing. He trusts us to say "This is what we think kids should be able to do" and he TRUSTS our opinion. We think it is a wonderful, wonderful place to work. [H - 7]

Theoretical versus Actualized Voice

In 1990, the "teachers felt the purpose of the procedures and processes they had created and implemented under the name of Shared Governance was to give teachers a voice in the instructional life of the school" (Allen, 1993, p. 69). In contrast, in 2000, the teachers assumed that they had a voice and did not have to be given a voice. Furthermore, they had moved beyond the emphasis solely on the instructional life of the school. The influence of the teachers' professional growth had extended to other school districts, the University (through their interaction with Allen and the League), community members, parents, and students. Some examples include:

What I like about the League meetings is that you are with other schools that are "movers and shakers" as well. You are with schools that have a good foundation for making things happen. And it is fun to go present with them, because you know that they can take what you said and use it. It is also fun to participate because you can see what another school is doing and then we can implement it. So the League meetings are very important. It is kind of nice because we go to these meetings and think, "Gosh, we are already doing that" and it revalidates the good job that we feel we have going on in our school. So it has been fun. [A - 4]

Are there 700 children here? I know there are, because I have been doing presentations on reading in other places, in conferences, and we have to give that number. That is a neat part of this job. Mrs. B. and I are the "Whoopie Team" … when we do our PowerPoint presentation. Have you been in the Conference Room and seen the hard copies of the slides we used at other schools? [I - 23]

In 1990, Allen discussed at length the key elements of voice, the types of voice, the levels of involvement, influential factors in accepting or rejecting voice, the effects of voice, and the process of expressing a voice. In contrast, in this recent study, voice was an assumed "way of life" as stated by this teacher:

I guess because I was not here before Shared Governance started, that it has just always been the way of life…The way we do things. Most teachers are willing to work together…at this school it is a "We" instead of a "They or Them" ...You know, the "powers that be." I think it is more of a "we" atmosphere at this school. [F - 10]

The teachers were so accustomed to having a voice that during this follow-up research,

they became aware of the need to continue to provide in-service to new teachers about

the existing Shared Governance process, voice, and what it had been like before Shared

Governance. Thus, mentors helped inductees develop self-reliance, including their use of

voice as in the following statement:

> When we interview new people to come to work at our school, a team of faculty
>
> members does that interviewing for the initial interview. Part of what we talk to
>
> them about…is "Our school works together…our school is a team"… so the
>
> people that we choose to hire have that same team comradeship that we do. I think
>
> that is very important! Some [new] teachers are confused and say "We all share
>
> with one another? Or help each other out? You even stick up for each other? …
>
> Gosh … No other school is like this. I can't believe this" they say and so then
>
> everyone is happy and that makes this a good place to work. [A - 7]

By 2000, all of these factors combined to improve the self-esteem and status of the

teachers of WCPS.

<u>Status of the Teachers</u>

The status of teachers was not a factor of concern in 1990: "Teachers were not

getting respect when Shared Governance came along" [B - 13]. It was "just 'the way

things were' under a very dictatorial kind of structure and leadership" [I - 3]. In 2000, a

teacher discussed the change in status and respect for teachers:

> When I first started here, I took over a class that was straight across from the
>
> office. It was scary! That was the principal with the paddle…. And if your

children were not silent in lines, she would jerk them right up and paddle them
…and she might yell at you too. That made me very uncomfortable! [I - 11]

The lunchroom was also silent…and if any child talked…["chump" noise]
Paddle! …Right there. I never ate in that lunchroom. My stomach was just tight.
It was that kind of authority…The intercom was used to yell at teachers to come
to the office. The day that the register was due and you filled it out and if you
made a mathematical error your name was called school-wide. You lived in fear
of that! [I - 12]

Teachers and students felt fear and anxiety. I know how I would have felt
if somebody next to me in line got paddled by that principal. That was pretty
scary. And no one asked for my opinion. We had to ask for supplies…all the
supplies were locked up and you had to go to the office if you needed staples
…you had to ask the secretary to intercede for you. We are talking a very
controlled situation here! And if it wasn't a good day…the secretary would say:
"Not a good day for staples…Don't ask today." [I - 13]

Then I'd say, "You never saw me. I am out of here." To me…looking
back now, I feel as if I am almost telling you a lie. Because it is so very different
now! I just can't imagine being like that anymore. [I - 14]

One teacher referred to that time as a "Reign of Terror" [I - 26] when teachers did
not dare to give input:

10 years ago, you didn't dare ask [for advice on reading]…. You just went in
there and did what you were told to be doing. Whereas now, the whole
atmosphere is we are working on these new things, and we are trying to find new

ways to help children, and we have this person and that person who can help you in whatever you are teaching. [C - 13]

In contrast, in 2000 the teachers were very aware of the advances that they had made in their own professionalism:

Shared Governance means to me that as a faculty, we finally came together, that we started to believe in ourselves. It made us realize that we are professionals and that we are in the craft of teaching and then we rose to the occasion! [J - 1]

How wonderful it was to be part of Shared Governance and therefore the League. I remember one teacher came back and said "It was the first time that I had gone to something where I felt I was treated like a professional!" …We were really excited about trying to get input from everyone. [I - 4]

We work as a team, a group and as a family. The principal treats us like a professional…I can make decisions. [D - 7]

I feel more like a professional. And it is much less frustrating than being in a situation where you have no control! And as a teacher, when you are in there doing it, you see what needs to be done. It would be very frustrating to be in there knowing what you need to do and yet have no voice. [C - 15]

Furthermore, teachers were reluctant to go back to the dictatorial processes of the earlier era as this teacher stated:

I taught here back in the 80's when the principal ruled with a paddle in her hand, and she patrolled the halls, and there was no discussion about decision making. Or children. That was very many years ago about in 1980…here at this school. Those were some of the negative experiences before Shared Governance. [I - 3]

That is another thing that has happened since Shared Governance…we have been able to try things out. They aren't just forced down your throat like before. Two or three people volunteer to try new things, and then the next year some more will say "I like what I saw; I'd like to try that, too." It sort of grows …more of a natural and comfortable progression than someone saying, "Now this is what we are going to do today or next year." It would be hard to do things that way again. We have come a long way in reading and math. So this is a nice thing that has changed since Shared Governance. [C - 14]

Teachers' individualism in decision making was not a factor in 1990 as was reflected when this teacher said, "the first 10 years that I was here, teachers followed through with what was being said to do. We were very compliant" [A - 6]. In this present study, teacher involvement in decision making was a means of supporting positive change. In 2000, individual teachers evolved as decisive leaders in several areas such as giving presentations at League meetings on math, reading, IN TECH, and mentoring other teachers or entire schools. A teacher explained the leadership roles in the following quotation:

We brainstormed the different areas that we felt needed to work on…reading became one of our top priorities. They have done an awesome job there. It is through people going to conferences and bringing things back and then teachers teaching other teachers to do those things. Now we have teachers trained specifically (as part of their daily job) …to share some of those wonderful techniques with the classroom teacher. …. We just get stronger and stronger. Stronger Teachers… Stronger Skills, Stronger Students. Like with IN TECH. It

was decided that the whole school needed to be trained in IN TECH. I have seen a lot of growth in teachers who were not computer literate and that have now tried programs that they thought they could never do. There has been tremendous growth over the past 10 years. Now there are teachers to help with computers, and there are also experts in math and reading. There are enough people trained so anyone can say, "I need help with this"…and it is someone that they feel comfortable with…not like 10 years ago, when you didn't dare ask. [C - 13]

Time is Essential

This type of sharing spirit developed when adequate time was given to initiate collaborative action and to develop relationships. Teachers considered that adequate time was essential for developing such alliances between teachers. Thus, principals who want to promote improved classroom instruction must provide time for open interactions between peer teachers as well as between the principal and the teachers.

Time was a concern expressed in 1990 as seen in this statement: "If the teacher took time at school to serve on a committee or task force, it would mean time taken away from grading papers or planning" (Allen, 1993, p.127). In contrast, time was not brought up as a negative factor in 2000 because there was release time for those serving on committees, task forces, or the SIT; furthermore, teachers enlisted volunteer help as needed. Time for reflection was a practical management tool for supervisors to use to maximize educators' productivity, creativity, and well being. This statement by a teacher reflect this spirit of productivity and well-being:

Time it hasn't been a factor, for we have released time for meetings. At the

beginning, the meetings were after school. Now, we have them during the school

day and we are also getting credit for it. We have come a long way! [MF 5]

Thus, in the year 2000, with Shared Governance firmly established, the WCPS

teachers viewed the following domains of WCPS as having benefited from this

democratic form of school governance: teachers, parents, students, administrators, the

school as a whole, as well as other schools. Furthermore, they held the perspective that a

two-way benefit of mutual understanding evolved between WCPS and the University.

Other examples of the teachers' perspectives of the benefits of Shared

Governance process (as noted in the information under this category in the EXCEL

spreadsheet) include vision, leadership equals responsibility, and the role of the principal.

Vision

Teachers considered that a school vision was important for continual progress, as

heard in this teacher's words: "You have to have some vision…it is nice to be going

somewhere together; but if you do not know where you are going, it won't happen. There

has to be someone who has the vision" [MF - 4] and also in this teacher's view:

Before Shared Governance, I think that people went in their room, shut their door,

and they did a good job…regardless. [chuckling] But what they did was not

necessarily communicated back to them nor appreciated nor praised. Also there

was no unity in the building about the goals and directions. There was no focus. If

someone had come up, and asked "What is your school trying to work on?" or

"What do you see as a need?" he would have gotten fourteen different

opinions…because that was never discussed. [I - 7]

> Where with Shared Governance, everything is very different! We identify the needs. We looked at those awful tests, and we decided way back that Language was a real roadblock for our kids …if you looked at the test scores year after year…they fell down. So, with Shared Governance, we asked ourselves "What can we do?" [I - 8]

Thus by 2000, Shared Governance encouraged responsible leaders from the teacher ranks who utilized action research to help children.

