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An Analysis of the Decision-Making Process Used by Chief Student Personnel Administrators

Lawrence Anthony Pfaff
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AN ANALYSIS OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS USED BY
CHIEF STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS

by

Lawrence Anthony Pfaff

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Counseling and Personnel

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1980

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a number of individuals who, throughout my doctoral program, have been instrumental in my achievements. These individuals deserve my appreciation for their support.

I wish to thank Dr. Paul Griffeth and Dr. John Nangle, members of my doctoral committee, who have been supportive of me throughout my program. They have given freely of their time whenever I was in need of assistance.

I have a special feeling of appreciation for my committee chairperson, Dr. Ed Trembley. Working with him has been both challenging and exciting. He is responsible for the most satisfying and valuable learning experience of my life. His intensity and desire to learn have been an inspiration to me throughout the writing of this dissertation.

I wish to thank the members of the student services staff at the University of Northern Iowa and especially Dr. Larry Routh, Dr. Tom Romanin and Dr. Tom Hansmeier. Their insights and encouragement during the initial phases of the study were invaluable. Without their assistance this study would not have been possible.

To my father, Charles Pfaff, go my thanks for his encouragement and guidance throughout my education.

Finally, a special thank you goes to my wife and best friend, Colleen Sante, for her continued understanding, encouragement and assistance.

Lawrence Anthony Pfaff
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STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS

Western Michigan University

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine the decision-making process used by chief student personnel administrators within universities.

This study examines the decision-making (DM) methods of chief student personnel administrators from the perspective of both the chief and his/her subordinates. The relation between DM method and selected situational variables is examined. Situational variables studied include type of decision situation (program, budget, personnel), importance of the decision situation to the chief or subordinates, span of control of the chief administrator and frequency of occurrence of situations.

Rationale for the Study

Administrative leadership has received a great deal of attention in the professional literature. Since leadership is such a broad term, this study will focus on the function of leadership called decision-making. Administrative leadership can, in fact, be defined in terms of making decisions.

This study does not approach decision-making solely as an event taking place at a particular moment. Nor is it an act of
only administrators. Rather, DM is viewed as a process taking place over time during which an organizational problem is solved. The process may involve one or more persons within the organization.

This study concentrates on how decisions are made rather than on the content of the decisions. DM can be defined along a continuum of subordinate influence in the DM process. This approach to DM examines the contributions that people make to the process of decision-making. The DM process is also viewed as interacting with situational variables, several of which are examined in this study.

Although research has been done with regard to DM in business organizations, little has been done to examine DM as an interactive process between people and situational variables. Although much is written about leadership style in higher education, there is a paucity of research on the DM process. In the field of higher education, especially student personnel services, most studies of DM examine open-ended descriptions of the DM methods used by the chief administrator (Harway, 1977). This descriptive research approach is not entirely adequate in examining the process of DM because it ignores studies done in business organizations, and it does not lend itself well to analysis.

It is increasingly apparent that chief student personnel administrators do not make decisions in isolation, but rather are influenced by interactions with subordinates and others who provide input, advice, suggestions and demands—all of which are seen as situational variables interacting with persons in the DM process.
This study examines the interaction of the chief student personnel administrator and subordinates and their relation to several situational variables.

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Is there agreement between the perception of chief administrators and subordinates with regard to the chief's DM method used in each of the three decision areas of personnel, program, and budget? If not, what is the nature of the disparity?

2. Is there agreement between the subordinates' perception of the DM method of the chief administrator and the subordinates' preferred DM method in each decision area? If not, what is the nature of the disparity?

3. Will the DM methods used by the chief administrator depend on his/her perception of the importance of the decision situation or on the subordinates' perception of the importance of the decision situation or on neither measure of importance?

4. Is there a relationship between the chief administrator's organizational span of control and the DM method used by the chief in each decision area?

5. Is there a relationship between the frequency with which problems are encountered by the chief administrator and the DM method used?
Decision-Making Methods

In order to answer the research questions, it is necessary to have a scale to assess the decision-making methods of the chief student personnel administrator. Most scales assume a split between democratic and authoritarian methods. The scale used in this research is the Decision-Making Methods scale and is modeled after the Influence-Power Continuum (Heller, 1971) and uses five alternatives which are described in detail in Chapter III. The Decision-Making Methods scale, like the Influence-Power Continuum, does not suggest that any of the alternative styles is any better or worse than the others. The scale measures varying amounts of influence-sharing among people.

The five DM methods used in this study are:

Method 1: Chief's decision without detailed explanation (subordinate nonparticipation).
Method 2: Chief's decision with detailed explanation (subordinate nonparticipation).
Method 3: Prior consultation (subordinate nonparticipation).
Method 4: Joint decision-making (subordinate participation).
Method 5: Delegation (subordinate participation).

Definition of Terms

The following definitions cover the major terms most frequently used in this study.

1. Decision-making (DM) method.--refers to a process in which a series of events solves an organizational problem. It may involve
one or more persons in the organization. It is viewed as spanning a continuum of methods described in detail in Chapter III. Decision-making style or process is used as synonymous with decision-making method.

2. **Chief student personnel administrator** as used in this study refers to the person in the highest administrative position in the student services division of the university. Generally this person will hold the title of vice-president for student affairs, vice president for student services, or dean of students.

3. **Subordinates** refers to professional full-time student personnel workers in the student services division under the direction of the chief student personnel administrator. Generally these individuals will hold the title of director and will be responsible for a unit within the division.

4. **Decision-making areas** refers to the division of decisions into the categories of personnel decisions, budget decisions and program decisions.

5. **Span of control** refers to the number of professional staff reporting directly to the chief student personnel administrator.

6. **Importance of the situation** refers to the perception of the chief as to the importance of each situation with regard to its impact on the student services division or the perception of subordinates as to the importance of each situation with regard to its impact on a department.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study focuses on the decision-making (DM) methods of chief student personnel administrators. Due to the close association between DM and leadership it is necessary to review the literature in both. Hersey and Blanchard (1977) define leadership as a process of influencing an individual or group in a particular setting, especially within organizations. Leadership and DM are closely linked within organizations due to the interpersonal and social aspects of both (Vroom & Yetton, 1973).

Leadership

Leadership has maintained a major role in the study of organizational administration (Heller, 1971). Many approaches have been taken in attempting to understand leadership; however, three major trends in the study of leadership seem to be discernible from a review of the literature in this field.

The Trait Approach

This is the oldest approach to the study of leadership and involves a search for a cluster of leadership traits which set leaders apart from followers (Hamner & Organ, 1978). Leadership is analyzed in terms of the person only, and it is seen as a
function of personal behavior, ability, perceptions and attitudes (Heller, 1971). These leadership traits are believed to be transferable from one situation to another.

Stogdill (1948) reviewed 124 studies of personal factors or traits associated with leadership status. He found 27 traits that were studied by three or more investigators. Several of these traits correlated positively with leadership status, including intelligence, initiative, and certain physical characteristics. Stogdill also reported on 19 studies in which the pattern of leadership traits differ with the situation. The results of these studies suggested that leadership must be conceived in terms of the interaction of situational variables which place different demands on the leaders and which are subject to change. Persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations. Stogdill concluded that leadership is not a matter of the possession of a combination of traits but rather the interaction of personal characteristics and situational variables.

The trait approach to studying leadership implied that identifying and measuring leadership qualities would allow one to choose effective leaders (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). There were two problems with this assumption. First, most studies attempted to find correlates of leader status, not correlates of leader effectiveness. Second, no studies attempted to find whether leader traits develop in individuals as they act as leaders (Hamner & Organ, 1978). Since 1950, the study of leadership has de-emphasized the importance of the leader's personal traits.
The Behavioral Approach

The behavioral approach to the study of leadership began after the Stogdill (1948) study. This approach was characterized by examining what the leader does in the leadership role (Hammer & Organ, 1978). Leadership was examined in terms of patterns of the leader's overt behavioral interaction with others (Heller, 1971). This approach also examined how organizational members form groups and perceive leaders.

