TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ROLE CHANGE THROUGH SHARED DECISION MAKING: A 2-YEAR CASE STUDY

By

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</strong></td>
<td>ii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABSTRACT</strong></td>
<td>vi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definitions of Terms</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design of the Study</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization of the Dissertation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of Literature on Shared Decision Making.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Cultures: The Conditions of Teaching and Their Effects on Teachers' Roles.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role Theory</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Setting</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Methods and Procedures</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodological Issues</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDM AT SILVER HILL: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT FOR TEACHER ROLE CHANGE</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Context: A Description of Silver Hill</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evolving Definitions of SDM at Silver Hill</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barriers that Impeded Progress</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty-Administration Trust</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SDM Accomplishments: Learning about SDM AND SDM and School Change.</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ROLE CHANGE AT SILVER HILL</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Problems and Their Influence on Teacher Role Change</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changes in Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Understanding and Changes in Self-Perceptions</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers' Relationships</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship of Findings to Previous Research</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions of Findings to Practitioners</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions of Findings to SDM Research</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions of Findings to Teacher Education</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>RESEARCH TEAM HANDOUT ON FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF SDM</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>INITIAL TEACHER ROLE INTERVIEW</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>SECOND TEACHER ROLE INTERVIEW</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFERENCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ROLE CHANGE THROUGH SHARED DECISION MAKING: A 2-YEAR CASE STUDY

By

William E. Smith

August, 1993

Chairman: Dorene D. Ross
Cochairman: Elizabeth Bondy
Major Department: Instruction and Curriculum

The purpose of this study was to illuminate the process of teacher role change as perceived by teachers engaged in the implementation of shared decision making (SDM). The researcher reported the progress of SDM in one school over a 2-year period. He examined teachers' perceptions of changes in their roles, differences in their experiences of SDM and role change, and factors that supported or constrained role change.

The study took place in a large urban elementary school. Data included 100 interviews conducted with faculty, administration, and staff from February, 1990, through May, 1992. In November, 1991, and February, 1992, the researcher conducted 26 interviews with 14 teachers he identified as SDM performers, audience, and outsiders. Performers were
teachers who were actively involved; audience were concerned and supportive but not as involved; and outsiders were uninvolved. Although analysis of data drew upon all interview data, the 26 interviews with teachers designated as performers, audience, and outsiders helped clarify differences in teachers' experiences of SDM.

Analysis focused on teachers' perceptions of their responsibilities and rights, personal changes, and relationships with other role partners. Performers reported a variety of new responsibilities and said SDM gave them the right to express their views candidly. They believed they gained understandings about school change and improved their leadership skills. Some performers said they increased their confidence and sense of efficacy. They also reported changed relationships with colleagues and the principal. Audience and outsiders perceived fewer and less substantive changes. Further, teachers revealed few changes in their relationships with students, parents, and nonprofessional staff, and teachers' relationships with district administration remained unchanged.

Failed communication made it difficult for audience and outsiders to experience the role changes performers enacted. SDM created communication demands that the school's communication systems could not meet. In addition, teachers' perceptions of district nonsupport for SDM limited the
faculty's decision-making authority and their ability to restructure their school.

The study suggested the importance of teacher inclusiveness in SDM and provided new directions for SDM research. Widespread implementation of SDM implies a redefinition of teachers' roles and, thus, a reconceptualization of teacher education.
CHAPTER 1
BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Contemporary educators face many difficult and complex problems. One strategy that scholars (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Griffin, 1988; Maeroff, 1988) are advocating for improving schools is shared decision making (SDM). Shared decision making is a form of school governance that increases decision-making authority at the school site and places school decisions in the hands of all local educational stakeholders, including teachers, other school staff, parents, and, in some cases, students (Cistone, 1989; Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980). Proponents of SDM have asserted that it will change teachers' roles by giving them greater responsibility for the success of their schools (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986) and altering their traditional relationships with colleagues and administrators (Johnson, 1990a).

However, early studies of SDM (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990; Lindquist, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988) have not supported scholars' predictions that it changes teachers' roles. My intent in this dissertation was to examine teacher role change during SDM from a theoretical perspective different from previous studies and to use research methods more
likely to reveal role change and the conditions that support or constrain it. Before discussing those considerations further, I will relate the historical background that led to the emergence of SDM as an educational reform strategy.