<u>Leadership Equals Responsibility</u>

Teachers evolved into responsible leaders who not only pointed out problems but also offered solutions, as in a faculty meeting when a teacher expressed:

> [Key things that are essential for Shared Governance to happen include]…you must have a faculty that is willing to pick up the slack and do leadership roles. I think that it is hard when you first take that leadership role…it is a BIG responsibility on our faculty. And our faculty does it great. I think that in some faculties where the lead does not get taken up…then you might not continue to excel. [MF - 4]

Another assumption held by the faculty was that everyone involved had a voice as expressed when this teacher stated, "What we think is important is that Shared Governance gives us all a voice!" [K -1] and

> I think that [Shared Governance] is definitely better for the school, because you have a SAY in anything that is controversial… It is better for the individuals to be able to express their opinions, and [with Shared Governance] … you do get a chance to do that. [G - 4]

Furthermore, "Not only do we state a problem but we also have to find a solution for that problem …something that everyone will be able to use…we share ideas" [H - 1]. This is a continuation of the concept that leadership equals responsibility. Then after the issue is voted on, it is carried out as these teachers stated:

> In a nutshell, I think that Shared Governance is that someone or something has the confidence in your abilities to let you make a good many of your decisions and then you "take the ball and run with it." [E - 16]

> I think we have learned, too, that you can't just come up with a problem…you also have to have a solution for that problem. Or be willing to look for a solution for that problem. And then try different things [until something works]. [MF - 4]

This type of teacher as responsible leader was made possible with principal support.

The Role of the Principal

The principal's pivotal capacity for nurturing (or limiting) Shared Governance was viewed as essential for teacher professionalism by 2000. Teachers desired to work with a principal, who valued their opinions, as this teacher stated: "He trusts our judgment …trust is the big thing [about Shared Governance]. He trusts us to say "This is what we think kids should be able to do …and this will help." [H - 7] Another teacher replied "We do trust…we are like family…maybe even better than family…we are fortunate to be here and be in this situation. This is the place [to be] and we have the best of all things!" [MF - 6]. In response, a teacher stated "We all believe the same thing and therefore we all try to move in the same direction…we all share the same philosophy"

[H - 5]. This Shared Governance principal used trust building as well as other facilitative processes to encourage group development.

Benefits Dominate Over Concerns

As they worked with a supportive principal in this present study, the teachers stated that all members of the school benefited from Shared Governance including teachers, principal and other administrators, students, and parents. Furthermore, they believed that there were many more benefits than concerns in this Shared Governance initiative as stated in these 2000 teachers' comments about teachers, principal, students, and parents:

Teachers:

I never, ever dread coming into work. Everyone here feels the same…it is like lots of good family time…we enjoy working. Back to how I feel: One thing that I love about this school is that we are so non-competitive. I know some schools where test scores are the main focus...I even know of a school where whatever teacher's children score the highest, they get a bonus…X number of dollars. I am so glad that our school is not like this. We all share. We do not hide what we are doing because we are afraid that somebody else may want to do the same thing…instead we are very open and I love being that way… Non-threatening! Non-competitive. I really enjoy that. [E - 6]

The first years that I was here we had to have our test scores printed and the percentile…and we all got a copy of it…so you could see what class scored highest and what class scored lowest. [E - 7]

But now after Shared Governance, we are just so open. We just say, "Oh, I love that idea on your door" and they say "I got it from such and such magazine," and then I say… "I'm gonna write it down and do it next year." It is almost like a compliment. It is wonderful. [E - 8]

It's a freedom to choose what you want to teach and when you want to teach it. Yes, we do have certain things that we have to cover in each of the nine weeks…but Shared Governance is having that freedom to be spontaneous in some of the things you do. [E - 2]

In the beginning, teachers were fearful of asking for supplies: We had fear and anxiety…Pretty scary. You had to go to the office to get supplies…a very controlled situation. [I - 13]

Today, I have my own staples, and if I needed them, I wouldn't mind asking for them. You know… Anything that is a problem, I feel like I have a voice and I can share that. I also feel that if there is a supply that is necessary for the children to learn, I feel it will be addressed. If there is any way possible, we will have it. And if something can be changed staff-wise…to meet the needs of children…those things will happen. [I - 15]

It [expressing a voice] was wonderful. It was wonderful I liked the idea that we have always been asked…that our opinions are listened to. There are times when it is not a steady progression…it hems and haws…but then you go back to having a principal that is willing to step back and let teachers have input. He is also a man of vision. He has been able to translate that vision to us not hand it down and demand it from us. It is something that we have worked together. We

don't let those little children slip through our fingers anymore. We reach…to see

that their needs are met. Dr. M. [principal] could not have done that on his own by

handing it down. We couldn't have done it without his support. It was a total

teamwork kind of way! [J - 5]

Positive benefits of Shared Governance for others in the school population include:

Principal:

Teachers have taken on roles as trainers …helping other teachers …or as

mentors…sort of a leadership or an administrative role. Now we have teachers

with specific areas of expertise…IN TECH or reading. Dr. M. [principal] seems

to have a knack of seeking out the right people and putting them in charge of

things like IN TECH. It helps his workload and hopefully it is good for the

teachers, too. [C - 12]

We have a lot of people who come here to see how well our school gets

together and works together as a team, a group, a family. They go back and say "I

wanna work there" and "How come we can't have that?" at their school. I am

very happy to come to work each day I am comfortable to come every day. [D - 6]

He treats us like a professional. The fact that I can make some decisions…on

what I teach. I feel like, if he hired us, he hired us because he knew what we were

doing … or he wouldn't have hired us. I think that if you are going to hire

someone that knows what they are doing, then let them go and do what they are

supposed to do. Otherwise, he would be teaching and running the whole show. He

would run himself ragged trying to do everybody's job. You hire someone so you

don't have to do that. I mean he doesn't come there going…writing down a study

like "She's not doing this and she's not doing that." I think he hired me with an expectation and I have lived up to that expectation. [D - 9]

I don't see a lot of turnover here. It is hard to get a job here. Unless people are having a change in family status or a husband transfers, they stay. I have never seen anybody leave out of anger and say "I hate this place!" Never! Not even once in the 10 years that I have been here. [D - 9]

The impetus for change is often coming from Dr. M. [principal]. He is often the one on the cutting edge of other places or research and he supplies the initial information about [possible] changes. "This is what I am hearing could work for our kids…What do you think? Who would like to pilot it next year? You three? OK, you pilot it next year and see what you think…See if it is something we can live with." That is how our math program changes, our reading program changed and our science program came to change. So changes usually come to me from him…He might say: "I am hearing we need to try Reading Recovery" and "What do you think?"…[It] changed our reading and our whole school… Which made our reading scores go up. The initial knowledge came from him. I sometimes wish that more of it would come from us…maybe that is idealistic…but with a baby, husband and job…that is enough for me. [I - 37]

Teachers felt that the students of WCPS also benefited:

I think that the kids are very happy and also the teachers. And the administration is happy, too. They have to be willing to let go of some of that rope and let their teachers do what they were trained to do. They cannot do it all by themselves …that is why you have a staff. Otherwise, you might as well put them all in the

principal's office and have him do it himself. Just one person does not run a
corporation or business. Yeah...he's the head of the school…but if I have a
problem or I need something, I am not afraid to go in there…and knock on the
door and say, "This is what is going on." I think that most of the kids and teachers
are very happy to be here…when they visited other schools that do not run their
school this way, they are even happier that they are at a school like this. So I think
I will go and visit some other school and really see what a fine place we have
here. [D - 10]

If there is some supply that is necessary for children to learn, I feel that
will be addressed. If there is any way possible, we will have it. And if something
can be changed staff-wise…to meet the needs of children…those things happen.
No child's name is a surprise at the end of the year that he or she is doing so
poorly. Or that there is a problem. We know these children…And if someone has
an opinion like "I think this child would be better served here" or "Let's try
this"…then those things happen…daily, weekly…it is ongoing. [I - 15]
We constantly dare to do things that we have never done before restructuring:
How things are grouped…what are we going to do to improve writing? How are
we going to learn about computers? How will we find time in the day for the
children to use the computers? Math? What is best for our kids? Are our top 15
challenged and are our bottom 15 supported? [I - 37]

Before Shared Governance, there wasn't a whole lot of input. After we
had Shared Governance implemented, we had task forces on certain areas that we
thought were concerns. We decided where our problems were…what we needed

to work on to help the children. We just designed our own program…the kind that works…using the QCC and everything that is a basis for everything that the children should be able to do. We just built it on our … to serve the children. And the difference is like night and day. [H - 2]

Shared Governance is the avenue by which…we help our children and our teachers as far as morale is concerned, as far as the ability to work together and share ideas and materials. It's more a matter of what we share and what we do, and I think that beforehand, there was a lot of competition…whose door can look the best and whose kids can go the fastest…Now it is a matter of "Now let's work together for the good of everybody." [H - 9]

They are not bored with it [reading]. We have gone from where they would sit at their seats all day long…and just do whatever you told them to by rote... you hoped they would. Now they are more active and more involved in what they do…and I think it means more... It is theirs… They have ownership. [H - 11]

Test scores have gone up considerably in the last few years…several of us were trained in Reading Recovery…which now evolved into Reading Discovery…because we pulled away from the "Mother" [Reading Recovery]. I think there have been significant increases. We have gotten most of our children on or above grade level by the end of second grade. [H - 12]

Parents also benefited from the Shared Governance initiative:

And if they [parents] do not come to us, we go to them …98% of parents made fall conferences. [H - 13]

We do not have as much [parent interaction] as we would like. We do
have lots of parent volunteers who come to the rooms and help children and we
have community volunteers. We have executives or people who work in different
companies come in and support the children …We have more parent involvement
from children's parents who don't need the help…we would love to have more
parents come in so we can show them what they can do at home…but most of
those parents work. It is hard to get them in…[So we started] and our assistant
principal is in charge of the HELP program and Super Saturdays because we got a
grant. They have to come in with an adult…that is the draw. [H - 8]

I think that one of the most exciting things we did was to vote YES for the
R.J.R. Reynolds program with that Help Program. That was one of the most
shining things! Lew [Allen] had a lot to do with helping us "clean up the
language" and helping us write the grant…we could use his expertise on that. It
was thrilling to have input in it and to have them believe that we could do it. We
knew it was going to work for us, and we felt comfortable about what we were
doing. It was to come back [to us] with one half a million dollars because your
school had a good idea [about ways to help children and parents]. What a shot of
adrenaline for this faculty! [J - 4]

Next Century Schools' Family Learning Center:

WCPS enjoyed a magical St. Patrick's evening at the Family Learning
Center…entertained with magic tricks. Leprechaun popcorn and lemonade
provided and served by a group of loyal center volunteers made the evening extra
special. The next big event to be held at the Center is the Super Saturday Health

Fair, in cooperation with SM Health Care System. The Family Learning Center is

a resource area for all Primary School families to use after regular school hours. It

is designed for Children Pre-K through second grade accompanied by adult

family members. Volunteers staff the Center. [N - 3/24/94]

We won the state award (for family involvement) for ourselves…and the

main point is that the kids win! That is the bottom line. [FM - 7]

Thus, the benefits of Shared Governance far outnumbered the concerns expressed

by teachers. In summary, the answer to Research Question Number One incorporated the

teachers' positive perspectives of the following objects, events, and aspects of human

nature: actualized teacher voice (including evolving vision), teachers as professionals,

time as essential, leadership equals responsibility, and the expanded role of the principal.