Two pioneering studies that paved the way in this direction were the Ohio State Leadership Studies and the Michigan Leadership Studies (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). The Ohio State Studies identified two relatively independent behavioral dimensions along which leaders differ: initiating structure and consideration. Initiating structure pertains to how the leader acts in organizing, setting goals and giving directions. It is associated with task orientation. Consideration involves leader actions which establish mutual trust, rapport and communication with subordinates. Consideration behavior is seen as relationship oriented and emphasizes the needs of the individual in the organization. The two dimensions, initiating structure and consideration, are independent of each other and leadership can be defined by the combination of relative standing on the two dimensions. Katz and Kahn (1978) discussed the need for both dimensions of leader behavior in the workplace but suggested that most individuals are unable to exhibit initiating structure and consideration behaviors. Such inability may cause problems in
studying individual leaders since nonleaders may be supplying the consideration dimension for fellow workers. Katz and Kahn agreed with the conclusion of the Ohio State Studies that high levels of initiating structure and consideration are essential in the workplace to maintain high levels of production.

Paralleling the concepts of consideration and initiating structure, the Michigan Leadership Studies identified two dimensions of leadership referred to as employee orientation and production orientation. The two dimensions were anchors of the same continuum. Employee orientation described the behavior of leaders who take the human relations side of the job seriously (Heller, 1971). Production orientation described leaders who stress production and technical aspects of the job. Employee orientation was viewed as more important because it helps employees have a sense of importance and worth in the workplace (Likert, 1961). The Michigan Leadership Studies and the Ohio State Leadership Studies both approached the study of leader behavior from a similar framework in that both examined two alternative leader behaviors.

The Situational Approach

The situational or contingency research approach to leadership arose due to the limited success of the trait and behavioral approaches. The situational approach suggested no single "best" style of leadership, but rather focuses on the most effective style for the situation (Fiedler, 1965). It emphasized the study of the environmental factors that can influence leader behavior.
The leadership model developed by Fiedler (1965, 1967) included three situational parameters which determine whether a situation is favorable or unfavorable to a leader: leader-group relations, task structure, and position power. Leader-group relations referred to the personal relations the leader has with members of the group. Task structure referred to the degree of structure in the particular task or tasks a group is performing. Position power referred to the power and authority provided by the nature of the position the leader holds.

Fiedler's approach assumed that personality predisposes the leader toward a certain interpersonal style in relation to subordinates. The measure of interpersonal style was a simple scale indicating the degree to which an individual describes, favorably or unfavorably, his/her least preferred co-worker (LPC). This LPC rating measured the degree to which a leader is either human relations oriented or task oriented. Leaders cannot easily change their behavioral style and, in order to maximize administrative effectiveness, one must engineer the situation to fit the leader by altering the position power of the leader, changing the task structure or improving the interpersonal climate (Fiedler, 1965).

Fiedler's model seemed to be reverting to a single continuum of leader behavior with two basic styles--task-oriented or relationship-oriented--that are used consistently by a leader (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). Critics contend that the LPC measure is still somewhat of a mystery, and it cannot be reasonably
considered to be independent of the three situational dimensions, especially leader-group relations (Hamner & Organ, 1978).

Decision-Making

The preceding discussion about leadership style leads to a conceptualization of leadership as an interactive process between leader and subordinates. Decision-making is generally viewed as a function of a leader within the leadership role. DM is a process which results in a choice among alternative courses of action (Taylor, 1965).

One of the most influential studies of DM was conducted by Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939). In this study three DM styles were described: democratic, authoritarian and laissez-faire. Authoritarian leaders made decisions in isolation while laissez-faire leaders made no decisions. Democratic leaders made decisions with their subordinates. Since laissez-faire leadership was seen as clearly inappropriate for organizations, DM began to be viewed in terms of two widely divergent styles: democratic and authoritarian.

Democratic DM was associated with the concept of subordinate participation throughout the literature. Unfortunately, the terms authoritarian, democratic and participative have become highly value laden, and it has become difficult to evaluate them in a detached way. Generally, participative DM was viewed as better than other methods since it is an expression of a democratic way of life (Lumley, 1979). This assumption of only one appropriate
kind of DM has not always been supported by research (Sales, 1966). In fact, Sales found conflicting results with regard to the effectiveness of authoritarian versus democratic DM.

Obviously, DM does not consist of only two styles. Many attempts have been made to define DM along a continuum of methods from authoritarian to participative. The points along the continuum have not been clearly defined or have been defined in unequivocally positive or negative terms (Likert, 1961). Vroom and Yetton (1973) eliminated some of these difficulties in their normative model of decision-making. The normative model contained five alternative processes including two autocratic, two consultative and one group process. The five processes were behaviorally defined but still contain somewhat value-laden terms such as autocratic and problem-sharing.

Some of the difficulty with the study of DM has been traced to the use of the concept of participation. The exact meaning of the term can vary widely. Participation has been usually measured by the amount of interaction in a group (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939). Participation is often assumed to lead to psychological satisfaction among group members even though no clear link between the two has been found (Heller, 1971). Heller pointed out that this participation-satisfaction link can lead managers to use pseudo-participatory practices in order to improve morale. In these instances the subordinates were not participating in the DM process, since their input was not being used to improve the quality of decisions, to improve communications or to train subordinates. The subordinates were only experiencing a "feeling" of participation. In fact,
participation more appropriately could be replaced by the concepts of influence and power (Crozier, 1973). Participative behavior can be counterfeited, but influence is more basic to DM (Heller, 1971). Participation requires interaction between people, and it is only one method of gaining influence to a decision.

There was a need for a more neutral model of DM methods in which the range of alternatives was sufficiently well balanced and value-free to avoid bias on the part of respondents (Heller, 1976). Heller's Influence-Power Continuum was an attempt at such a neutral model. This model went beyond participation as a DM method to the delegation of DM to subordinates. This expanded the possibility of DM methods for the administrator.

In the field of higher education little empirical study has been done on DM although recognition has been given to the need for effective DM methods for academic administrators. There is the belief that, with the increasing complexity of higher education administration, administrators will need to have strong DM skills (Lahti, 1973).

As in the management literature, DM in higher education was often described in relation to shared responsibility and involvement (Taylor, 1979). Participation was viewed by many as the desired approach regardless of the nature of the problem. Pollay, Taylor and Thompson (1976) developed a five-stage model for participative DM in higher education that permits expressions of opinion and preference on a decision from virtually all individuals in the organization. Again, participation was viewed as the "best"
approach to all DM even though faculty revealed reservations about participating in decisions.

The consensus among writers on DM in higher education was that participation is highly desirable, but they seemed to provide little beyond stating that participation is better. This notion was based upon the assumption that participation will provide better information and better information will result in a better decision (Heller, 1971).

On the other hand, Willey (1979) wrote of flexibility and modifiability as essential characteristics to effective DM. This seems contrary to the "participation is better" approach. Also, the study conducted by Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker and Riley (1978) indicated that unionization and economic factors have forced administrators away from participative DM. Collective bargaining has separated faculty and administration and has formalized a "we-they" mentality. Despite presidents' feelings of vulnerability, Baldridge found evidence to indicate that there is actually a shift toward greater administrative power. More decisions are forced upward, away from departments, to the central administration. Also, outside arbitrators and courts were seen as playing a greater role in campus DM. Economic factors, that is decreasing financial resources, have moved DM to higher levels of administration. Baldridge found that faculty committees are not good at making cutback decisions. The role of making cutback decisions has been pushed up the administrative structure because of an uneasiness on the part of the faculty to make negative decisions about
colleagues. Lower level student services administrators are also reluctant to be involved in cutback decisions about peers.

Cohen and March (1974) referred to participation in higher education as a "garbage can" into which problems, organizational participants and preconceived solutions are poured and jostled around until a solution emerges. They contended that this approach is too often used because it is seen as the only good approach to DM. The assumption of one appropriate approach to decisions has been the basis of most studies of DM in higher education.

This conflict over the preferability of participation in DM is compounded by the lack of information about DM with regard to situational variables in higher education. It appears as though the writers on DM in higher education are still searching for the one behavior that results in effective decisions. They are still viewing leadership in higher education at the level of the trait and behavioral approaches. This conclusion also applies to the writers on DM in student services. In fact, student services researchers are still writing almost exclusively in terms of the trait approach to leadership. There has been little research done on DM in student services. This makes it even more appropriate that an examination be made of what is actually taking place in the DM process in student services before any DM method is labeled as a "best" method.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample for this study consisted of chief student personnel administrators and their subordinates in Region IV East of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). The institutions included in the study were public universities with an undergraduate student enrollment of 5,000 and above. All administrators in NASPA Region IV East institutions meeting these criteria were invited to participate in the study.