In 1903 John Dewey warned that reformers were placing educational leadership in the hands of people who had little knowledge of schooling and were "moved by non-educational motives" (p. 195). Dewey's appraisal was alarmingly consistent with the assessment that scholars have made of contemporary policymakers. As in Dewey's time, current policy has been directed by legislators, governors, school board members, and business leaders (Griffin, 1988; Toch, 1984; Wise, 1979) who have provided "simplistic solutions to complex educational and social problems" (Orlich, 1989, p. 513). Ironically, the reforms of Dewey's era did not have as profoundly negative an effect on teaching and learning as the outpouring of legislation of the last 20 years. The prescriptions for teaching that educational reforms have imposed upon teachers and administrators have ignored not only the complexity of teaching and schools but also the dramatic social changes of the last 50 years (Griffin, 1988; Sizer, 1984).

Invariably, the result of these reforms has been "the further centralization and bureaucratization of education" (Wise, 1979, p. xi). The increased bureaucratic control of teachers and local school authorities has—in the pursuit of
educational excellence—precluded, rather than encouraged, the attainment of instructional excellence. It has had an especially debilitating effect upon classroom teaching and teachers (Apple & Teitelbaum, 1986; Toch, 1984; Wise, 1979). The result of this "first wave of reform" (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988, p. 229) has been that most public school teaching has become increasingly routinized and mechanical, devoid of meaning and relevance, and impersonal and disengaging for the students who must endure it (Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984). Further, many exemplary teachers are leaving the classroom (McNeil, 1988; Raywid, 1990; Sykes, 1990), and current teaching conditions are discouraging the "best and brightest" from entering the profession (McNeil, 1988; Sykes, 1983, 1990). Ashton and Webb (1986) have concluded that "teaching is becoming an imperiled profession precisely because it deprives so many good teachers of their motivation and sense of professional self-esteem" (p. 2). Such findings are particularly ominous in light of predictions that the demand for teachers in the 1990s will be significantly larger than the present supply (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986).

The fundamental flaw in the policies of the first wave of educational reform was their failure to take into account the conditions and cultures of schools (Timar, 1989). As Wirth (1983) noted, "Controls, without commitment of students and teachers, do not produce impressive results"
Educational policy has been based on a factory model that conceives of students as products to be molded (Schlechty, 1990) and views teachers as workers who can be motivated toward greater production by incentives external to the task of teaching (Wirth, 1983). In contrast, teachers have reported that they derive satisfaction from their interactions and successes with students (Lortie, 1975) and that they value collegial relationships over competitiveness with their peers (Little, 1988).

One result of the incongruence between policymakers' conceptions of schools and the reality of school cultures has been that decisions handed down to teachers are rarely implemented as they are intended (Ball, 1987; Bullough, 1987). In effect, policy initiatives are "shaped" (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988) by teachers at the level of implementation. Bullough explained this dynamic by observing that teachers act upon their sense of service to society and to their students. Regarding themselves as public servants, they may willingly comply with some organizational demands but stop short when they perceive that organizational requirements conflict with the needs of students. Then, their desire to serve their students compels them to reject policy mandates. In effect, teachers have been limited in their "productive power" (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988, p. 242), possessing only the ability to constrain the implementation of centralized decisions.
result is an educational system at odds with itself, incapable of effectively fulfilling its mission.

In response to these conditions, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986) ushered in the "second wave" (Cistone, 1989, p. 363) of reform. The Carnegie Report posited the need to restore the nation's economic competitiveness and to provide equitably for the educational needs of children from diverse backgrounds. It called upon policymakers to "restructure schools to provide a professional environment for teaching" (p. 3). The Commission envisioned schools in which teachers have greater control over instructional decisions and are accountable for student learning. According to the Carnegie Report, such professional environments would attract the "best and brightest" into teaching (The Carnegie Commission on Education and the Economy, 1986).