Furthermore, all members of the school benefited from Shared Governance.

Research Question Two

The second research question addressed in both studies asked: What feelings,

thoughts, and behaviors resulted from teachers working in a school that has implemented

Shared Governance for 10 years? In each study, the researchers found that "Having

teachers take an active role in the life of the school, in general, had an accumulative

positive effect on the climate of the school" (Allen, 1993, p.134).

In 1990, several of the 15 teachers reported some negative feelings toward the

initiative, whereas only one of the 12 participants in the 2000 interviews expressed this

concern: "We need to let new staff and parents know about Shared Governance. They

have no clue and that is something we have never addressed" [MF - 1]. The three missing

participants (from the 1990 study) no longer taught at WCPS and therefore were not

eligible for the 2000 interview session. In summary, an overall, positive feeling emerged in both the 1990 and the 2000 research studies.

Evolving Yet Positive

Throughout the studies, the teachers' perspectives, feelings, understandings, and actions were changing in a positive direction in how they felt about the school and their own self-image. When asked about how she felt about Shared Governance, a teacher in 2000 stated:

I love it. I think that most people enjoy it. It never gets stagnant. We keep raising the bar. So we think, "That's good…but you can do better!" You never just sit back and enjoy. Instead of "We raised the reading scores to 95% average" … "Well, that's good, but let's go here next and improve this." [F - 7]

Thus the Shared Governance initiative was evolving as it reached for new heights. Furthermore, the majority of the teachers maintained a positive self-image as portrayed in these teachers' statements:

We…believe in ourselves. [J - 1]

Teachers are not used to being treated like real people and it still knocks my socks off when that happens. It's like …Whew! We are somebodies …Whoa! We are being treated like real people! Nicely. [J - 10]

When it [Shared Governance] began, I think that a lot of people felt that we had to go somewhere else to observe, and they didn't think that anything very great was going on here…where if you wanted to learn something, you had to go outside the school. I think that that is a complete turnaround 10 years later.

Everybody is coming to us and that is great. But we had to go through those years

of coming to that realization and that took time. [J - 2]

[Before Shared Governance] I was frustrated because I didn't mind going

outside the school and presenting what I was doing [she was first Kindergarten

teacher in the state]…but nobody here gave you any backing. They didn't care if

you went or not…or if you heard anything that was critical. It was like "I don't

have to show off what I do with all of that good stuff" …You know it was yucky.

I knew we were doing good things here…but there wasn't any vehicle [to share

it]. You first had to believe in yourself…and then be willing to go. Now [after

Shared Governance was in place] there is so much of that …we are giving

presentations all over the place. I am really proud of that. [J - 11]

In the beginning, I used to do a lot [of presenting] with Early

Childhood…NCER conference in Athens. In fact, just to go to those

conferences…they were not too happy before Shared Governance…to let you go

to the conferences. In the very beginning, you had to use your sick leave to do it.

And you had to use up your sick leave before they would let you use professional

leave. It was the way things were done…Now [2000], you are encouraged to go,

and we present a lot of stuff at conferences. [J - 12]

We had say, and it mattered about what we said. Our input mattered. It did

a lot for me as far as how I felt about myself…as a teacher and as a professional.

Because so many times before that…well one of my principals had been my high

school principal…and so sometimes you felt like a grown-up student as a teacher

here rather than as an adult who is doing a job. And one who has gone to school

to learn how to do this job. So many times before Shared Governance, you were just told "This is what you are going to do" …but now with Shared Governance we were considered professionals rather than just a bigger high school student or a college student. [C - 2]

Shared Governance was that the faculty has a voice…and that gives you ownership about your curriculum. It makes you feel part of it and your ideas and thoughts are valued. [F - 1]

I can't imagine ever quitting and not teaching here…this is such an exciting place to teach at…that I think…what if I never got the chance to go back? I would miss that so badly [F - 5]

I think that what has come out of all of this now is that when we see new programs if we go to a conference or a workshop, or just another teacher who has a sister in another county that is doing good things. We know that we can come back with these ideas and that it is very open. A lot of these things that we come back with, these people will come and speak with us or we can try to implement the new programs on our own. You know it is nice going to these things and not sitting there, as before we had Shared Governance and just sit thinking "I wish I could do that, but I know that they are not going to let us." But now, we feel that our opinion is accepted and valued! I think that Shared Governance got it all off to a strong start so that the teachers felt comfortable doing it and maybe Dr. M. felt comfortable doing it. I think it would have been harder to get to this point without Shared Governance. [C - 3]

As far as making decisions, I feel good that we are asked every time…they

send us a note that tells: we are having a meeting, this is what will be brought to

the principal…please give your input…what do you want to see done? We can

put down whatever we want without any fear of being…anybody getting on to us

or things like that…I feel as if I have a lot of say as far as things that are

applicable to me. [D - 3]

As far as being in a school that is implementing Shared Governance, I've

never been in a school that doesn't implement Shard Governance. This is the only

school that I have ever worked in…I don't know any other way to be. I would not

know how to act if I couldn't write a note to my principal and say, "Hey, I think

we need to do this" and for him to say, "Well let's talk about it." I don't know any

other way to be. [D - 4]

<u>Pride in Programs</u>

In addition to pride in their own worth, the teachers felt pride in the programs of

instruction that they had created over the 10 years. An example was a teacher who said

that before Shared Governance, "We would have whatever was mandated for our

school…this is your program. And you will teach it!" [F - 3]. By the year 2000, the

teachers picked the programs for math, reading, and science and modified each program

and instruction to fit the children's needs. "We designed our own program…the kind that

works…. Using the QCC…we just built it to serve our children" [H - 2].

<u>Trust in the Principal</u>

In 1990, the feeling of "initial skepticism was evidenced in the planning teams'

meetings" (Allen, 1993, p. 136). One teacher speculated that Shared Governance would

only last until "The first time that the teachers made a decision that the principal did not like and then the whole thing would be over." A long-time veteran teacher remembered thinking to herself "This too shall pass" [MF - 5].

This skepticism did not appear in the 2000 study. Instead, teachers said "I feel a part of it, and we can do it" [C - 6] frequently. Furthermore, the principal's trust level with his staff was cemented when he did not override the POD vote or the school within a school vote because it did not reach the 80% level of approval from the staff [I - 36]. Thus, a long established trust level led to several teachers stating that their only worry or concern was "What will we do if the present principal leaves and we no longer have his vision of Shared Governance nor his support?" [E - 13] and "We need an open administrator" [H - 7]. At a subsequent group discussion, several teachers echoed the need for a receptive administrator when they stated the following:

> What are we going to do when Dr. M. [principal] leaves? …[Moaning from several staff]…I think that we, as a school, have got to stick together to say this Shared Governance idea works! … Right! … The Central Office will have to say that when they hire [a new principal] …unless they buy into this…the strategic plan of it… … I heard at other schools, they had this and got it going and then a new principal was not even aware and started making decisions that used to be the faculty's decision…that is really going to be hard. They are having a really hard time trying to tactfully bring her [principal] aboard and live with what was now being handed down to them. It would be very hard to go back! And it would be very, very, very destructive for us! Dr. S. [superintendent] believes in it…Yeah! … There it is…she will listen! She definitely has a say so over the next principal.

I think she will look for someone that will look out for our best interests! … I

think that we know that it works so well, we do not want it to change! … We just

don't want Dr. M. [present principal] to leave. [MF - 2]

Your principal has to be totally trained…totally committed and find out that

he or she actually can let go …or it is never gonna work! [MF - 2]

Thus by 2000, this effective Shared Governance principal incorporated many of

these same ideals that the teachers espoused: building trust, initiating facilitative

processes and structures, and encouraging group development.

Trust in Themselves

In an analogous vein, teachers in 2000 felt comfortable with being autonomous

rather than controlled as revealed when these teachers stated:

Well, you feel like you have more control over what happens. You don't feel like

it is "top-down" administration…we have a say…we always felt like we could

say…listen …and that our opinion is worth something. [H - 6]

Carl [Glickman] was here only at the first part…he came and sort of…I

remember thinking it was like college rush …where he was looking at us, but we

were also looking at him…so it was decision-making right from the beginning.

He chose our school to be one of the sites. That was cool. But we had a choice to

choose or not, also. So from the very beginning he was talking about what it was

going to be about and what it was going to be like…it was that shared kind of

feeling. And then I thought we were gonna be with Carl [chuckles] and we didn't

see him after that…When we started meeting it was Lew [Allen]. He just sat in on

a lot of meetings, never really took part. He was always around to remind us of

things to do for the University at the end of the year…things would come up

through the years, but we made decisions. We used League resources…then we

shared information, discussed it in small groups and for different reasons, some

[issues] passed and some did not. It was never a "snow job"…even when you

knew that that was what Dr. M. [principal] wanted…it still might not have passed.

So that is what Shared Governance is really all about. [I - 36]

In 1990 and 2000, the shared governance experience did not always lead to

increased involvement. Several chose not to be involved in 1990. In contrast, only one

teacher in 2000 stated that she did not want to be directly involved on the SIT [I - 19].