Research Instruments

Two forms of the research questionnaire were designed specifically for this study (Appendix A). One form was developed for use with chief student personnel administrators and the other form was developed for use with subordinates. Both forms of the questionnaire contained the same 26 specific problem situations. For each situation the chief administrator was asked to respond to each of the following:

1. Approximately how many times in the last two years have you encountered this type of situation?

2. Of the five Decision-Making Methods described, which one have you used most often to make a decision?
3. How important is this situation to you in terms of its impact on the entire student services division?

Subordinates were asked to respond to the following for each situation:

1. Of the five Decision-Making Methods, which one would be used most often by your chief student personnel administrator?

2. Of the five Decision-Making Methods, which one would you prefer the chief to use?

3. How important is this situation to you in terms of its impact on your department?

In addition to the 26 specific problem situations the questionnaire respondents were asked for demographic data including name, title, institution, number of years in current position, number of professional staff reporting directly to each chief, and the total number of professional staff reporting to each respondent.

The development of the 26 problem situations was done systematically. A review of the literature revealed two instruments using specific problem situations for decision-making in business and industry (Heller, 1971; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). These situations were used as a guide in developing the problems for the questionnaire. Current and former chief student personnel administrators were contacted to develop situations specific to student personnel administration. With this information the original draft of the questionnaire was developed. The original draft was then given to five chief student personnel administrators for critiquing. The format was
changed and the situations that were not common to all were excluded or changed.

The revised questionnaire was then pilot tested with five chief student personnel administrators and 10 subordinates. From the pilot testing results and the written recommendations of the pilot subjects, the questionnaire was revised a second time. It was then presented to the doctoral dissertation committee for final review; minor revisions were made and the final questionnaire was approved for this research.

The 26 situations by area were:

**Personnel Situations**

  1. Decide on one of several applicants for an entry level position in a department.
  2. Decide on a change in location of a department head's office.
  3. Fire a department head's nonprofessional employee.
  4. Increase the number of permanent positions in a department.
  5. Change the title of a department head while duties and pay remain the same.
  6. Combine two or more departments into one larger department under one director.
  7. Assign a department head to a different position at the same salary.
  8. Decide on job duties and objectives of a department head.
  9. Respond to the institutional community when there are doubts raised about the effectiveness of a department's staff.
10. Determine office policies of the student services division.

11. Transfer a staff member to a position at the same level in a different department (lateral transfer).

Program Situations

1. Decide on the method of evaluation of a particular program in a department.

2. Decide in which department a new program will be located after the need for such a program has been demonstrated.

3. Decide on the defense of an existing program the chief views as essential after the program has been questioned by the faculty of your institution.

4. Decide to redistribute department budgets or discontinue a program after it loses funding external to the university.

5. Decide on changes in a department's program after evaluation of the program has shown that it is not meeting its goals.

6. Decide on the continuation of a program when the program is no longer needed due to student body changes.

7. Determine the written goals and objectives of a program that presently has no written goals and objectives.

8. To establish priorities for programs within departments.

Budget Situations

1. Decrease some department budgets when requests from all departments are beyond allowable levels.
2. Decide on the purchase of a necessary piece of equipment for a department costing over $500.

3. Decide on a significantly greater increase in budget for one department than for other departments in the division.

4. Decide on decreases for most department budgets when it becomes clear that increases for budgets throughout the institution will be less than expected.

5. Decrease the budget requested by one department because the request is not in line with those of other departments.

6. Decide on policies for the use of department travel money.

7. Decide on the installation of additional telephones in a department.

Reliability and Validity

The questionnaire used in this study was developed through procedures directed at guaranteeing an acceptable level of content validity. The items were chosen by using relevant literature and questionnaires that had been validated (Heller, 1976) and by consultation with subject experts in the developmental stages of the questionnaire to insure content validity. The face validity of the questionnaire was satisfactory as reported by both the consultants during its development and the student personnel professionals during pilot testing.

Test-retest reliability was established on the questionnaire by using the pilot testing group (N=12) and readministering the
final questionnaire after a period of four months. This time period seemed appropriate since it did not allow the participants to remember their initial responses. The questionnaire was administered for the retest at a different time in the academic year in order to sample the administrative workload for the group. Due to the ordinal nature of the data collected in the questionnaire, a Spearman rank correlation coefficient was calculated to measure the test-retest reliability. The overall coefficient was found to be .89 for the questionnaire.

Decision-Making Methods

The model of decision-making methods used in the questionnaire and throughout this study was an extension of the authoritarian-participative continuum used by many researchers. The five positions on the continuum used for this study were similar to a continuum developed for use with managers in business and industry (Heller & Yukl, 1969). The five methods identified for use throughout the study were:

**Method 1:** Chief's decision without detailed explanation refers to decisions made by the chief without any prior consultation with department heads (subordinate nonparticipation). Consultation by the chief with persons at a higher or equal authority level of the chief is not excluded.

**Method 2:** Chief's decision with detailed explanation refers to decisions made by the chief without prior consultation with department heads (subordinate nonparticipation) but adds a formal post-
decision explanation of the reasons for the decision. This may be done by memo, special meeting, or some other method.

**Method 3:** Prior consultation refers to decisions made only after consultation with one or more department heads (subordinate nonparticipation). The chief makes the decision by himself/herself and the final choice may or may not reflect the influence of those consulted.

**Method 4:** Joint decision-making is a process of consensus formation in which one or more department heads participate (subordinate participation). The department heads usually exert as much influence as the chief in the final choice.

**Method 5:** Delegation refers to decisions that the chief allows department heads to make on their own (subordinate participation). The chief may or may not request a report of the final decision. Although the chief can veto the decision he/she seldom does.

**Hypotheses**

The hypotheses were tested in relation to the two levels within student services divisions: chief student personnel administrators and their direct subordinates. The hypotheses are directly related to the research questions stated in chapter I. In the statements of hypotheses, the senior officer is referred to as the chief, and the subordinate is referred to as the director.

H₁: Directors will see themselves as having more influence in relation to decisions than the chiefs believe to be the case. That is, directors will see the DM method
as less centralized than the chief.

$H_2$: Directors will prefer to have even more influence in relation to decisions than they currently perceive. That is, they would prefer the DM method to be even less centralized than it is.

$H_3$: Where decisions are more important to the chief, more centralized methods will be used. Where decisions are more important to directors, the chief will use more power-sharing methods. Where decisions are not important to either, centralized methods will be used.

$H_4$: Larger span of control by chief will be associated with more centralized DM methods.

$H_5$: The more frequently encountered situations will result in the employment of more centralized DM methods by the chief. For situations not previously encountered, the chief will use methods that are associated with the most frequently encountered situations.

Data Collection

There were 46 institutions that met the criteria for inclusion in this study as outlined earlier. At the time of the distribution of the questionnaires, five institutions had either no chief student personnel administrator or had recently hired a new one. Due to the nature of the data collected, those five institutions were excluded from the study. Therefore, questionnaires were mailed to the remaining 41 institutions.
Questionnaires were mailed to 41 chief student personnel administrators and 245 of their subordinates. The chiefs and subordinates were identified by name through the NASPA Region IV East Membership Roster, The Yearbook of Higher Education (1979), and by consulting the bulletin of each institution. A questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope were sent to each individual (see Appendices A & B).

The questionnaires were mailed in late January, 1980, in order to reach all individuals before the term workload became too heavy. Since the questionnaire and this study in general were endorsed by the institution of employment of the author, the cover letters were signed by the author and the vice president for student services of that institution. Since the questionnaires were sent to chiefs and subordinates at each institution, participants were notified in the letter that other individuals at their institution were participating in the study. The initial mailing resulted in a response of 133 (63%) of the chiefs and 23 (56%) of the subordinates contacted.

Approximately four weeks after the initial mailing, chief student personnel administrators who had not responded were telephoned by either the author or the vice president at the author's institution. They were reminded of the importance of the study and were asked to return completed questionnaires. Subordinates who had not responded were sent individually typed reminder letters urging them to complete and return the questionnaire (see Appendix B).

The initial return plus the follow-up returns resulted in a total return of 35 (85%) of the chiefs' questionnaires and in a
total of 154 (73%) of their subordinates' questionnaires. Since the data were analyzed on an institutional basis, only subordinate questionnaires of chiefs who returned a questionnaire were included in the study.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed to answer research questions and to test hypotheses.