Numerous scholars have reiterated the Carnegie Report's assertion that SDM will improve the conditions of teaching, thus enabling schools to attract and retain teachers of the highest calibre (Griffin, 1988; Houston, 1988; Johnson, 1990b; Maeroff, 1988; Wise, 1990). Others have recommended SDM because they believe that the leadership demands of the principalship are too extensive and varied to be met by any one individual. These scholars believe that schools cannot meet today's educational demands without mobilizing the knowledge and leadership abilities of all teachers and staff.
Shared decision making is also being promoted by educators who recognize that school dilemmas are context specific and that the solution to one school's difficulties may exacerbate problems in another setting (Griffin, 1988). Moreover, some schools are implementing SDM with the expectation that it will improve the experience of schooling for students (David, 1990; Ratzki & Fisher, 1990).

Teaching cannot be professionalized as long as teachers have limited control over decisions that affect their work. According to Berliner (1986), "the best way to change the norms of the workplace is to provide teachers with the opportunity to do it themselves" (p. xii). Numerous scholars have asserted that SDM increases teachers' ownership of decisions and, thus, their commitment to the achievement of schoolwide goals and initiatives (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Linguist & Mauriel, 1989). Johnson (1990a) noted that when teachers participate in decision making, "policy is more likely to correspond to practice" (p. 138). Other scholars believe SDM will increase teacher collaboration, create more supportive environments for teaching, and improve teacher morale (Timar, 1989; White, 1989). In addition, there is evidence that teachers who have worked in leadership roles better understand the complexities of school operations (Duke et al., 1980; Lieberman, Saxl, & Miles, 1988). Most
important, SDM may enable educators to mobilize the knowledge, creativity, and leadership of all school stakeholders in solving school problems (Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Schlechty, 1990).

Shared decision making may have the potential to fulfil these expectations. However, there is little empirical evidence to support advocates' predictions (Imber & Duke, 1984). Further, research has demonstrated that organizational change in schools is complex and problematic (Ball, 1987). Shared decision making requires of teachers and administrators a very difficult transition. It demands that they alter their traditional roles as they structure new relationships and assume new responsibilities (Johnson, 1990a). As Griffin (1988) noted, "It is doubtful that positive changes in schools will occur without some dramatic restructuring of the role of the teacher" (p. 86).

Griffin's (1988) assertion affirms the importance of studies of teacher role change during the implementation of SDM. Teacher role is so central to SDM that the innovation itself cannot be adequately assessed without understanding its effects on teachers' work and their organizational relationships. To illuminate the process of teacher role change during the implementation of SDM is to know with greater certainty if SDM improves the conditions of teaching, increases collaboration among teachers, broadens teachers' perspectives of educational dilemmas, improves
teachers' commitment and morale, and draws upon teachers' expertise to solve school problems.

The purpose of this study was to contribute to our understanding of the process of teacher role change during the implementation of SDM. The restructuring of the relationships of school stakeholders—which, by definition, is what SDM does—implies role change. However, the nature of teacher role change during SDM and the conditions that foster or constrain the process have not been established. Nor is it clear that the redefinition of roles in schools enacting SDM will be a smooth or easy process. In fact, scholars have noted that the process is problematic for teachers and administrators (Conley, 1991; David, 1991; Lieberman, 1988). For example, teachers must acquire additional knowledge and skills in order to manage school affairs in which they have not been involved traditionally (Griffin, 1988; Johnson, 1990a). As Johnson noted, teachers "have implicitly negotiated a treaty that protects their classroom autonomy in exchange for knowing their place and leaving school management to administrators" (p. 143).

Malen and Ogawa's (1988) research indicated the difficulty of changing principal, parent, and teacher roles. Malen and Ogawa studied SDM in Salt Lake City and found that traditional roles did not change. Clearly, additional studies, especially longitudinal investigations, are needed to identify the factors that foster or constrain SDM success
and teacher role change (Malen & Ogawa, 1988). Such studies should add to our understanding of the importance of teacher participation in decision making (Conley, 1991). These studies should clarify what constitutes participation and the effects of teacher participation in different decision domains. Researchers should examine closely the processes by which teachers redefine their organizational roles. Further, researchers must attend to the school contexts in which SDM is implemented and to the influence of different models of SDM (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988). Attention to these research issues will result in greater understanding of the different experiences of teachers involved in SDM and will provide a clearer image of the qualities possessed by teachers who thrive professionally in this new professional environment.