She was happy because she felt represented, and so her needs were met even though she

chose not to serve on committees. The teachers (to maintain the flame of interest in

Shared Governance) used a variety of activities and resources. Some examples include:

> The University [gave us] support as we set up the strong foundation … it made a
>
> big difference… and Dr. M. [principal] was open to Shared Governance, so I
>
> think it [University] gave him a framework to go on…for him to feel comfortable
>
> with and it also gave us something comfortable and concrete…something to go
>
> by…a template in the beginning. [MF - 2]

> Our school [WCPS] is up for a statewide Exemplary Reading Award…We
>
> have a lot of teachers that just come to see our program. We are mentoring a
>
> whole school in Walton County. We are helping this other school get their
>
> curriculum focused instead of floundering. They are overwhelmed…We will
>
> work on whatever their needs might be. We have a wonderful administration. He

works as hard as anybody else does. We have had parents on the SIT. We are

together. We are a whole. We try to help each other as much as possible. [B - 7]

[How do new people on the faculty find out about Shared Governance?]

That's a good question. We have lost a little bit of the initial structure…but other

things have developed [from it] like mentor (Bey & Holmes, 1992) teachers for

the new ones. The SIT may not be the only way to get things taken care of

today…now we have mentor teachers and TSS trained teachers…and the SIT has

expanded to other ways to help. We have teachers who do certain kinds of

training in math or reading…We have IN TECH training here ... I am in charge of

that and I will train 46 teachers this year. [C - 11]

That is something I have seen change also…Teachers have taken on roles

as trainers…mentors…leadership…administration...now we have teachers who

have more specific areas of expertise. We have come a long way from "You'll

have to ask the principal. She has it [chalk] locked in her closet." [C - 12]

Shared Governance has made it a less stressful working situation…I feel

more professional and also it is much less frustrating now than being in a situation

where you have no control…It is very rewarding to know you can help create and

make a school what it is. You are affecting those children, but it is even

more…as a whole, "we" make Wilson County Primary School. [C - 15]

Our whole faculty is just immersed in it [Shared Governance]. It is not like

we really even have to work on it anymore. A few years ago, we even went to a

"Beginning Shared Governance" meeting again. Because a lot of the people who

were on the SIT had never even been on the original SIT. So we went back and

got kind of revitalized at the University at a workshop. And that was very

important to us…to keep it going! We ask for help from the University when we

need it. Like if we want to do a research project on writing, we call them and they

give us good literature…and we go to League meetings, which is fun. We even

presented at League meetings…It was wonderful. It is good to know that what

you are doing is important. [A - 3]

They did some pretty creative things [to keep interest high]…one year, a

trip to Hawaii … come to the Luau… with necklaces and fruit drinks …to get

people to want to serve on the SIT…but participation in the belief is what is

happening. It's the whole democracy thing. [I - 25]

In summary, democratic governance in a primary school allowed individuals to

take an active role in the process. Sharing in the governance of a school by utilizing voice

and action research enabled many positive changes to occur in an ascending spiral. The

positive benefits overwhelmingly prevailed over the few concerns. These changes gave a

positive tone regarding the teachers' perspectives in answers to Research Question

Number One: "What are the teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the

attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance in a school

where Shared Governance has been implemented?" As a result of these positive events

(such as Super Saturdays), specific objects (such as the Nabisco Grant), and the evolving

professionalism in the teachers' natures, a multitude of positive feelings, thoughts, and

behaviors resulted from the teachers working in a school that has implemented Shared

Governance for 10 years. Thus, Research Question Two, corresponding to Question One,

also had overwhelmingly positive results.

Thus, findings of this study focused on change, voice, and the principal. There were some similarities and yet several important differences regarding the change in teachers' perspectives after 10 years of Shared Governance. When the school structure became more democratic and the teachers shared in the governance of the school, the teachers concurrently adapted to changes more readily. In this present study, teachers held overwhelmingly positive perspectives about themselves, their programs of instruction, their principal, and their students' achievements. Continued study on the long-term effects of Shared Governance on teachers, as well as on students, parents, and administrators is justified.

At WCPS, teachers utilized an unencumbered voice and collaborative inquiry to achieve a systematic process for informed decision making. Teachers worked in a non-threatening school climate and had adequate time to use their professional voice in ongoing activities, such as action research for curriculum improvement in this successful Shared Governance school. The positive school climate led to a multitude of benefits for teachers as well as for students and administrators.

The teachers' perspective was solid in regard to the role of the principal. They repeatedly stated that is was important to have a supportive principal. After 10 years of Shared Governance, their only concern was "What would happen if he left the school?" Thus, the results of this study have implications for administrators and teachers in school districts as they assess their progress toward restructuring the school district. This study contributes to the body of research literature and can assist other educational organizations in their implementation of Shared Governance for the betterment of students, teachers, and administrators.

Summary of the Findings

1. Changes in the teachers' perspectives occurred at WCPS over the 10 years, including those regarding their professionalism, autonomy, and self-esteem.

2. Teacher voice, a supportive principal, and adequate time were important factors for the success of Shared Governance at WCPS.

3. Shared Governance produced considerably more benefits than concerns for the staff and students at Wilson County Primary School.

Theoretical Discussion

Suggestions made by theorists in the literature enhanced the comparison of Allen's (1993) findings with the findings in this present study. Allen noted that when findings are presented "as a whole within this sequential inventory, a theory emerges that deals with the complexity of the research topic" (p. 146). Thus, this present study's findings are compared and contrasted to the data found in Allen's 1993 study. The following were derived from the comparison of the present and former findings on teachers' perspectives of Shared Governance: (1) Change is an Evolving Vision in the Shared Governance Process, (2) Voice is the Core Category that Facilitates Shared Governance, and (3) A Shared Governance Principal Facilitates Trust.

Change is An Evolving Vision in the Shared Governance Process

In 1990, democratic schooling was not evident at WCPS as an evolving process towards an ideal. By 2000, this construct was reflected in the transcripts of several teachers who indicated that Shared Governance required an everlasting quest for "What is next?" as they attempted to raise the standards of achievements for their students. Some examples include:

I love it here…It never gets stagnant. We keep raising the bar. So we think that is good…but you can do better. You never just sit back and enjoy…instead of "We raised the reading scores by so much of a percentage"… "well, that's good…but we can go here next." [F - 7]

I think that the working environment here is like an even keel…it is not that we don't have a lot to do … why we even come over on weekend. It's not that the administration expects it of us …they don't even require it … but for us to be able to do it … We are going to do our best. It can be tiresome. We stay late but it is for the love of the children and the love of the school, that we want it to be the best! …There is not resentment for the amount of work that is required …it's just that we feel like we need to do this. The environment of our school is wonderful. I have been in the school for over 20 years and I am still happy. [B - 12]

We…are movers and shakers. [A - 5]

The [Shared Governance] model works and then gets other things started. If you have a group that is trained and operating that way…you have something in place…you have that structure so then [an issue comes up]…Do we decide we want it? How are we going to implement it? How will we know if it is going well? How will we communicate it to others? That is a model that just works...to get things … as big as this school has become. [I - 22]

Furthermore, if you don't participate in it, you are in danger of losing it. It is the whole Democracy thing. [I - 25]

Always evolving…This school never sits…We never get comfortable with much. We are always changing something up. Everyone has decided we need a change…it is not just every day there is a new decision…yet people are never satisfied. That is why our reading scores keep going up! If you asked me, in the "Reign of Terror" could you have reached 95%… of the students going to the next school…95%…or whatever it was last year…to be reading on grade level…I would say no way! I don't think that back then [before Shared Governance] that I would have believed then that it could ever go that high. But it's way up there now…90 something percent on grade-level in reading fluency. That is phenomenal. But then when we had that last year, so this year we say "So that was good last year, now we need to work on boosting comprehension scores…because now we are freed up to work on that." We think we know what we are doing with fluency…it's kind of going at 95%… but we have to raise the mark. We are going to do more testing to see where that comprehension is and see how much higher we can get it. We have found that you have to get a certain level of fluency before you can really push them in Reading Comprehension. You could work on Oral Comprehension, but not really asking deep questions on what they have read. But you can certainly in First Grade and in Kindergarten ask those kinds of questions to be thinking about in what you read. [I - 26]

When comparing the teachers' perspectives of outcomes in 1990 and 2000, a sharp contrast developed related to the school's vision. In 1990, students were reading below grade level. Currently, under a commitment to an evolving vision, 95% of the students were fluently reading on or above grade level. This ongoing process of renewing

and reaching for the school's vision enriched the school for teachers and students as it stood the test of time. This was achieved through thousands of small opportunities of facilitating an instructional focus that evolved into common values of democratic governance. This Shared Governance school, which utilized collaborative, databased inquiry provided teachers with an ongoing, systematic process for informed decision making. Thus, the vision challenged and empowered members of the school and this helped them in times of conflict. Thus, outcomes, including academic achievement and personal adjustment, were more positive in 2000.

The teachers in the 2000 study were aware of this evolving vision and its benefits as noted in these teachers' statements:

You have to have vision…it is nice to be going somewhere together, but if you don't know where you are going…it is not good…there has got to be someone that has the vision. [MF - 4]

I think that Shared Governance is what got us started…because it gave us a voice and a focus. We didn't have that focus at the beginning, when I first came here. There have been a lot of changes in education through the years...but working towards goals can make it the best of what you are doing. If we focus on our goals, then we are heading in the right direction. [B - 15]

Yes …we really do [see a difference in reading test scores and children's abilities] …since we started the [Shared Governance] program. It didn't just happen overnight. We struggled for awhile for us to find where we needed to be. We struggled through a lot of different kinds of things from Whole Language and the misconception of Whole Language…we went that avenue…and we stumbled

and researched and we came up with [our present program] of all the other things that you need to help children become good readers. [H - 3]

We will ask for their [University's] help when we need their help. Like if we are doing a research writing project, we call them and they give us literature as we need it. [A- 4]

We have our own math curriculum now. Years ago, we had a workbook. We started out using "Math Their Way" …it originated because one of our teachers had seen it somewhere else…She came back and said, "I really think that this is something that we ought to try." So Dr. M. [Principal] said "Go ahead and pilot it and see how you like it. Then share it with more people." It started with three teachers… and pretty soon it was school wide. It has been modified to meet our needs…we added a component called "Math in Action"…so we have a combination of several programs, including "Math Their Way." [H - 4]

Give yourself time. It doesn't happen in a year or two or three years. I don't know when that magical thing happened when it started to feel comfortable…It was not comfortable in the beginning…You just have to stick with it long enough for it to become a way of life! [MF - 2]

This last quotation may explain why the few, previous, short-term (two or three years) studies on the effects of shared governance did not produce significant findings. They did not study the school long enough to realize that they got "over the hump" of bumpy times and into the smooth sailing of a school that had established the shared governance process.