Question 1: Is there agreement between the perception of the chief administrator and subordinates with regard to the chief's DM method used in each of the three decision areas of personnel, program and budget?

This question was analyzed first by comparing the cumulative frequency distributions of the DM methods of the chiefs and subordinates, by decision area to discern the extent of agreement. Since testing for statistical differences in the DM rating values of chiefs and subordinates was of interest, two statistical tests were performed on the data. First, the data were analyzed by item using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov two sample test (Siegel, 1956). This test was chosen because of the ordinal nature of the ratings by chiefs and subordinates and the ability of the test to detect significant differences in the distribution of responses of the chiefs compared to the subordinates. This procedure created 26 analyses, one for each item. These analyses were then grouped by decision area, and summary statements were made about each area.
Second, the data were analyzed by decision area through the use of the McNemar test for the difference between proportions (Downie & Heath, 1965). In this analysis the data were grouped for all items within each decision area for all institutions and a comparison was made between the chiefs and subordinates. This test was chosen because it allows for the use of correlated data where there was more than one observation from each individual and where the data were grouped by decision area. The McNemar test required a two-by-two table and, therefore, some collapsing of the five rating categories was necessary. Rather than making an arbitrary decision about the combination of five DM methods, the author referred to the two major sources of studies conducted in DM. Heller (1976) and Vroom and Yetton (1973) provided data and theoretical arguments for a collapsing of methods 1, 2, and 3, nonparticipation, into one category and the collapsing of methods 4 and 5, participation, into one category. This allowed for a two-by-two table for the testing of proportions of chiefs against subordinates for the two categories, nonparticipation and participation. This method provided three analyses comparing the DM methods of chiefs and perceptions of subordinates.

These approaches to the analysis of the data allowed for comparisons within and across individual questionnaire items with regard to agreement between chiefs and subordinates. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test allowed for the testing of significance of differences between all chiefs and all subordinates by questionnaire item while the McNemar test allowed for testing significant differences between chiefs and subordinates within decision area. The hypothesis

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that there are differences between the chiefs' DM methods and the subordinates' perceptions of the chiefs' DM methods was tested at the .05 level of significance.

Question 2: Is there agreement between the subordinates' perception of the DM method of the chief administrator and the subordinates' preferred DM method in each decision area?

The question was analyzed first by comparing the cumulative frequency distributions of the DM methods of the chiefs as perceived by the subordinates and the preferred DM methods of the subordinates to discern the degree of agreement. To test for the statistical significance of differences between the subordinates' perceived DM methods of the chief and the subordinates' preferred DM methods, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test was utilized (Siegel, 1956). This test was chosen because it allows for the comparison of responses by individual subordinates for the two response categories, perceived DM method and preferred DM method, in terms of the difference in the two scores as well as the magnitude of the difference. The Wilcoxon test allowed for the use of correlated data in which each person acted as his/her own control. The Wilcoxon analysis was done for each of the 26 questionnaire items, which were then grouped by decision area. Summary statements were then made about each decision area. The hypothesis that there were differences between the subordinates' perceptions of the DM method of the chief and the subordinates' preferred DM method was tested at the .05 level of significance.
**Question 3:** Will the DM methods used by the chief administrator depend on his/her perception of the importance of the decision situation or on the subordinates' perceptions of the importance of the decision situation or on neither measure of importance?

An analysis was done of the dependence of the chiefs' DM methods and the chiefs' perception of the importance of the situation. The McNemar test for difference between proportions was used to test for significant difference in DM methods depending upon the chiefs' importance ratings for each questionnaire item. Since this test required a two-by-two table, collapsing of the data was necessary. The DM method ratings were combined as in the analysis of Question 2, with Methods 1, 2, and 3, nonparticipation, forming one category, and Methods 4 and 5, participation, forming the second. The importance ratings were combined by using the "not important" and "less important" ratings for one category and by using the "important" and "very important" ratings for the second category. This method allowed 26 separate analyses about which summary statements were made.

The data on importance rating by subordinates resulted in only one situation of the 26 studied on which fewer than 50% of the subordinates rated as "important" or "very important." Because of this result, the relation between the chiefs' DM method and the importance rating of subordinates was only examined by a descriptive comparison of the frequency measures of the chiefs' DM methods on several questionnaire items. No summary statement about the effect
of importance on the DM method of the chiefs was made as a result of the two analyses. The McNemar test allowed for testing of the hypothesis that there was significant dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the importance ratings of the chiefs. This was tested at the .05 level of significance. Because of the lack of dispersion of subordinates' importance responses, no test of significance could be applied regarding the dependence of the DM methods of chiefs on the importance ratings of subordinates.

**Question 4:** Is there a relationship between the chief administrators' organizational span of control and the DM method used by the chief in each decision area?

An analysis was done of the relationship between the chief administrators' span of control and the DM method used by the chief using the Fisher exact probability test (Siegel, 1956). Because of the statistical requirements of the Fisher test, collapsing of the data was necessary. The DM methods scale was collapsed as before by combining Levels 1, 2, and 3, nonparticipation, to form one category and by combining Levels 4 and 5, participation, to form the second category. The grouping by span of control was done by examining the frequency distribution of the chiefs' span of control. It was found that there were two groups in which chiefs were located with regard to span of control: span of control less than 10 and span of control 10 or greater. Using these groupings of DM methods and span of control data, the Fisher test was applied to each of the 26 items for all chiefs. The resultant analyses were then grouped by
In addition to the statistical tests, the cumulative data in each decision area were examined by comparing frequency distributions of the DM methods of the chiefs to discern differences in DM method by area. The Fisher test was used to test at the .05 level of significance the hypothesis that there was a relationship between span of control of the chief and the DM method of the chief.

Question 5: Is there a relationship between the frequency with which problems are encountered by the chief and the DM method used?

The analysis was done by item comparing the chiefs' reported frequencies of encountering each problem with the DM methods used by the chiefs. The initial step was to find a breakdown for the frequency measure to obtain discrete categories. This was done because of the limited number of chiefs (N=35) and the potential for a large variation in the reported frequencies. It was found by examining the distributions of the frequency ratings that responses generally fell into three categories: not encountered, encountered one to four times, encountered five or more times. The analysis was first done comparing DM methods that had been encountered, ignoring reported frequencies of zero. This was done because it was believed that situations that were not encountered were responded to with no basis of previous experience.

The DM methods ratings were also collapsed to obtain two categories using, as in previous analyses, a grouping of Methods 1 to 3, nonparticipation, and Methods 4 to 5, participation. The
Fisher test was used to test the difference between frequency ratings and DM methods. The Fisher test was also used to test the difference between the items not encountered and those encountered five or more times in order to test the second part of the research hypothesis that items not encountered were treated in the same manner as more frequently encountered items. In both cases the hypothesis that there was a relationship between the frequency with which problems were encountered by the chief and the DM method used was tested at the .05 level of significance. This procedure resulted in 26 analyses, and summary statements were made about the results.
CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The report of the analysis of the data collected in this study is presented in this chapter. The purpose of this study was to examine the decision-making (DM) process used by chief student personnel administrators at public universities with an enrollment of 5,000 undergraduates or more.

As reviewed in chapter III, two forms of a research questionnaire were developed to obtain data from chief student personnel administrators and their direct subordinates about the DM methods of the chief student personnel administrators. A total of 35 chiefs and 154 subordinates responded to the questionnaire from a sample of 41 institutions.

The statistical treatments of the data were performed by each research question, therefore, the results of the study are presented by research question. When appropriate, descriptive statistics were used to supplement the data analysis and discussion.

Findings

Research Question 1

Is there agreement between the perception of the chief
To test for significant differences in the DM rating values of chiefs and subordinates, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Siegel, 1956) was used. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test determines if the two samples of responses, chiefs' and subordinates', have the same distribution across the five DM methods. The test compares each interval, in this case each of the five DM methods, of the frequency distributions of chiefs and subordinates. For each interval, the step function of one distribution is subtracted from the step function of the other distribution. The test focuses on the largest of these observed deviations, which results in a D score that is converted to a chi-square value. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed for each questionnaire item, that is, each problem situation.