Shared decision making may help stakeholders to solve their schools' most troubling dilemmas. However, we should avoid advocating solutions without considering the complexity of the problems faced or the solutions proposed. When we view issues simplistically, we contribute to the certainty that we will be disappointed in the results of our proposed solutions (Louis, 1990). One goal of this study was to contribute to practitioners' understandings about SDM by illuminating its complexities and providing insights into its implementation. The second goal was to contribute to scholarly research on SDM by examining the process of
teacher role change and by raising questions for further investigation. The third goal was to inform teacher education by providing understanding about changes in school cultures and teachers' roles that may occur during the implementation of SDM. If participative school governance becomes commonplace in our nation's schools, teacher education cannot ignore the implications that such a change has for its mission.

Statement of the Problem

In the 1989-90 school year, Palmetto County (a pseudonym), a large urban district in the Southeast, through a collaborative effort between the school board and the local teachers' union, initiated an SDM project in 10 pilot schools. The school board contracted with the Research and Development Center on School Improvement in the University of Florida's College of Education to provide a formative evaluation of the implementation of SDM in six of the schools. Since that time a team of researchers from the Research and Development Center, under the direction of Dr. Rodman Webb, have followed the progress of SDM in Palmetto County and have provided written reports to the individual schools and the school board and district administration.

As a member of the research team, I was assigned to study Silver Hill Elementary School (a pseudonym). During the first 2 years of SDM implementation (beginning in February, 1990, and continuing through May, 1992), I made
seven on-site visits to Silver Hill to collect interview and observational data. I also conducted additional interviews over the telephone. I submitted to the school seven status reports based on my analysis of these data.

Analysis of the initial set of on-site interviews conducted at Silver Hill on February 26, 1990, revealed several shared perceptions among the interview respondents. They agreed that the intent of the school board and teachers' union in implementing SDM was to professionalize teaching, with the expectation that student outcomes would improve as a result of teacher professionalization. The mood of the seven teachers and the administrator who were interviewed that day was one of excitement and anticipation as they approached the task of restructuring their school's governance. They exuded a sense of confidence that SDM provided them a mechanism through which they could collectively resolve the numerous and confounding problems facing their school. Nonetheless, their collective sense of efficacy was accompanied by an anxiety that stemmed from the ambiguity of the task that lay before them. Their ambivalence was best expressed by one of the school's union stewards, who stated,

Well, we are all walking in a dark tunnel here. The first time there's not even any light at the end of the tunnel, because we have no idea even how long the tunnel is. We're all kind of stumbling around in the dark. But I can see at our school, that even though we're all stumbling around in the dark, we're beginning to become allied. . . . We may all walk into a wall,
but . . . we're going to [do] it together. I guess in any large group of people there are going to be one or two stragglers, one or two naysayers. I'm sure we'll probably discover that too. But I really sense that there's a good strong purpose here. What it is we don't know and where we're going we're not real sure, but I think we're willing to try it.

The metaphor of the dark tunnel conveyed vividly the perceptions of the faculty and administration in February, 1990. In interview after interview, staff expressed the following sentiments. First, although uncertain as to how they would succeed in restructuring their school, they were confident that by consolidating their collective abilities and energies, they would ultimately succeed. Second, they agreed that some teachers would not embrace SDM. Indeed, they were sure there would be a few "stragglers" or "naysayers." Third, they believed that SDM would increase collegiality and collaboration at their school. Above all, they were certain that if SDM was implemented at Silver Hill, the school and their roles within it would change significantly. The certainty that their work would change, however, was matched by their uncertainty as to how it would change.

The faculty's uncertainty about the effects of SDM on their professional lives first suggested to me the importance of understanding teacher role change during SDM. As I continued to read the literature on SDM, my conviction that teacher role was a central issue progressively strengthened. I also found, however, that the few empirical
studies of SDM indicated that teachers' roles did not change significantly. Closer examination of these studies, continued participation in the Research and Development Center's evaluation, and reflection upon the SDM literature and the events unfolding at Silver Hill suggested to me that teacher role change was more subtle, complex, and problematic than many advocates had predicted. I also began to suspect that the existing empirical studies of SDM did not reveal teacher role change due to methodological limitations and because the researchers conducting these studies did not recognize the subtlety, complexity, and difficulty of role change. Their research perspectives simply did not allow them to discern teacher role change.