Thus in 2000, this shared governance school had confident teachers that were ready to tackle such problems as thriving under a Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) review. Going through a SACS review, with its considerable focus on Vision, can be chaotic for some schools, but the WSPC staff felt that Shared Governance's series of small opportunities to develop mutual values helped them "practice" for SACS as indicated in this teacher's exclamation:

This practice with this type of governance helps us with accreditation; it seems they use the same model. It feels really good. I would hate to go back! [I - 21]

Shared Governance [is related] to implementing "What is our focus?"… "What are we concentrating on and hopefully making that happen?"… Looking at the Mission Statement for the school and its beliefs and if there is anything we want to change in that [mission statement]. …He calls people to participate, we work on a certain area of it and we get people to work with us [Steering Committee] and then there has to be input from everyone. So the SACS review of our school has a real Shared Governance Focus. Otherwise, they won't pass us. [I - 20]

They became a "fluid staff" that could flexibly work for the common good as heard in this teacher's words: "He [student] is changing classes tomorrow…[It happens] especially in reading, because we have the staff set up to be very fluid. Teachers are listened to about their kids…if a teacher speaks up and says that the light bulb has come on …we will pull him out tomorrow…[she will] assess his abilities and place him in a higher group. [I - 16]

Thus, the school is the product of countless, everyday interactions of individuals. In the current movement to restructure schools, many educators are advocating expanding the role of teachers to allow them to have greater impact on the life of the school through utilization of their voice and action research. In 1990, schoolwide action research involving everyone in the school was not the norm. By 2000, the teachers continually and methodically studied their total school, analyzed the data, and utilized it to seek improvements in the everyday interactions of staff and students. Thus, schoolwide action research became the process of collecting data about an ongoing system with the purpose of improving the practice of teaching and learning. They integrated action research into the culture of a school as a normal mode of operation, by fostering social bonds and ensuring technical support as they moved from innovation to a lasting school practice. It became a natural part of WCPS' organizational life. This teacher's statement reflects that ongoing renewal: "At the end of the year, we … re-assessed [our progress]…where we were going…That was our own kind of Action Research" [I - 36]. Thus, including involved teachers, community members, and students in decision-making based on action research became a means of supporting positive change.

By 2000, individual teachers evolved as decisive leaders in several areas such as mentoring other teachers and giving presentations at League meetings on math, reading, and IN TECH. A teacher no longer existed as an island in her classroom; rather, the teacher was mainstreamed into the changing school community. Providing teachers a voice in the governance of schools was one manifestation of this movement of utilizing action research in the quest for an evolving vision of better schools.

Voice is the Core Category that Facilitates Shared Governance

Both studies found that if schools are to be restructured so that teachers are encouraged and enabled to lead, then teachers' voices must be heard as countless problems are defined and courses of action are planned and implemented. The school's vision, through the avenue of voice, continued to evolve in Wilson County Primary School, as heard in the following statements:

We had worked so hard to get where we are. I didn't want to lose it. I wanted to make sure that it [Shared Governance] was going to continue … It was something that I felt strongly about! … Being able to be part of it from the ground up and I knew what we had before. I sure didn't want to go back to that! Each person has a chance to say what they feel. [B - 5]

[Can you share your ideas with the SIT? Administrators? Central Office?] I can talk to anybody. We can, if I have a concern, go to the head of that particular concern and tell them. I think that a lot of good things have developed from Shared Governance. [B - 6]

In 1990, when teachers were not given a voice, the basic structure of the school district and the school often kept teachers isolated and therefore silenced. Dissimilarly in 2000, in a school where Shared Governance had been in place for 10 years, the staff felt positive because all had a voice [I - 4]. Furthermore, they felt that their opinions were valued [F - 1] by the principal and the superintendent. These teachers felt happy [D - 10] and rewarded [C - 16], and they believed that the school had a positive atmosphere [C - 13]. This situation occurred because they viewed the superintendent and the principal as

gracious [H - 1] in listening to the staff [I - 16] and gave opportunities for all of the staff to have a say [G - 4] or speak up [H - 12].

By 2000, teacher voice (including adequate time to utilize their voice) was an important factor in successful Shared Governance. In contrast in 1990, some negative effects of the contrived congeniality of very limited teacher voice included depletion of time, decreases in teacher morale, and decreases in teachers' political efficacy. For example, in 1990, time was a major concern of the teachers [G - 1] and the morale was not high [I - 37]. Lack of time was a factor at the beginning, [MF - 4] and yet in 2000 teachers stated, "We have come a long way" [MF - 4]. Furthermore, the teachers had dismissed time as a concern in 2000 because in earlier years they had addressed the problem. The solutions they created include providing release time for all involved in SIT meetings [K - 17], research on issues [A - 4], task forces [H - 2], and supportive International Reading Association and League meetings [MF - 4]. Additionally, teachers received Staff Development Units (SDUs) for time spent in curricular development meetings. These practices promoted leadership in the learning community. In addition, the principal found ways to streamline lesson planning with weekly planners [K - 18]. All of these combined in stark contrast to the years before Shared Governance when the teachers had to use their sick days to go to a professional meeting. Asked if the teachers wanted to go back, this teacher's answer was a definitive "No!":

> No way! I sure didn't want to go back to that! To not being able to say this is
> what I want to teach and I can do it this way. Shared Governance has brought our
> school together and we have worked very hard. We are a congenial group. We
> have our team meetings and we get things accomplished with those. When we see

that something is lagging or needs work, that is what we begin to center on…

research…then express our needs to the School-wide Instructional Team (SIT)

and they talk about it and see what needs to be done from there. Each person has a

chance to say what they feel. [B - 5]

Teachers further suggested that the passage of time was also needed to smooth out the

"bumps" that inevitably occur. A veteran teacher made this suggestion: "Give it time!"

[I - 36]

This teacher summarized by stating:

Our school is a wonderful place to work and I really do attribute it to Shared

Governance! And to the leadership of our administration… Everyone at our

school has been doing it for so long now that we know that we have a voice! We

know that we are thinkers as faculty members. That is a big change over the last

10 years! We expect them [new teachers] to think. [A - 1]

Thus, voice was the core category or "common thread holding together their collective

meaning of Shared Governance" as defined by Allen (1993, p. 69). Adequate time and a

supportive principal sustained that voice.

<u>A Shared Governance Principal Facilitates Trust</u>

In this study, district level supervisors and the principal supported Shared

Governance for a decade. In this county, the superintendent, principal of WCPS, and

teachers believed that the responsibility for planning and change should be shared.

However, in 1990, principals were generally not known to be strong advocates for issues

of social, racial, and gender equity. By 2000, this principal (a democratic leader) elicited

teacher voice and thus weathered the conflicts brought by change. In 2000, one teacher

expressed the teachers' concern of conflicts that could evolve from a future change in administration by stating: "We have Shared Governance. We did it. I'm glad! And I hope that. Dr. M. [principal] stays here forever. At least until I am gone!" [I - 24]. Thus, his facilitative school leadership contributed to the teachers' overall sense of well being and empowerment as indicated in the "interlacing" of Shared Governance, trust, and optimism in the following teacher's statements:

> I have worked for Dr. M. [principal]… he was the fourth principal that I worked for here. I did feel pressure [before] …that I would be fussed at. Things are better now. I guess he is an easier going person. He wants things done but he is not going to crack the whip on you. He expects it and we know that and we want to do things for him and the school. I think therefore that there is a different attitude in the teachers. I will say that he is the best principal that I have ever had. I have enjoyed working for him. It makes a big difference! He knows and he trusts us to do what we are supposed to do …and we trust him. [B - 13]

> We have become like a trusting family… It's a good feeling…It really is. There are a lot of good things to smile about at our school…I think we are the Cadillac of schools. [E - 15]

By 2000, teacher voice and trust in the principal facilitated positive changes in the school. Furthermore, a teacher in 2000 noted that sharing the governance was a two-way street. She indicated that change was best implemented in a Shared Governance school when there is a balance between principal and faculty.

> Implementing change within Shared Governance … takes a group of teachers that are willing. It would be much easier to say, "This is what you will do this

week"…but with Shared Governance, you are given some leeway …so you have

got to stimulate some ideas. In essence it takes some digging down deep into your

creativity…and then being able to work it out…Shared Governance means a

balance between teachers and principals. [E - 13]

Thus by 2000, facilitative school leadership contributed significantly to the teachers'

overall sense of well being and empowerment. This teacher's statement reflects the

overall sense of well being derived from such leadership:

We are very fortunate that it was our principal who wanted to start Shared

Governance. So he had a buy-in to begin with…he has not changed. I also think

that he finds it a good place to work because we really do help with a lot of the

work. I know he is in charge…and a prime motivator…but it the way that he

brings out an idea… "I was thinking, could we get some study groups up and look

at this and see where we want to go with it?" It is a very open-ended kind of

question. [Then] people sign up for study groups and if they are interested, then

we come back for a faculty decision…Then we vote. So it works wonderfully

well. I can't say enough good things about it! [A - 2]

The WCPS principal modeled democracy in education when he allowed the

faculty vote on issues to prevail. There was initial skepticism in 1990 concerning Shared

Governance. This was dispelled when the teachers voted down two of the principal's

preferences: (a) a school within a school and (b) a POD system. Skepticism was replaced

by trust in this exemplary Shared Governance principal. Thus, the process of expressing

teacher voice was impacted by the structure of the school, including the role that the

principal played in the school. The WCPS principal acknowledged the empowerment of the democratic process, which sanctioned a true voice for teachers at WCPS.

These examples of democracy in education reinforce the belief that the fundamental purpose of public education is to prepare the child for productive citizenship and democratic participation by actualizing the democratic values of America. A re-commitment to America's democratic foundations and decentralized schools hold the most potential for improving children's lives. In accord with this belief, the importance of leadership for democracy included not only listening to teachers but also to children. There is also a need for decentralization in higher education, where dictatorial statements reject the espoused practice of Shared Governance and minimizes the role of the faculty.