Table 1 shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the 11 personnel items. No item showed a significant difference between the distribution of ratings of the chiefs and subordinates. Of the eight program items, only item 21 showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in ratings of chiefs and subordinates (see Table 2). No significant difference in ratings by chiefs and subordinates was found among the seven items in the budget area (see Table 3). Thus, the analysis using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded only one item with a significant difference in ratings of chiefs and subordinates in the three decision areas.
Table 1

Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Analysis Comparing the Distribution of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Subordinates Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods for Personnel Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.139</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 35 chiefs and 154 subordinates were included in each analysis.

$^a_{df} = 2.$

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Table 2

Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Analysis Comparing the Distribution of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods for Program Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>$\chi^2_a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>8.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 35 chiefs and 154 subordinates were included in each analysis.

$^a_{df} = 2$

*P < .05

Table 3

Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Analysis Comparing the Distribution of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods for Budget Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>$\chi^2_a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 35 chiefs and 154 subordinates were included in each analysis.

$^a_{df} = 2$
The items were grouped within each decision area, and the McNemar test for the difference between proportions was performed on the cumulative data in each decision area. The McNemar test compared the proportions of the entries in a two-by-two contingency table constructed on two dimensions: chiefs, subordinates; participation, nonparticipation. This analysis showed no significant difference ($p < .05$) in the proportions of responses for chiefs and subordinates on the participation, nonparticipation dimension in each of the three decision areas (see Table 4). Although the

Table 4

Comparison of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs DM Methods by Decision Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Area</th>
<th>Chiefs $n^b$</th>
<th>Subordinates $n^c$</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>1224</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Utilizing the McNemar test for correlated data, df = 1.

$^b$Total number of grouped responses by chiefs

$^c$Total number of grouped responses by subordinates.

McNemar analysis yielded no significant differences, the budget area yielded a higher chi-square value than the personnel and program areas, which indicated less agreement between chiefs and subordinates in the budget area than in the personnel and program areas.
Neither the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for individual questionnaire items nor the McNemar test for grouped questionnaire items showed significant differences in the DM method ratings by chiefs and subordinates. Neither test gave support for acceptance of the hypothesis that there were differences in perceptions of chiefs and subordinates with regard to DM methods of chiefs.

Table 5 shows a comparison of the frequency distribution of the five DM method ratings of chiefs and subordinates by decision area. In the personnel area there was general agreement between chiefs and subordinates about the DM methods used by chiefs. In the program area there was a difference in the perceptions of the chiefs and subordinates about the DM methods used by chiefs. The subordinates perceived chiefs as using method two, chief's decision with detailed explanation, 16% of the time, while chiefs saw themselves using method two 8% of the time. In addition, subordinates perceived chiefs as using method four, joint decision-making, 31% of the time, while the chiefs' perception was 47% in the program area. This pattern was repeated in the budget area where subordinates perceived greater use of method one, chief's decision without detailed explanation (7%), and method two, chief decision with detailed explanation (27%), than chiefs perceived (method one = 2%, method two = 22%). Subordinates also perceived less use of method four, joint decision-making (15%) by chiefs than the chiefs perceived (25%). These descriptive statistics showed results that were contrary to the research hypothesis that subordinates would perceive
Table 5
Comparison of the Percentage of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods by Decision Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Area</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>chiefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subordinates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>chiefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subordinates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>chiefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subordinates</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the chiefs as using less centralized DM methods than the chiefs would perceive themselves using.

Research Question 2

Is there agreement between the subordinates' perception of the DM method of the chief administrator and the subordinates' preferred DM method in each decision area?

Table 6 shows a comparison of the cumulative frequency distributions of the DM methods of the chiefs as perceived by the subordinates and the preferred DM methods of subordinates by decision area. In the personnel area, subordinates reported that they would
Table 6
Comparison of the Percentage of Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods and the Subordinates' Preferred DM Methods by Decision Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Area</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>DM Method Reported (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>perceived</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preferred</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>perceived</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preferred</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>perceived</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preferred</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

prefer less use of DM method one, chief's decision without detailed explanation (1%), and DM method two, chief's decision with detailed explanation (6%), than they perceived (4% and 14%, respectively).

They also reported that they would prefer more use of method four, joint decision-making (47%), than they perceived (33%). This finding was consistent across all three areas of personnel, program and budget decisions. In all areas the subordinates reported that they would prefer less centralized DM methods, that is, less use of methods one and two and increased use of methods four and five.

To test for significant differences in the ratings of the chiefs' DM methods as perceived by subordinates and the subordinates' preferred DM methods, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test was
The Wilcoxon test utilized information about
the direction and magnitude of differences between pairs of obser-
vations, that is, each subordinate's perceived and preferred DM
method. The Wilcoxon test ignored pairs of scores that showed no
change, so that the number of pairs used in the calculation was
usually less than the total number of pairs in the sample, since some
subordinates reported no difference in their perceived and preferred
DM method. The Wilcoxon test produced two statistical values: a $T$
value which was used when $n \leq 25$; and, a $z$ score which was used when
$n > 25$. The Wilcoxon test was run on each of the 26 questionnaire
items, grouped by decision area.

Table 7 shows the results of the Wilcoxon test analysis of the
items in the personnel area. All 11 items showed a significant
difference ($p < .05$) in the subordinates' perceptions of the chiefs'
DM methods and the subordinates' preferred DM methods. The negative
$z$ values also indicated that the subordinates' preferred DM methods
were less centralized, that is, tending toward DM methods four and
five. In the program area (Table 8) a significant difference was
found on seven of the eight items, and in the budget area (Table 9)
a significant difference was found on six of the seven items. On
all 26 questionnaire items the difference in direction of the percep-
tions of subordinates and their preferred DM method indicated that
they preferred less centralized DM methods to be utilized than they
reported chiefs utilizing.

The hypothesis that there would be a difference between
the subordinates' perceptions of the chiefs' DM methods and the
Table 7

Results of the Wilcoxon Analysis Comparing Subordinates’ Perceptions of Chiefs’ DM Methods and Subordinates’ Preferred DM Methods for Personnel Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>$t^a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-4.01</td>
<td>0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-4.97*</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-1.99</td>
<td>17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-5.33*</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>-5.81*</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-6.94*</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-5.91*</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-3.70*</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-4.48*</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-3.83*</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-4.41*</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ Value used to test for significance when $n < 25$.

*p $< .05$. 

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Table 8
Results of the Wilcoxon Analysis Comparing Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods and Subordinates' Preferred DM Methods for Program Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-3.71*</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-5.86*</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-5.15*</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-6.44*</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-5.81*</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-5.49*</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-3.03*</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.

Table 9
Results of the Wilcoxon Analysis Comparing Subordinates' Perceptions of Chiefs' DM Methods and Subordinates' Preferred DM Methods for Budget Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>T^a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-6.67*</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-5.14*</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>-7.03*</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>-6.79*</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-5.61*</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-4.32*</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^aT value used to test for significance when n ≤ 25.
*p < .05.

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subordinates' preferred DM method was supported based on the significant differences found by the Wilcoxon analysis on 24 of the 26 questionnaire items. The direction of the differences in the Wilcoxon analysis also supported the acceptance of the research hypothesis that subordinates would prefer more influence in decisions than they are currently perceiving.

Research Question 3

Will the DM methods used by the chief administrator depend on his/her perception of the importance of the decision situation or on the subordinates' perception of the importance of the decision situation, or on neither measure of importance?

The McNemar test for the difference between proportions was used to test for significant differences in DM methods used by chiefs depending on the importance ratings chiefs gave to specific situations. The McNemar test compared the proportions of the entries in a two-by-two contingency table constructed on two dimensions: chiefs' importance ratings and participation, nonparticipation. Of the 26 analyses, 14 had expected frequencies of five or greater, which allowed for the use of the McNemar test (Siegel, 1956). The low expected frequencies in the remaining 12 analyses did not permit their use in this research. Table 10 shows the results of the 14 analyses in which 10 of the questionnaire items showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in the DM methods used by chiefs who gave ratings of "not important" and "less important" from those of chiefs who gave ratings of
Table 10
McNemar Analysis of the Relation of Chiefs' DM Methods\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Importance Ratings for 14 Questionnaire Items\textsuperscript{b}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>( n )\textsuperscript{c}</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )\textsuperscript{d}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13.06*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.08*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13.06*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Dichotomized by participation, nonparticipation.