For that reason, I decided to turn to the literature on role theory. In this dissertation I have drawn upon the knowledge and sophistication of that theoretical perspective to analyze teacher role change at Silver Hill Elementary School.

Systems theorists who conduct research of schools do not attend to teachers' views and, therefore, often fail to understand teachers' reactions to innovations (Ball, 1987). In contrast, role theorists who take a symbolic interactionist perspective believe that people behave according to their perceptions of situations. Thus, role theorists attend closely to individuals' interpretations (Hewitt, 1988, p. 77). By assuming a symbolic
interactionist perspective, I believed I would be able to account for the behavior of SDM participants whose interpretations did not match the organization's and who did not act in accordance with the organization's expectations.

Symbolic interactionists believe that people actively construct their roles in interaction with others (Hewitt, 1988). That is, organizational expectations do not predetermine entirely how individuals will act. People exercise autonomy in defining their roles even though they tend to adjust their behavior to accommodate the expectations of others (Hewitt, 1988). Research conducted from a theoretical perspective in which the nature of role change is assumed to be known a priori cannot reveal role changes that do not agree with the researchers' preconceptions. By attending to the views of teachers and analyzing their interpretations from the perspective of role theory, I believed I would be able to discover whatever role changes teachers enacted, irrespective of preexisting notions of what role change in SDM should be.

The purpose of this study was to illuminate the process of teacher role change as it was perceived and understood by teachers at Silver Hill Elementary School during the initial 2 years of SDM implementation in their district. The guiding question for this research was

How do teachers' roles, as they perceive them, change during the implementation of shared decision making?
Subsumed under that question were others that were also considered. Among those were the following:

1. From the perspective of SDM participants, how has SDM evolved during its first 2 years, and what effect has it had on their school?

2. From the perspective of SDM participants, have teachers' roles changed? In what ways?

3. From the perspective of SDM participants, did the experience of role change vary from teacher to teacher? If so, what were the differences, and why did participants believe these differences occurred?

4. From the perspective of SDM participants, what contextual factors have fostered teacher role change in SDM, and what factors have constrained it?

5. How does role theory help to explain the experiences and perceptions of teachers at this school, and how does it contribute to our understandings of SDM?

Definitions of Terms

This study examined the process of teacher role change during the implementation of shared decision making. To clarify my research perspective, I provide the following definitions of role and shared decision making.

Role

Hewitt (1988) stated, "A role is generally defined as a cluster of duties, rights, and obligations associated with a particular social position" (p. 79). As Hewitt noted, many social scientists speak of individuals "playing" or "enacting" roles. The implication is that people "are doing and saying what the cultural script indicates they should do at any given point" (p. 79). In fact, Hewitt argued, people
are not as constrained by their roles as the notion of following a "cultural script" might suggest. Rather, "the concept of role . . . provides a way for people to grasp how situations are structured" (pp. 79-80). Although roles provide a script for behavior in specific situations, individuals may choose not to follow the script. Further, and especially relevant to this study, when people find themselves in new situations, they often create new roles (Hewitt, 1988).

Individuals' self-concepts are often tied to their dominant roles (Zurcher, 1983). Further, role theorists define role in terms of an individual's interactions with a particular type of role partner (Bredemeier, 1979; Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979; Hewitt, 1988). Teachers, for example, enact one type of role in their interactions with students, another in their interactions with other teachers, and another in their interactions with parents. The collection of these roles is called a "role set" (Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979). In this study, the term role refers to all of the roles that teachers enact in their work, as that more inclusive definition of teachers' role is compatible with the usage of role by most educational theorists, particularly those who consider the concept of role in SDM (Griffin, 1988; Hallinger & Richardson, 1988; Hamilton, 1981; Imber & Duke, 1984; Johnson, 1990a; Louis, 1990).
**Shared Decision Making**

Duke et al. (1980) stated, "Shared decision making refers to teacher (or parent, student, or community) involvement in the process by which decisions are made. . . . School decisions are greater in scope than a particular classroom, but not greater than a school" (p. 93).