Our American public schools must promote and model the highest ideals of the Constitution, including equal protection, freedom of speech, and religious freedom. When these values of American democracy are instilled, it will promote the safe protection of future generations. The WCPS principal modeled "democracy in education" and this facilitated further benefits including an overall sense of well being and trust. This exemplary Shared Governance principal embraced the empowering, democratic process of voting on issues, which allowed teachers a true voice in the school.

Summary

The WCPS Shared Governance initiative elevated teachers as they worked hard, practiced ongoing research, were creative, enthusiastic, optimistic, and proud of their accomplishments. The teachers created a variety of changes including educational programs that benefited children as the staff used their voice and their emerging

professionalism. The principal was the facilitator of many of these accomplishments for he dared to share his power and everyone gained autonomy. The overall results included a resounding majority of benefits of Shared Governance as compared to former concerns about the process.

The purpose of this study was to advance knowledge about teachers' perspectives of Shared Governance after 10 years of implementation in a primary school. The findings of the study developed into these statements: (1) Change is an evolving vision in the Shared Governance process, (2) Voice is the core category that facilitates Shared Governance, and (3) A Shared Governance principal facilitates trust. Chapter 5 presents implications for further study to broaden the research base and summarizes the entire study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Overview

The purpose of this research was to conduct a follow-up study of Allen's (1993) work on Shared Governance at Wilson County Primary School, located in central Georgia. Specifically, this researcher aspired to disclose the teachers' perspectives regarding Shared Governance, after they had implemented the democratic initiative for 10 years.

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study by emphasizing the evolution of Shared Governance in business, industry, and education. This chapter outlines the conceptual framework for this follow-up study and emphasized the two research questions from Allen's original study that also guided this present study:

1) What are the teachers' perspectives (what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature) of Shared Governance in a school where Shared Governance has been implemented for 10 years?

2) What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from teachers working in a school that has implemented Shared Governance for 10 years?

Chapter 2 provided a review of the related literature. This review included an overview of democratic governance of schools, conditions, and parameters of Shared Governance, teachers' perspectives regarding inclusion in decision-making, and decision

making situations desired by teachers. Chapter 3 delineated the methodology utilized to collect and analyze the data. Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study. This chapter is divided into three sections: (A) Overview, (B) Summary of the Findings and Implications, and (C) Summary of the Study.

<div align="center">Summary of the Findings</div>

The findings of the present study include:

1. Changes in the teachers' perspectives occurred at WCPS over the 10 years, including those regarding their professionalism, autonomy, and self-esteem.

2. Teacher voice, a supportive principal and adequate time were important factors for the success of Shared Governance at WCPS.

3. Shared Governance produced considerably more benefits than concerns for the staff and students at Wilson County Primary School.

Both Research Questions revealed positive changes in teachers' perspectives. Skepticism was replaced by optimism and fear was replaced by pride. In 1990 some teachers reported negative feelings toward the Shared Governance initiative, whereas overall positive feelings emerged by 2000. For example, in 1990 one teacher speculated that Shared Governance would last only until "the first time that the teachers made a decision that the principal did not like and then the whole thing would be over." By 2000, with several trust-building experiences through the years, doubts had evaporated. Furthermore, in 2000 the teachers felt pride as the programs of instruction and student scores on standardized tests dramatically improved. Allen wondered if "as a result of Shared Governance, do teachers alter their teaching methods in such a way that student

outcomes are improved?" (Allen, 1993, p.175; Kohn, 1993). Standardized test scores in

reading revealed that 95% of the students were able to fluently read on grade level or

higher at the end of second grade. However, there is room for further study in this topic

of research. Will this improvement continue in other grade levels? In subjects other than

reading? Furthermore, the support of the superintendent, the principal, and the university

was also documented in this study. Further study is needed to examine the role of internal

and external facilitation: Can Shared Governance survive without that support? What will

happen to WCPS when the present principal leaves?

Further research is needed to provide educators with the type of in-depth information

that is necessary to guide the Shared Governance process. This research will create a

broader research base of teachers' perspectives as they utilize their voice in leadership

roles in a non-restrictive or open setting as found in this Shared Governance primary

school. This researcher did not intend nor does she claim to have discovered conclusions

that are universal. However, when other researchers conduct similar studies at varying

grade levels, backgrounds of teachers, as well as urban versus rural settings, the

comparison across the studies will expand the knowledge base.

<div align="center">Summary of the Study</div>

This 10-year follow-up case study of a Shared Governance primary school noted

some similarities to as well as several differences from Allen's (1993) study. Examples of

similarities included: a) teachers reported increased communication, commitment, and

competence when they were involved in making decisions about their work; b)

"principals played key roles by providing vision for the school and modeling collegial

trust and respect for teachers"(Allen, 1993, p.173); c) rather than seeking power over the

process, the teachers interpreted Shared Governance as a series of opportunities that allowed them to express their voice; and d) both studies focused on specific details and behaviors in the teachers' everyday life. As a result, a deeper understanding was gained of the complexities of the Shared Governance process and "how it affects and is affected by teachers" (Allen, 1993, p. 174). This present re-visitation of Allen's (1993) Shared Governance primary school noted that several of his findings are still evident today.

However, this present study also noted several differences when compared to the findings of the 1990 study. Some of the differences that were evident by 2000 included: 1) teachers freely and continuously used their voices to effect a multitude of positive changes in the school, 2) teachers used action research to explore evolving school issues as they reached for their school's vision, and 3) teachers were no longer concerned strictly with classroom issues, but rather interacted professionally with principals, central office administrators as well as other schools and districts.

This study disclosed that Shared Governance brought considerably more benefits than concerns to the staff of WCPS. In contrast, Allen's (1993) study revealed many initial concerns from teachers who desired a voice in the decisions that affected their schools and also in resolutions that affected district and statewide policies. This primary school actualized their earlier desires.

Furthermore, this single-school, follow-up case study was concerned with why teachers felt as they did and how they came to the positive perspectives that they held. Many teachers in 1990 had concerns about general issues such as establishing Shared Governance, defining the issues of voice, and anxiety about the future. In contrast, by 2000 the overriding benefits of their long established teacher voice dominated their few

concerns about Shared Governance. The teachers' positive perspectives of an abundance

of present benefits coexisted with the teachers' assumption of having a voice. In 2000,

the teachers expressed only three minor concerns: 1) the need for increased involvement

with working parents, 2) establishment of in-service for new teachers about the Shared

Governance process, and 3) management of time for research to initiate new issues.

However, many teachers expressed a fourth concern as having great importance: the loss

of a supportive principal could mean the loss of Shared Governance and voice. The

WCPS teachers wanted this democratic form of school governance to continue, thus

providing benefits for teachers, students, administrators, parents, the school as a whole,

other schools, and districts. By 2000 the teachers' perspectives of Shared Governance

were overwhelmingly positive.

Research Questions One and Two revealed positive changes in teachers'

perspectives, including the perspective that skepticism was replaced by optimism and fear

was replaced by pride. In 1990, initial skepticism was evident. In 2000, the teachers felt

pride as their programs of instruction and student scores on standardized tests

dramatically improved. In summary, several teachers reported negative feelings about the

first years of the Shared Governance initiative, whereas an overall positive feeling

emerged by 2000.

Throughout both studies, the teachers' perspectives, understandings, and actions

were constantly being modified and improved. Furthermore, correlating Research

Questions One and Two led to this overriding concept: When teachers' working

conditions became more democratic and they shared in the governance of the school,

their corresponding feelings, thoughts, and behaviors were more positive. In conclusion,

a consideration of the similarities and differences in the two studies revealed that Allen's study concentrated on the various aspects of voice, whereas the teachers in this study had assimilated voice so thoroughly that they no longer were concerned about its aspects. One teacher's enthusiastic remarks consolidated this attitude into this powerful statement: "We did it! I have it! I don't want to lose it!" [I - 15].

As more studies are conducted in other settings (such as large urban high schools or middle schools) where Shared Governance has been implemented for 10 or more years, findings that are consistent or relevant in varying degrees across the schools will emerge. This study revealed that Shared Governance was alive and well after 10 years of implementation based on the evidence from interviews of teachers, observations, and memos. Furthermore, the surprise for those interviewed was the realization of how far they had come and the rekindled desire to share that concept with others.

In the past, a void has existed in the research literature regarding the long-term effects of Shared Governance on teachers' perspectives. The few studies previous to this one considered only two or three years of Shared Governance. Yet, repeatedly in this study, teachers stated that the process needed time. Furthermore, they stated that the first few years were not smooth ones, but that a multitude of benefits emerged over the longer period of time. The purpose of this follow-up case study was to investigate the influence of shared governance on teachers' perspectives after 10 years of implementation at a primary school. It described the teachers' perspectives of change within themselves and in the governance structure of the primary school between 1990 and 2000. This Shared Governance initiative produced long-term positive results for teachers, students, and

administrators. Determining, explicating, and comparing the likeness and difference of teachers' perspectives noted evolving changes in several areas of school life.

This present study addressed an element that had been previously missing from the research base: teachers' voices addressing the real issues that they encountered in school. This present study's observations of the teachers' perspectives reveal that there is hope for education in America. The teachers felt free to express themselves without fear. Their openness and confidence in their use of voice under a supportive principal appear to have a direct correlation with giant strides in student achievement and a positive school climate. Further research in these areas could provide educators with the in-depth data that is needed to navigate through the fluid realm of educational practices.

Changes such as the development of teachers' professionalism (compliance to competence), positive interactions of the eligible teachers with the school and individual students (isolated, competitive teachers became sharing leaders) made a positive impact on the school and the children. By 2000, some of the rewards of Shared Governance included teachers' improved self-image and improved student academic scores (95% of the students were scoring on grade level or higher on exit reading tests). Thus, sharing in the governance of a school by utilizing voice enabled many positive changes to occur in an ascending spiral. A supportive principal was needed for shared governance to survive, yet he also reaped the benefits. Recommendations for further study can center on the perspectives of other groups of teachers, parents, students, university advisors, and the principal. This study is significant because it uniquely initiated the needed extended research on teachers' beliefs about the long-term effects of shared governance.