\textsuperscript{b}Items with expected frequencies of five or greater.

\textsuperscript{c}Number of chiefs included in each analysis.

\textsuperscript{d}df = 1.

\(*p < .05.*

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"important" or "very important" on each item.

A comparison was also made across the five DM methods by obtaining frequency data on the 14 questionnaire items analyzed (Table 11). Chiefs used DM method five, delegation, more often

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chiefs' Importance Rating</th>
<th>DM Method Reported (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less important or not important</td>
<td>2 11 20 22 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important or Very important</td>
<td>2 13 31 41 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Items with expected frequencies of five or greater. Items included were: 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26.*

... when situations were rated as "less important" or "not important" (45%) than when situations were rated as "important" or "very important" (13%). The results of the McNemar test gave support to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there was a dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the importance ratings of chiefs based on significant differences ($p < .05$) on 10 of 14 analyses. Descriptive data (Table 11) indicated support for the research hypothesis that chiefs would use more power sharing (methods four and five) in situations they viewed as less important.

The data on importance rating by subordinates resulted in only one situation (questionnaire item 26) which more than 50% of
the subordinates rated as "not important" or "less important" and a total of only six situations (questionnaire items 3, 7, 8, 22, 25 and 26) which at least 30% of subordinates gave ratings of "not important" or "less important." Because of the lack of dispersion of subordinates' importance responses, no test of significance was applied regarding the dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the importance ratings of subordinates. Using these six items (3, 7, 8, 22, 25 and 26), a comparison was made of the cumulative frequency distributions of the DM methods of chiefs on the six items and of the DM methods of chiefs on the remaining 20 items (Table 12). The chiefs used more delegation of DM, method five, on the six specific items that had lower importance ratings by subordinates (28%) than they used on the remaining 20 items on which subordinates gave higher importance ratings (11%). Although descriptive data on only six

**Table 12**

Comparison of Chiefs' Cumulative DM Methods on Six Items with Low Subordinate Importance Ratings and Chiefs' Cumulative DM Methods on Twenty Items with High Subordinate Importance Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinate Importance</th>
<th>DM Method Reported (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Items on which a rating of "important" or "very important" was given by more than 70% of subordinates.

*Items on which a rating of "less important" or "not important" was given by more than 30% of subordinates. Items included were: 3, 7, 8, 22, 25, 26.
questionnaire items were used, the results of this comparison did not support the research hypothesis which predicted that the chiefs would use more power sharing in situations that were more important to subordinates.

Research Question 4

Is there a relationship between the chief administrator's organizational span of control and the DM method used by the chief in each decision area?

The Fisher exact probabilities test (Siegel, 1956) was used to test for significant differences in the DM methods of two groups of chiefs: those with a large span of control and those with a small span of control. Since the Fisher test requires dichotomous data, the chiefs were arbitrarily divided into two groups: those with span of control less than 10, small span of control, and those with a span of control of 10 or greater, large span of control. The chiefs' DM methods were dichotomized on the participation, non-participation dimension. In the personnel area, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found to exist for two of the 11 questionnaire items (1 and 8, see Table 13). No significant differences were found in either the program area items (Table 14) or in the budget area items (Table 15).

Using the same arbitrary grouping for chiefs by span of control, a comparison was made of the frequency distribution of the DM methods of the two groups of chiefs by decision area (Table 16). In
Table 13
Results of the Fisher Analysis of Span of Control\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Reported DM Methods\textsuperscript{b} for Personnel Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.01*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} Dichotomized by span of control less than 10 and span of control 10 or greater.

\textsuperscript{b} Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

\*p < .05.

Table 14
Results of the Fisher Analysis of Span of Control\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Reported DM Methods\textsuperscript{b} for Program Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} Dichotomized by span of control less than 10 and span of control 10 or greater.

\textsuperscript{b} Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

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Table 15
Results of the Fisher Analysis of Span of Control\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Reported DM Methods\textsuperscript{b} for Budget Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Dichotomized by span of control less than 10 and span of control 10 or greater.

\textsuperscript{b}Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

Table 16
Comparison of Chiefs' Span of Control and Chiefs' Reported DM Methods by Decision Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Area</th>
<th>Span of Control</th>
<th>DM Method Reported (%)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Span &lt; 10</td>
<td>3 14 33 40 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Span ≥ 10</td>
<td>2 12 35 20 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Span &lt; 10</td>
<td>2 10 34 37 17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Span ≥ 10</td>
<td>0 8 29 54 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Span &lt; 10</td>
<td>4 25 30 26 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Span ≥ 10</td>
<td>0 18 31 24 27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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the personnel area, chiefs with a large span of control used method five, delegation, more often (18%) and method four, joint decision-making less often (20%) than chiefs with a small span of control (method five = 10%, method four = 40%). In the budget area, chiefs with a large span of control used method five, delegation, more often (27%) and method two, chief's decision with detailed explanation, less often (18%) than chiefs with a small span of control (method five = 15%, method two = 25%). In the program area, chiefs with a large span of control used method five, delegation, less often (9%) and method four, joint decision-making, more often (54%) than chiefs with a small span of control (method five = 17%, method four = 37%).

The results of the Fisher test do not support the acceptance of the hypothesis that there was a relationship between span of control of the chiefs and DM method of the chiefs since only two of the 26 analyses showed significant differences ($p < .05$). The cumulative frequency data (Table 16) gave some indication that the opposite of the research hypothesis was occurring, that is, chiefs with a large span of control used more power sharing (DM methods four and five) than chiefs with a small span of control.

**Research Question 5**

Is there a relationship between the frequency with which problems are encountered by the chiefs and the DM method used?

The Fisher exact probabilities test was used to test for differences in the DM methods of two groups of chiefs: those who encountered a particular situation one to four times and those
who encountered a particular situation five or more times. Since the Fisher test requires dichotomous data on both variables, the DM methods were divided on the basis of participation, nonparticipation. The Fisher analysis was done for each questionnaire item but because some items did not have chiefs in one of the two groups, encountered the item one to four times or encountered the item five or more times, some items (4, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17) were not included in the analysis. This resulted in seven personnel items, six program items and seven budget items that were used in the analysis.

Of the seven personnel items, only item 18 showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in the DM methods (Table 17). In the program area and budget area, no items showed a significant difference in the DM methods used with regard to frequency of encountering items (Tables 18 and 19). These results do not support the acceptance of the hypothesis that there was a relation between frequency with which problems were encountered by the chief and DM method used since only one of the 20 analyses showed significant differences.

There were only five questionnaire items (3, 6, 14, 15, 21) on which chiefs gave frequencies of encountering as zero and which were also encountered five or more times by other chiefs. The Fisher test was used to test the significant difference of DM methods of chiefs who had not encountered a situation and the DM methods of those who encountered the same situation five or more times (Table 20). No significant differences ($p < .05$) were found in the DM methods when comparing these two groups of chiefs.
Table 17

Results of the Fisher Analysis of Frequency of Encountering Situations\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Reported DM Method\textsuperscript{b} for Personnel Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n\textsuperscript{c}</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Frequency dichotomized by one to four times and five or more times in past two years.

\textsuperscript{b}Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimensions.

\textsuperscript{c}Number of chiefs included in each analysis.

*\textsuperscript{p} .05.

Table 18

Results of the Fisher Analysis of Frequency of Encountering Situations\textsuperscript{a} and Chiefs' Reported DM Methods\textsuperscript{b} for Program Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>n\textsuperscript{c}</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Frequency dichotomized by one to four times and five or more times in past two years.

\textsuperscript{b}Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

\textsuperscript{c}Number of chiefs included in each analysis.

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### Table 19

Results of the Fisher Analysis of Frequency of Encountering Situations\(^a\) and Chiefs Reported DM Methods\(^b\) for Budget Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>(n^c)</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Frequency dichotomized by one to four times and five or more times in past two years.

\(^b\)Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

\(^c\)Number of chiefs included in each analysis.

### Table 20

Results of Fisher Analysis Comparing Chiefs' Reported DM Methods\(^a\) for Situations Not Encountered and Situations Frequently Encountered\(^b\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>(n^c)</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Dichotomized on the participation, nonparticipation dimension.

\(^b\)Situations encountered five or more times.

\(^c\)Number of chiefs included in each analysis.
Cumulative frequency distribution of chiefs' DM methods comparing frequencies of zero, one to four, and five or more are represented in Table 21. Although no significant statistical differences were found, some differences may be observed in the frequency distribution.