Scholars often use the terms school-based management, restructuring, and school-based management/shared decision making when they describe the organizational change Duke et al. defined as shared decision making (SDM). White (1989), for example, stated that the intent of school-based management is to improve decisions by granting decision-making power to those who must implement them. David (1990) used the term restructuring to describe a Dade County, Florida, project that Cistone (1989) had labeled school-based management/shared decision making.

I have used the term SDM in this dissertation as that was the term used by educators in Palmetto County. I define SDM as a form of governance that involves all of the school's stakeholders in making school decisions. I define restructuring somewhat differently. Restructuring implies fundamental changes that result from a reconceptualization of the aims of schooling or of school operations. Restructuring of a school's governance may very well result in SDM, but restructuring of a school's curriculum, for
example, could be attempted through an administrative mandate. I define school-based management as a shift in decision making from the district or state level to the school site. Here again, school-based management may result in SDM, but moving decision-making authority to schools does not assure the involvement of all stakeholders in decision making.

These definitional distinctions are not clear in the literature, and many authors use these terms interchangeably. I have used the term SDM throughout this dissertation, even as I reviewed literature by authors who used another term, provided, of course, that the author's description of school governance matched the definition of SDM I have given here.

**Design of the Study**

Hewitt's (1988) definition of role indicates that individuals, especially in new and problematic situations, construct their roles. Because people construct their roles according to their interpretations of situations and their beliefs about others' expectations for their behavior, it is important that studies of teacher role change focus on teachers' perceptions. Qualitative research attends to participants' perspectives and understandings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Spindler, 1982a), and qualitative methods enable the researcher to examine the process of change
(Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). For those reasons, I used qualitative methods of inquiry for this study.

To investigate the process of role change, I examined data that I collected during the first 2 years of the implementation of SDM at Silver Hill Elementary School. In part, I analyzed data that I gathered as a researcher for the Research and Development Center's formative evaluation of SDM in Palmetto County. These data included 74 interviews of teachers and administrators, school and district archives, and field notes gathered on site, including notes on two meetings of Silver Hill's SDM Council. In keeping with the purposes of the formative evaluation being conducted for Palmetto County, the 74 interviews focused broadly on the process of SDM implementation.

Based on analysis of data gathered during the first year and one-half of SDM implementation (including 48 interviews of teachers and administrators), I selected 14 teachers in October, 1991, who had varying levels of involvement in SDM. These teachers ranged from leaders in the implementation of SDM to those who were uninvolved. In delineating these levels, Goffman's (1973) conception of performers, audience, and outsiders (p. 145) provided a useful framework. Analysis of data suggested that teachers were either actively involved in SDM (performers), concerned and supportive but not as actively involved (audience), or
were on the outside of the action (outsiders). I identified six teachers as performers, four as audience, and four as outsiders.

I interviewed these 14 teachers during a 2-day visit to Silver Hill in November, 1991, and I conducted followup interviews with 12 of them during another 2-day visit in February, 1992. My intent in these interviews was to elicit teachers' perceptions about their professional roles, with particular attention to role changes that occurred during SDM implementation and to factors that either fostered or constrained teacher role change. Two of the teachers interviewed in November—both of them performers—retired from teaching prior to the February data collection. I had interviewed one of them four times, more than any other teacher at Silver Hill, so her data set still provided a history of her evolving role in SDM over the 2 years she was involved in the project. Nonetheless, with the retirement of these two teachers, there were four teachers in each of Goffman's categories for the focused study of teacher role change.

In addition to interview data, I also collected archives throughout the project. These documents included school performance reports, demographic data on staff and students, and minutes and memoranda that pertained to SDM. By analyzing data that I collected over more than 2 years as a member of the evaluation team, I was able to
construct a portrait of teachers at Silver Hill in the process of SDM implementation. In addition, the interviews specific to teacher role change provided a more in-depth view of the perspectives of teachers at each of the three levels of SDM involvement.

I used ethnographic methods recommended by Spradley (1980) to analyze interview data. These methods helped me to identify teacher role change, to delineate the levels and dimensions of change that different teachers experienced, and to illuminate the contextual factors that influenced role change. In this manner I was able address the guiding and subsidiary questions posed earlier.

**Significance of the Study**

As noted earlier, advocates of SDM have posited teacher role change as a central issue and, in fact, as a reason for implementing SDM. Researchers conducting empirical studies, however, have concluded that teachers' roles do not change during SDM. I attribute that conclusion to two factors.