A lack existed in the research literature regarding the long-term effects of Shared Governance. Other studies had considered only two or three years of application of this governance system. However, teachers expressed that the initial years were sometimes difficult but that the long-term benefits overwhelmingly outnumbered the few concerns. The purpose of this follow-up case study was to investigate the influence of Shared Governance on teachers' perspectives after 10 years of implementation at one primary school. The study noted changes not only in the teachers but also in the governance structure of the primary school between 1990 and 2000. This shared governance initiative produced long-term positive results for teachers, as well as administrators, and students. Comparing the same teachers' perspectives 10 years later revealed positive changes in these realms of school life: 1) development of teachers' professionalism through the use of teacher voice, 2) negatives of the past changed to positive current conditions, and 3) positive interactions of the teachers with the school staff and individual students. Furthermore, this study found that a supportive principal was essential for shared governance and it also revealed positive improvement in students' reading test scores. Recommendations for further study include perspectives in other settings as well as the perspectives of other groups of teachers, parents, students, and principals (Blase & Blase, 1999, 2000). This present study was significant as it launched the needed research on teachers' beliefs about the long-term effects of Shared Governance.

The door to democratic schooling has been opened at least in one school. The light is shining through. Who will be next to pick up the torch? That school will also "come together as a faculty …that believes in ourselves…realizes that we are all professionals and that we are in the craft of teaching and [similarly] rise to the occasion"

[J - 1] and yet "we are just regular, down to earth kinds of people like you have all over the place…we have just learned to do it better!" [MF - 7].

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

I _____ agree to participate in the research entitled <u>Teachers'</u>
<u>Perceptions of Shared Governance After a Ten Year Implementation in a Georgia</u>
<u>Primary School</u> which is being conducted by Helen Fish, of the Educational Leadership
Department of the College of Education. I understand that this participation is entirely
voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of
the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed
from the research records, or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1) The reason for the research is to learn more about teachers' perspectives of what it is
   like to work in a school that has implemented shared governance procedures.
2) The procedures are as follows:
   1. I will participate in an interview at a time and place that is convenient to
   me. The interview will last approximately 10-30 minutes.
   2. The researcher will analyze my responses and compare them to the responses
   of the other interviewees in the study.
   3. The researcher may request a follow-up interview at a later date.
3) No discomforts or stresses are foreseen.
4) No risks are foreseen.
5) The results of this participation will be confidential, and will not be released in any
individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. All
tapes and transcripts of tapes will be kept in a locked file drawer in the home of the researcher.
All tapes will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study (approximately 6/2001). Transcripts will
be kept indefinitely so as to be available to the researcher in the event they prove to be useful to
future research studies. These transcriptions will be labeled with fictitious names.
   The code to the fictitious names will be available only to the researcher.
   6) The investigator will answer any further questions about the research, now or during
the course of the project.

_____ _____
Investigator   Date   Participant   Date

 Please sign both copies of this form. Keep one and return the other to the investigator.

IRB OVERSIGHT PARAGRAPH: For questions or problems about your rights please call or write:
Ms. Julia Alexander, Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies
Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; I-Mail address IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX B

TEACHER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

All Teachers are Female.

Code	Grade	Years Teaching	Years at WCPS	SIT member
A	K	19	19	Yes
B	1	22	19	Yes
C	1	22	22	Yes
D	2	22	22	Yes
E	K	21	21	Yes
F	K	15	15	Yes
G	P.E.	11	11	Yes
I	K	30	30	Yes
J	2	20	14	Yes
K	Chap. I	15	15	No
L	2	32	25	Yes
M	1	28	11	Yes

APPENDIX C

WCPS GOALS AND TABLE

Action Plan for the 90's: The Ideal Primary School for Reducing Risks [PP]

Introduction: WCPS is involved with the University of Georgia's Program for School

Improvement in a joint effort to develop a Shared Governance program for the school.

The school established a formal Shared Governance operation during the 1989-1990

school year. The structure chosen by the faculty includes the election of representatives

from each instructional planning team in the school to a School-wide Instructional Team

(SIT). SIT is responsible (through the assistance and guidance of the entire faculty) for

the identification of school-wide concerns and the development/implementation of

solutions. Before any implementation can begin, the entire faculty (with an approval rate

of 80%) must approve the plan of action developed. [Panda Paws = PP]

This document presents the results of the first year's Shared Governance efforts –

the development of a *Plan of Action*. During the 1989-1990 school year, the SIT and the

faculty worked together to identify the elements that they felt would create the "Ideal

Primary School for Reducing Risks." [PP]

The 1990 goals were listed in priority order according to the ratings given them

by the faculty. The 2000 evaluation revealed that most of the 1990 goals had been

achieved. These goals and their resultant accomplishments by 2000 included: Reduced

class size, school nurse, curriculum based on Holistic principles, parent training program,

pre-school programming, continuous progress instruction, guidance counseling services,

home liaison, parent volunteer support, parent feedback system, after-school programs,

lead teacher, alternative classroom, more use of computers, and a free summer school program.

From this list of goals [PP], two were chosen for implementation during the 1990-1991 school year. By 2000, almost every 1990 goal was achieved as indicated in the present teachers' statements that follow each goal:

1. Reduce class size to 15-20 students with heterogeneous groupings and minimal pullouts for special services. In 2000, teachers noted that the desired type of grouping was achieved as part of the change process utilizing voice and a supportive principal, as described in this teacher's statement:

> We were grouped homogeneously, and we wanted heterogeneous grouping …when we got and we made our own decision and the whole staff voted on it…then it happened …we wanted to get the children [grouped] so that they could see good behavior from their peers [B - 2].

> It has been wonderful. We made some changes ... because we felt we could meet their needs. This way is flexible so that we can move our children "up" into other groups as they make improvements…I think it has been one of the best things that we have had for this school…So it is really nice to be able to have a Voice! I guess that about the main thing is that we have a Voice! We feel that we are important! … That the administration cares about us! Somebody cares what I think! [B - 3].

2. Develop a curriculum based on holistic principles that include real life situations/applications. The curriculum should be integrated instead of a series of

isolated skills. The curriculum must put skills into meaningful context for at-risk students and provide opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. By 2000, the teachers developed a completely revised curriculum in Reading and Math using holistic principles for meaningful context for the children, as described in these four teachers comments:

> We know that we are very lucky to work at WCPS. And to me what "Shared Governance" means is really what is encompassed in the two words that are written. It's a kind of government that is shared among teachers, para-pros, and all the people who work with the children here. All of this encompasses the policies and the way that we teach children here. And what we consider is the most important is that Shared Governance gives us all a voice! We have people who are selected to represent us and every month before they go to meetings, they come and individually ask us "Do you have anything …curriculum or other things… that you feel is important that needs to be discussed for the well being of the children and the school?' [K - 1]

> We have a good school. This is the third school that I have taught at. … When I came here, they were just getting into Shared Governance. It was new. "Shared Governance" to me was that the faculty had a voice…They have a decision as far as the changes that we want to see made here. And that gives you a real sense of ownership about your curriculum. It makes you feel a part of it and that your thoughts and ideas

are valued. It makes you work all the harder because they are your goals

and you want to see them accomplished. [F - 1]

For example, we voted to adopt "Math Their Way"

as our math program…. It worked wonders and since then

we have developed our own program using Math Their

Way and adding components of other really good programs

to meet the needs of our children. [F - 2]

Without Shared Governance we would have whatever curriculum

was mandated for our school...like "This is your program" and "You will

teach it!" With Shared Governance… in team meetings… we "map" what

direction our curriculum will go to help the children. [F - 3]

3. Provide the services of a school nurse. Not available in 2000.

4. Provide a comprehensive parent training program. Before 2000, the teachers had

   written a grant and received one half million dollars to implement the comprehensive

   parent training program as described in these three newspaper statements from 1993,

   1996, and 1997:

   WCPS Chosen as R.J.R. Nabisco Foundation's "Next Century Schools"

   Finalist…Proposal calls for increased parental participation through a

   family support program, which would provide parent-to-parent support on

   a continuous basis for at least three years. WCPS will receive a grant for

   up to $750,000. [N - 5]

   The Family Learning Center is a resource area for all Primary School

   families to use after regular school hours. It is designed for children Pre-K

through Second Grade… accompanied by adult family members. The Center is staffed by volunteers. The next big event to be held at the Center is the Super Saturday Health Fair…which is scheduled for April 9 in cooperation with St. Mary's Health Care System, Inc. [N - 4]

RESA Columns: WCPS Named Finalist: This proposal complements and extends the Action Plan developed by the staff last year as participants in UGA's Program for School Improvement (PSI). The proposal was approved by a majority of the faculty. [N - 6]

5. Provide preschool programming.

WCPS Has End-of-Year Program for Parents of 4-Year Olds [N - 8]. By 2000, the program was in place but no interviewed teachers were involved in it.

6. Establish continuous progress instruction based on individual learning needs/styles of each student with clear expectations for improvement and challenges. By 2000, continuous progress for students was in place as indicated in these two teachers' responses about meeting children's needs within a Shared Governance school:

Basically, when I think of "Shared Governance," first of all we look at our children and try to decide what these children need…. Shared Governance helps us serve our children…Our administrators have been gracious enough to give us the opportunity to speak up and say, "This is what these children need." Then he will say, "OK, then how will you fix it?" Not only do we have to state a problem but we also have to find a solution to that problem! And this school is wonderful about working together…that we

share ideas and we share materials. I think that everything that we do is for

the children! I really think that and I have seen both ways. I was here

before Shared Governance! And Shared Governance has made all the

difference in the world in what we provide for our children. [H - 1]

Beforehand…we were told pretty much what we were to do…there

was a committee that would select a basal…or whatever materials we

would use…and then that's what everyone would use! Across the board!

The choice you had was simply whatever the few people (that were at the

meeting…usually one per grade level) chose! You got to look through the

materials…but it was not a whole lot of input! After we got Shared

Governance implemented, we had task forces that were on certain areas

that we considered concerns. And we decided where our problems

were…where we needed more work…and we don't even have a basal

now… We designed our own program…the kind that works! …Using the

QCC and everything that is a basis for everything that the children should

be able to do. And we just built it on our own to serve our children! The

difference is just like night and day! [H - 2]

7. Provide guidance counseling services on a full-time basis. By 2000, interviewed

teachers noted several specific ways counselors assisted families, as noted in this

teacher's interview statement:

Partners in Learning: The counselor meets with families every other

Wednesday at the school to discuss parenting skills. Adults come in on

their own, or they use public transportation provided by the school. The

families in SIA/Chapter I classes are targeted. [MF - 3]

8. Establish a home liaison person who would act as a contact source for home

intervention and instruction. During the 2000 interviews for this study, three teachers

indicated that the home liaison contact was active in WCPS, as described in these

statements:

Chapter I Home Visitation: Visits are scheduled monthly. Twenty families

are involved. Adults visited are given materials to use at home.