Table 21
Comparison of Chiefs' Reported DM Methods and Frequency of Encountering Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency in Last Two Years</th>
<th>DM Method (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4 times</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more times</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is agreement on the DM methods used in situations not encountered and situations encountered one to four times. Situations encountered five or more times resulted in more power sharing and less centralized DM (methods four and five). This result was contrary to the prediction of the research hypothesis that more frequently encountered items would result in more centralized DM methods and that situations not previously encountered would result in DM methods similar to those used in more frequently encountered situations.

Summary

The findings of the data analysis for the five research questions were reported in this chapter. Summary statements of the five separate analyses are presented here. Although statistically...
significant differences were found only to exist in two of the five analyses, research questions 2 and 3, the descriptive statistics gave additional information regarding the research questions that was worth noting.

Although no significant differences were found, the descriptive statistics indicated that chiefs perceive themselves as sharing more power with their subordinates than the subordinates perceive happening (research question 1). At the same time, subordinates would prefer significantly more power sharing by chiefs than they perceive the chiefs using (research question 2).

The analysis of research question 3 showed a significant dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the chiefs' importance ratings of situations. Due to insufficient data, a statistical analysis of the dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the subordinates' importance ratings was not done. A descriptive comparison of the DM methods of chiefs with a large span of control with the DM methods of chiefs with a small span of control indicated some differences which were contrary to the prediction of the research hypothesis, but no significant differences were found. No significant relationship was found between the frequency with which problems were encountered by the chief and the chief's DM methods. Again, descriptive statistics indicated differences in the DM methods used in situations encountered more or less frequently, and these differences were contrary to the prediction of the research hypothesis.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FURTHER STUDY

Review of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the decision-making (DM) process used by chief student personnel administrators within universities. The study included a review of the literature on administrative DM and its applicability to student personnel services in higher education. A sample of chief student personnel administrators and their subordinates at 41 institutions in Region IV East of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators participated in the study. All institutions had enrollments of 5,000 undergraduates or more.

A review of the literature resulted in the development of five research questions regarding the DM methods of chief student personnel administrators. Research hypotheses were developed and were tested by using data collected by means of a research questionnaire. The questionnaire, designed specifically for this study, contained 26 different problem situations. Chiefs and subordinates were asked to respond to each problem situation with regard to their own perceptions of the chiefs' DM methods. The information from the completed questionnaires was used in the statistical significance
tests and descriptive statistics to analyze the research questions and hypotheses.

Summary of the Findings

Using two tests for statistical significance, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the McNemar test, no differences were found between the chiefs' perceived DM methods and the subordinates' perceptions of the chiefs' DM methods. Therefore, there was agreement between chiefs and subordinates as to the DM methods used by the chiefs. Further examination of frequency measures of DM methods indicated that chiefs perceived themselves as giving more influence to subordinates than the subordinates perceived to exist. This result was not consistent with the findings of DM research conducted in business organizations (Heller, 1971; Vroom & Yetton, 1973), in which subordinates perceived themselves as having more influence in decisions than the chiefs perceived to exist.

Subordinates indicated that they would prefer to have more influence in DM than they perceived themselves to have. This result was found to be statistically significant by using the Wilcoxon test and was in agreement with the research hypothesis. Subordinates indicated that they preferred the chiefs to use DM methods that were more consistent with the DM methods the chiefs reported they were already using. This inconsistency regarding the preferred DM method of subordinates and the reported DM method of chiefs was indicative of either a lack of communication between chiefs and
subordinates or of different interpretations of what was taking place in the DM process. Subordinates perceived themselves as being left out of the DM process in situations in which they believed they should be included.

Chief administrators reported that they did vary the DM methods they used depending on the importance rating they gave to the situations. This result was found to be statistically significant based on the results of the McNemar test and indicated that chiefs tended to allow more subordinate influence in less important situations. Chiefs tended to allow less subordinate influence in situations they rated as important.

Subordinates rated virtually all DM situations as either "important" or "very important." Because of this no analysis could be made of the statistical dependence of the chiefs' DM methods on the subordinates' importance ratings. The consistently high importance ratings by subordinates could be attributed to two factors: either all items were designed as too important while developing the questionnaire or subordinates were unable to discriminate between situations that were important and situations that were not important. In the development of the questionnaire the problem of importance was addressed and attempts were made to guarantee a sufficient number of situations that were not important to subordinates. The inability of subordinates to discriminate on the basis of importance was implied by the results of the study.

The chiefs' DM methods did not show significant statistical dependence on the span of control of the chiefs. Further examination
of frequency measures indicated some relation between the chiefs' DM methods and the chiefs' span of control. The research hypothesis, based on studies in business organizations, predicted that the chiefs with a larger span of control would tend to use more centralized DM methods. This was not supported by the data, and, in fact, it was found that chiefs with a larger span of control tended to delegate more DM than chiefs with a smaller span of control in two decision areas, personnel and budget. One explanation for this result may be that delegation as a DM method required less of the chief's time and was utilized as a time saving technique for chiefs with a large span of control. This result also indicated that chiefs with a smaller span of control tended to use more centralized DM methods and thereby maintained more control of the DM in their divisions.

No statistically significant relationship was found between the chiefs' DM methods and the chiefs' ratings of the frequency of encountering situations. Further examination of cumulative frequency measures indicated some relation between the chiefs' DM methods and the chiefs' ratings of the frequency of encountering situations. The research hypothesis predicted that the situations not previously encountered would be dealt with in the same manner as situations most often encountered. This prediction was based on the assumption that when faced with a new situation the chiefs would treat it in the same manner as situations they encountered often. The descriptive statistical analysis suggested that this was not the case. Rather, chiefs tended to use similar DM methods
for situations not previously encountered and for situations encountered only a few times. As chiefs encountered items more often, they tended to delegate more DM to subordinates. This increase in the amount of delegation may have been due to the chiefs' avoidance of repetitive situations, or the chiefs may have delegated more as a result of intending to model DM for subordinates in certain situations. In essence the chief would be saying to subordinates, "Now that you have seen me make a decision in this area many times, you will be able to make an appropriate decision." However, no definite conclusions can be drawn on this issue from the data of this research.

Further examination of the data revealed the chiefs reported the use of more power-sharing with subordinates in DM in program decisions than in personnel or budget decision. Subordinates perceived the chiefs as sharing more power in personnel and program decisions and less in budget decisions. The subordinates also preferred more power-sharing to occur in personnel and program decisions and less in budget decisions. The data indicated differences in DM method by decision area which lent support to the division of the situations into the three areas of personnel, program and budget and also, once again, suggested that chiefs and subordinates do not have the same perspective regarding power-sharing.
Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the decision-making process used by chief student personnel administrators within universities. Research hypotheses were developed on the basis of the findings of a literature review and the perceptions of the investigator. A questionnaire, which asked subjects to respond to specific problem situations by indicating the DM methods of the chief student personnel administrator, was developed to collect data for testing the hypotheses. The questionnaire was completed by chief student personnel officers and their subordinates at 35 selected universities in the Midwest.

The results of the survey verified two of the five research hypotheses. Subordinates preferred chief student personnel officers to use less centralized DM methods than they perceived the chiefs using. The DM methods of chiefs were dependent on the importance of the situation as viewed by the chief. There was a tendency on the part of subordinates to rate virtually all decision situations as important and this was interpreted by the author as an inability on the part of the subordinates to discriminate between situations. There were indications that span of control of chiefs and the frequency with which situations were encountered may have had an influence on DM method used.

Recommendations for Further Study

The results of this study indicated significant interaction
between the chiefs' perceptions of importance of a situation and the
chiefs' DM Methods. Also, significant differences were found in the
subordinates' perceptions of the chiefs' DM methods and the sub-
ordinates' preferred DM methods. Observational data also indicated
possible interaction between span of control of chiefs and chiefs' DM methods and between frequency of encountering items by chiefs and
chiefs' DM methods. Further study should be conducted to verify
each of these results.

The results of this study revealed three major findings that
deserve further examination and explanation:

1. A general lack of agreement between chiefs and subordinates
   as to the DM methods of chiefs.

2. The inability of subordinates to discriminate between more
   important and less important situations.

3. The general disagreement of the results of this study with
   the results of studies conducted in business organizations.