First, much of the literature advocating SDM has not emphasized the complexity, subtlety, and difficulty of role change. Consequently, researchers of SDM seem to have assumed that role change is straightforward and easily discerned. Thus, their theoretical perspectives have made the discovery of role change unlikely. Second, the methodologies these researchers have used have made it difficult for them to discern role change. Here again,
their assumption that role change is not problematic has likely guided their methodological decisions. Most of the studies have not followed teachers long enough to document role change. Few of the researchers have explored a single context in enough depth to understand the factors that influence role change at that site. Others have not recorded in detail how SDM was implemented. Therefore, readers cannot be sure that what occurred in some contexts was, in fact, SDM.

Role theory provided a theoretical framework through which I was able to observe and document teacher role change. In addition, I researched SDM at one site for more than 2 years, attending closely to the process of implementation and to teachers' perceptions of their roles. This study revealed subtle and gradual changes in teachers' roles not discerned by previous research. It also revealed the factors that influence role change and dimensions of role change that other studies have not reported. The study indicated that teacher role change is a slow, complex, and difficult process. Further, this research added to our understanding of SDM's implementation and raised questions for further investigation.

Organization of the Dissertation

The following chapters provide a review of selected literature, a description of the study's research methodology, and a discussion of research findings,
conclusions, and implications. Chapter 2 is a review of literature about SDM, school cultures, and role theory. In Chapter 3 I discuss the research methodology for this study. Chapter 4 is a case study of the implementation of SDM at Silver Hill during its first 2 years, and Chapter 5 is a summary of teacher role change in the school. I present conclusions and implications in Chapter 6.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to describe the process of teacher role change as it was perceived and understood by teachers in an elementary school during the implementation of shared decision making (SDM). To accomplish that purpose required that I examine literature on three distinct topics: shared decision making, school culture, and role theory.

Literature about SDM informs our understandings of the conditions that support or constrain its success, as well as the effects SDM has upon schools and their participants. The first section of this chapter is a review of that literature.

This chapter also includes discussions of school culture and role theory. According to Bredemeier and Bredemeier (1979), "People do not ordinarily act simply as 'people'; they play roles or occupy statuses in social systems, and their actions are actings-out of the cultural script defining their roles and statuses" (p. 35). The Bredemeiers' conception of role implies a reciprocal relationship between role and culture. That is, the school's culture influences the roles of school personnel;
similarly, the roles enacted by school personnel influence the culture of the school.

Thus, this literature review includes sections on SDM, school culture, and role theory. The review of literature about SDM is a discussion of its potential benefits, the complexities and difficulties of implementation, and findings about teacher role change. The section on school culture is a discussion of the conditions of teaching and the effects of school contexts on teachers' roles. In the review of role theory I provide a brief overview of that literature and a more focused examination of those theories that are most applicable to this study. After the three reviews, I assess research on SDM and teachers' roles in a concluding section.

Review of Literature on Shared Decision Making

The literature on SDM can be divided into four major categories: (a) conceptual literature, (b) personal accounts by teachers and administrators who have participated in SDM, (c) evaluation reports of efforts to implement SDM, and (d) empirical studies of SDM projects. Much of the conceptual literature was written following the Carnegie Forum's (1986) suggestion that real educational reform will be unlikely until teachers have a say in decisions affecting their work. The conceptual literature has been written by advocates of SDM who have related their views of its potential benefits.
Conceptual Literature about SDM

Six primary benefits of SDM are proposed in the conceptual literature. First, advocates argue that SDM improves teacher morale and commitment by increasing teachers' ownership of decisions (Raywid, 1990; Schlechty, 1990; Wirth, 1983). As Johnson (1990a) observed, when teachers are involved in making decisions, "policy is more likely to correspond to practice" (p. 138). Unlike centralized decisions, which are often compromised by teachers (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988), decentralized decisions leading to restructuring are more likely to be advocated, if not initiated, by teachers (Johnson, 1990a).

Second, advocates believe SDM will enable schools to use the creative energies of school people to meet the demands of a rapidly changing society (Schlechty, 1990). Shared decision making creates organizational structures that are flexible enough to respond to changing demands. By unleashing the energies and talents of all educational stakeholders and by creating more flexible institutional arrangements, SDM will encourage schools to be cultures of change (Schlechty, 1990).