Counseling is offered. The child's school progress and needs are

discussed. [MF - 4]

Migrant Education: The Migrant Education Coordinator visits in

homes of migrant families often. She holds classes every week for

preschoolers and their families. Language, motor skills, health care and

basic parenting skills are taught. [MF - 5]

Nabisco Foundation Grant would assign liaisons to work with four

families per week, providing materials, tutoring and parent school visits.

[N - 5]

9. Increase the parent volunteer support services. By 2000, certain aspects of parent

volunteer support services were in place; however increased parent participation

continued to be a need as described in these statements:

WCPS to be commended: Proposal made by the principal and staff of
WCPS calls for increased parent participation through a family support
program. [N - 7]

10. Establish a parent feedback system to get parent's opinions on how the school is
doing in helping their children. In 2000, two teachers described two types of parent
feedback (casual conversations and formal conferences) that were very actively in
place at WCPS. They also noted parent involvement as a further need as described in
these interview statements:

I was talking to a parent yesterday…who was concerned about her child in
Kindergarten…that she wasn't doing something. So I said to her that it
sounds to me that they have done all of those basic things and now they
are working on some First Grade objectives. She thought that was great.
I'm an EIP teacher and teach first grade. [F - 7]

We work very hard on parent involvement and getting them in for
conferences…and sometimes that is really hard. Our numbers were at 98%
attendance by parents for the fall conferences. And I feel that most of the
parents feel that they can come in anytime and talk to Dr. M and Dr. M
and Miss J [administrators]…parents feel welcome here. I hope that they
will always feel welcome here and that we want to help their kids and that
we are going to do whatever we need to do to do that. [F - 8]

Parents and children are involved. But there probably needs to be
more involvement! Basically the parents who come in to do volunteer
work are the parents of children that are doing the best in the class. Our

children that we really need to have a conference with, lot of times, you

are doing well to get them in for one conference a year. [E - 9]

We did have 98% participation for families in fall conferences, but

you must remember that several of those are re-contacting some parents

several times to get them in, staying long after school or even telephone

conferences. I remember one parent that I had to contact seven times and

finally got in one conference. That means a lot of follow-through. And I

really needed to talk about her daughter. I think that some of the parents

feel threatened…maybe they did not have a good school experience.

[E - 10]

I always start off [a conference] with a smile and something

positive about that child…. I try to be very positive with my parents, and

they know that I want them to come back. I always think that if I can get

them in that door one time [when they come to lunch]…then they'll come

back…I try to teach the way I hope someone is teaching my children.

Love with some structure …kindness and respect. [E - 11]

11. Provide after school programs for students (especially those students who do not have

the money to take advantage of current community based programs). By 2000, two

after-school programs were active at WCPS, as described in this teacher's interview:

We have the HELP Program and the Super Saturday program because we

got the grant…parents are asked to come in and they would help do some

training and that worked well. The children have to come with an

adult…that is the draw. [H - 9]

12. Provide a lead teacher who would be available to consult with teachers and/or provide direct instructional services (enrichment/remedial) to students at the request of teachers. In Pre-Shared Governance, one teacher described a dictatorial principal using the position as an incentive. In 2000, a lead teacher was active at WCPS and consulted and provided services to the students. Both of these are found in the following interview statements. The first statement includes a teacher's perspectives about her situation with a principal in neighboring county with NO Shared Governance:

> It was a very dictatorial kind of a structure. Lots of faculty meetings...
> "Principal Speaking-Us Listening" type of meetings. And I remember just
> sitting there thinking "This is such a waste of time. He could have put it in
> a memo and be done." I remember resenting that and the few meetings
> that we had that were supposed to be discussion…it seemed that if we
> tried to tactfully point out that that was not a good thing for our
> children…he became adamant! "No! That is what we are going to do! No
> matter what!" It was a very difficult situation for me…sniff… [stopped for
> a Kleenex]…and so I chose to leave. He kept asking me why I was leaving
> and he even said, "I will make you the lead teacher if you will stay." Some
> other really unprofessional things were offered…it just wasn't a
> comfortable place for me, and so I came to this school. [I - 3]

In contrast, in this Post-Shared Governance school, a teacher noted:

> Shared Governance means a lot to me personally. I have changed positions
> in the last ten years and am now a part of the SIT (School-wide

Instructional Team) now more as an administrator (Lead Teacher). Shared

Governance means a lot to us because of the buy-in that all of the faculty

at our school has. Everyone feels that they have a voice! We meet monthly

on a regularly scheduled basis. We have concerns that grade level

representatives bring to us. But if there is an emergency, some problem

that comes up, we can just meet instantly. Everyone at our school has been

doing it for so long now … We know that we have a voice! We know that

we are thinkers as faculty members. That is a big change over the last ten

years! Now, as new faculty members come on, it takes them a short while

to figure it out…Oh…what I say here is important! And when they came

from other schools, we realize that they have not been allowed to think.

And at our school, we expect them to think…and we do! Our school is a

wonderful place to work, and I really do attribute it to Shared Governance

and to the leadership of our administration. [A - 1]

13. Establish an alternative classroom (for temporary intervention) for behavioral
problem students who are not responding to classroom structure (with a required
parental involvement component). In 2000, no mention of this goal emerged.

14. Integrate a more extended use of computers in the school program as a real life
experience/application (in preparation for the 21st century). By 2000, several teachers
summarized the increase in use of computers as well as the teachers as trainers aspect,
as heard in these teachers' descriptions:

New people on the staff find who to talk to by several other things that

have developed over the ten years. The SIT used to be the only way to get

things taken care of...but other programs have evolved from the SIT. Like now we have mentor teachers and TSS trained teachers…and it has expanded in other ways to help each other. For example, we have teachers who do certain kinds of training like in Math…we Started with "Math Their Way" but we have turned it into our own program…and teachers train others so they are up on what they should be doing. And then we also have the In TECH training here. I am in charge of that here. I have a top drawer just full of information, and I am training 46 teachers [on computers] this year. [C - 11]

That is something that I have really seen change here. Teachers have taken on roles as trainers…helping other teachers …mentors or whatever…different teachers throughout the school who now have other jobs or responsibilities. It is sort of a leadership or an administrative role that teachers are now taking. Other than just having a Lead Teacher, now we have teachers who have more specific areas of expertise! That's my area…IN TECH, and we have the ability to take care of this, and we are in charge rather than being little puppets, doing what we are told to do. Instead, we are getting it done! I will tell a story of having to ask for chalk because we have come a long way! I remember when I was a first year teacher here, and I go bopping into the office and the secretary looks at me nervously and wrings her hands and said [she is whispering this part] "You'll have to ask the principal about the chalk. She has it locked in her closet." That principal was very much from the "old school" and nothing

went through anyone but her! …Even down to the chalk! Going from that

now to this with Shared Governance—I can see where other schools may

still be back in the old way. And I can also see that it does a lot for those

of us who have the responsibilities to know that we are considered adults

and intelligent and professional! I cannot say that word "professional" too

many times… because at a lot of other schools you are not considered a

professional. I feel that here, I am most definitely am considered a

professional! Dr. M [principal] seems to have a knack of seeking out the

right people and putting them in charge of things like IN TECH.

Hopefully, it [teachers in charge] is good for all of the teachers. For

instead of them having [someone] in front of them saying "Now this is

how you need to teach this" and you are sitting there thinking "They have

no clue!" because they have never really been in the classroom and done

it...whereas we have been there. [C - 2]

   That is another big difference in our Shared Governance School!

Lisa is doing a re-delivery model for IN Tech, while Terrie was trained in

the math programs so she trains new people that come into our math

program. Working at this school…we pretty much develop our own

program. And when someone comes on new, there is no teacher's edition

for the math or reading program …there isn't any…it is all our own

program. You have to learn how to do it with a partner or peer teacher or

mentor and there have to be training sessions…which teachers now teach

> …including staff development programs …and all of this is part of the
>
> ongoing process. [I - 34]

15. Establish a free summer school program for at-risk students to help eliminate some
of the regression problems. [MF - 2] Not discussed in 2000.

Thus, Wilson County Primary School made several positive, organized advances in the areas selected in 1990 as in "Need of Improvement." This was a stark contrast to the 1990 prediction of chaos! Furthermore, the teachers repeatedly stated that their use of voice in the Shared Governance process made many of these organized improvements possible. The following table condenses the preceding data by WCPS Goals Set in 1990 for the Ideal Primary School, and compares them to results found in 2000.

Ideal Primary School Goals	1990	2000
A. Reduce Class Size to 15 to 20 students with heterogeneous grouping.	No	**Yes**
B. Provide School Nurse services.	No	**Yes**
C. Develop Curriculum based on Holistic Principles, including real life applications.	No	**Yes**
D. Provide a comprehensive parent training program.	No	**Yes**
E. Provide Preschool Programming.	No	**Yes**
F. Establish Continuous Progress Instruction based on Individual learning need/styles with clear expectations for improvement and challenges.	No	**Yes**
G. Provide Guidance Counseling Service on a full time basis.	No	**Yes**
H. Establish a home liaison person who would act as a contact source for home intervention and instruction.	No	**Yes**
I. Increase parent volunteer support services.	Yes	**Yes**
J. Establish a parent feedback system to get parent's opinion on how the school is doing in helping their children.	No	**Yes**
K. Provide after school programs for students (especially those students who do not have the money to take advantage of current community based programs).	No	**Yes**
L. Provide a lead teacher who would be available to consult with teachers and/or provide direct instructional services (enrichment/remedial) to students at the request of teachers.	No	**Yes**
M. Establish an alternative classroom (for temporary intervention) for behavioral problem students who are not responding to classroom structure (with a required parental involvement component).	No	**Yes**
N. More integrated use of computers in the school program as a real life experience/application (in preparation for the 21st century).	Yes	**Yes**
O. Establish a free summer school program for at-risk students to help eliminate some of the regression problems.	No	**Yes**