The lack of agreement between chiefs and subordinates as to the
DM methods of chiefs might be investigated by a case study approach
that would collect more data, helping to identify more specifically
the areas of disagreement between chiefs and subordinates and the
reasons for such disagreement.

The inability of subordinates to discriminate between more
important and less important situations may be investigated by using
a refined, shortened research questionnaire in which subordinates
would be forced to rank order the importance of situations. In this
way it may be possible to determine subordinates' ability to discriminate the differential importance of situations. Also, a research methodology that combines questionnaire information and interview data may provide additional insights into this problem (Heller, 1969). This approach would allow for examination of group and individual data about the perceptions of subordinates.

Both the inability of subordinates to discriminate on the basis of importance and the general disagreement of the results of this study with the results in business organizations suggested that DM in student services divisions in higher education may have to be conceptualized in special terms. Perhaps the area of student services holds a unique place in higher education administration in that the services are under severe accountability pressures (Trembley & Sharf, 1975) and are often viewed as auxiliary functions in higher education. These suppositions could be investigated through an in-depth analysis of the DM of a few chiefs and subordinates in student services, helping to clarify and expand on the contradictory findings of this study.

One final area for further research is the examination of DM among chief student personnel administrators in private institutions. This study addressed only DM at large public institutions. A study similar to the one used in this research would lay the groundwork for the understanding of DM in private institutions. It would also serve as a guide for comparing student services at public and private institutions.
Clearly, the results of this study indicate that more research needs to be conducted in the area of DM in student services in an effort to determine reasons for the differences between student services administration and administration of business organizations. Also, research must be conducted to examine in greater depth the influence of the individual and his/her values on the DM methods utilized by chief student personnel administrators in higher education.
APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTATION

Chief Administrator's Decision-Making Questionnaire

Director's Questionnaire
Chief Administrator's Decision-Making Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a study to investigate the decision-making methods of chief student personnel administrators. Results will be confidential and reported only on a group basis without identification of schools or respondents.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

Directions

The first twenty-six items of the questionnaire are descriptions of decision-making situations. For each situation you are to respond to three questions:

a) Approximately how many times in the last two years have you encountered this type of situation? If zero, respond to b) and c) as though you had encountered this situation in the last two years.

b) Of the five Decision-Making Methods described below, which one have you used most often to reach a decision? (circle appropriate number)

c) How important is this situation to you in terms of its impact on the entire student services division? (circle appropriate number)

Items twenty-seven through thirty-two consist of demographic data. Since all information will be grouped by institution this information is essential!

Decision-Making Methods

Method 1: Own decision without detailed explanation refers to decisions made by you without any prior consultation with your department heads. Consultation with persons at a higher or equal authority level in the institution is not excluded.

Method 2: Own decision with detailed explanation refers to decisions made by you without prior consultation with your department heads but adds a formal post-decision explanation of the reasons for the decision. This may be done by memo, special meeting, or some other method.

Method 3: Prior consultation refers to decisions made only after consultation with one or more department heads. You make the decision by yourself and the final choice may or may not reflect the influence of your direct subordinates.

Method 4: Joint decision-making is a process of consensus formation in which one or more department heads participate. The department heads usually exert as much influence as you in the final choice.

Method 5: Delegation refers to decisions that you allow department heads to make on their own. You may or may not request a report of the final decision. Although you can veto the decision you seldom do.

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### Decision-Making Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Times Encountered in last two years</th>
<th>Method You Use When Making This Decision</th>
<th>Importance of situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Own Decision</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Own Decision with explanation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prior Consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint Decision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Decide on one of several applicants for an entry-level professional position in a department.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

2. Decide on the method of evaluation of a particular program in a department.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

3. Decide on a change in location of a department head's office.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

4. Fire a department head's non-professional employee.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

5. Increase the number of permanent positions in a department.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

6. To decrease some department budgets when requests from all departments are beyond allowable levels.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

7. Decide on the purchase of a necessary piece of equipment for a department costing over $500.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

8. Change the title of a department head while duties and pay remain the same.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

9. To combine two or more departments into one larger department under one director.  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

10. Decide in which department a new program will be located after the need for such a program has been demonstrated.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

11. Decide on the defense of an existing program you view as essential after the program has been questioned by the faculty of your institution.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

12. Decide to redistribute department budgets or discontinue a program after it loses funding external to the university.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

13. Assign a department head to a different position at the same salary.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

14. Decide on a significantly greater increase in budget for one department than for other departments in the division.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4

15. Decide on changes in a department's program after evaluation of the program has shown that it is not meeting its goals.  
    - 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4
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<td>20. Respond to the institutional community when there are doubts raised about the effectiveness of a department's staff.</td>
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<td>26. Decide on the installation of additional telephones in a department.</td>
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Feel free to include any comments on the back of this sheet.

☐ Check here if you wish to receive the results of this study.

Return to:  
Mr. Lawrence Pfaff  
Counseling Center  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Thank you for your assistance.
Chief Administrator's Decision-Making Methods

Director's Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a study to investigate the decision-making methods of chief student personnel administrators. Results will be confidential and reported only on a group basis without identification of schools or respondents.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

Directions

The first twenty-six items of the questionnaire are descriptions of decision-making situations that can occur in a student services division. Assume the situations occur at your institution and for each one respond to three questions:

a) Of the five Decision-Making Methods described below, which one would be used most often by your chief student personnel administrator? (circle appropriate number)

b) Of the five Decision-Making Methods described below, which one would you prefer that the chief use? (circle appropriate number)

c) How important is this situation to you in terms of its impact on your department? (circle appropriate number)

Items twenty-seven through thirty-two consist of demographic data. Since all information will be grouped by institution this information is essential!

Decision-Making Methods

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Decision-Making Situations

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</tr>
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<td>Initial Consultation</td>
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Return to: Mr. Lawrence Pfaff
Counseling Center
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Thank you for your assistance.
APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATIONS

Chief Administrator's Cover Letter
Director's Cover Letter
Reminder Letter
January 18, 1980

Dear

I am requesting your participation in a study of the decision-making methods of chief student personnel officers at universities of over 5000 students in NASPA Region IV-East. Please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire by February 15, 1980.

This questionnaire has been developed and piloted with the assistance of the student personnel directors at the University of Northern Iowa. The study is also approved by the Department of Counseling and Personnel at Western Michigan University as a major part of my doctoral dissertation.

The following directors at your institution are being asked to complete a similar questionnaire:

Due to the select group being sampled it is very important that both you and your directors participate in this study. All responses will be kept confidential. If you wish to receive results of the study check the appropriate space on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions regarding the study feel free to call me collect at (319) 273-2676.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Pfaff  Dr. Thomas W. Hansmeier
Special Assistant to the Vice President  Vice President, Student Services

Enclosures
LAP/bp
January 18, 1980

Dear Student Services Department Director:

I am requesting your participation in a study of the decision-making methods of chief student personnel officers at universities of over 5000 students in NASPA Region IV-East. Please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire by February 15, 1980.

This questionnaire has been developed and piloted with the assistance of the student personnel directors at the University of Northern Iowa. The study is also approved by the Department of Counseling and Personnel at Western Michigan University as a major part of my doctoral dissertation.

The chief student personnel officer at your institution is being asked to complete a similar questionnaire and he/she is aware that you and other directors have received the enclosed questionnaire.

Due to the select group being sampled your participation in the study is very important. All responses will be kept confidential. If you wish to receive results of the study check the appropriate space on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions regarding the study feel free to call me collect at (319) 273-2676.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Pfaff
Special Assistant to the Vice President

Thomas W. Hansmeier
Vice President,
Student Services

Enclosures
LAP/bp
March 6, 1980

Dear

In late January I wrote to you requesting your participation in a study of the decision-making methods of chief student personnel officers. I asked you to complete the "Chief Administrator's Decision-Making Methods--Director's Questionnaire" and return it to me. I have not yet received your questionnaire.

Your participation is essential to the completion of the study since it involves a select group of administrators in NASPA Region IV-East.

If you would take some time now to complete the questionnaire and return it, I would greatly appreciate it. If you have misplaced your copy, call me collect at (319) 273-2676 and I will have another sent to you.

If you have recently returned the questionnaire disregard this letter.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Pfaff
Special Assistant to the Vice-President

LAP:vs

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


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