A third perceived benefit is that SDM increases teacher collegiality and, thus, enhances teachers' sense of control over situations affecting their work (Lieberman & Miller, 1984). Lortie (1975) concluded that teachers' isolation increases their sense of uncertainty about their teaching
success, thus contributing to conservative practice. Working in isolation, teachers resolve problems and develop their craft without the benefit of collegial or administrative support (Lortie, 1975). It appears that SDM will alter the institutional arrangements that isolate teachers and contribute to the dilemmas Lortie observed.

Fourth, the involvement of teachers in decision making may increase their understanding of the complexity of school dilemmas (Lieberman, 1988). In contrast to the insular views of teachers who work in isolation (Lortie, 1975), teachers engaged in SDM may develop more global perspectives about education. Wirth (1983), who proposed that both education and industry would become more productive and more humane enterprises with the implementation of workplace democracy, indicated that worker involvement in determining company policy increased workers’ awareness of the ethical consequences of their decisions. In contrast, workers who felt they had no control over decisions did not consider their impact. Workplace democracy also enhanced the workers’ sense of the importance of their work, thus increasing their morale and commitment. Those who worked on teams developed a stronger sense of responsibility for their peers and were more likely to assist colleagues. The decisions of employees revealed that they possessed a level of expertise that management previously had not acknowledged. Productivity increased due to the improved
quality of decisions and because the workers recognized their stake in the success of their companies. Wirth suggested that these benefits will accrue to schools if they adopt more democratic structures (Wirth, 1983).

A fifth potential benefit of SDM is that greater teacher involvement in decision making will make teaching a more attractive career (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986). The Carnegie Forum predicted that the nation's demand for teachers will increase dramatically in the 1990s. Thus, the need to attract greater numbers of exemplary teachers will be more imperative than ever. Since the publication of the Carnegie Report, numerous scholars (Griffin, 1988; Johnson, 1990b; Wise, 1990) have repeated the assertion that SDM will professionalize teaching and enable schools to attract and retain teachers of the highest calibre.

A sixth perceived benefit—-and the one that should take precedence over all others--is that SDM will improve the experience of schooling for students. Scholars have argued that SDM places the responsibility for schools' success in educating children in the hands of those most directly involved in that work (Holmes Group, 1986; McNeil, 1988; Raywid, 1990). Moreover, SDM advocates believe that the five benefits discussed above will lead to improved student outcomes.
In summary, advocates have asserted that SDM (a) improves teacher morale and commitment by increasing teachers' ownership of decisions, (b) makes schools more responsive to changing demands, (c) increases teacher collegiality and enhances teachers' control over their work, (d) increases teachers' understanding of the complexity of schools and helps them to develop more global perspectives, (e) makes teaching a more attractive career, and (f) improves student outcomes. If SDM's implementation fulfils these expectations, it will enable school people to solve their most difficult problems. Indeed, the authors of most of the conceptual literature have asserted its efficacy with few warnings of its complexity or qualifications about its promise. However, no matter how intuitive these results may seem to be, we should be careful not to assume without supporting evidence the outcomes advocates have predicted. The following review of personal accounts of SDM offers support for some of advocates' assertions but also reveals some dilemmas in implementing SDM.

Personal Accounts of SDM

Personal accounts have limited scientific validity. Because the authors have been active participants in SDM, their accounts tend to reflect their personal impressions rather than empirically supported conclusions. In addition, these accounts almost invariably relate successful efforts to implement SDM. Nonetheless, this literature contributes
to an understanding of SDM. The literature offers some support for assertions about SDM's benefits and reveals some of the complexities of SDM implementation. These accounts also provide practical suggestions for implementing SDM. The personal accounts are divided into three categories: (a) accounts of SDM in Dade County, Florida, (b) accounts that support theorists' assertions of SDM's benefits, and (c) accounts that suggest the complexity of implementing SDM. Accounts about SDM in Dade County, Florida, comprise a separate category because conditions leading to SDM implementation in Dade County were very similar to those in Palmetto County. Dade County's SDM project was one of the nation's first efforts in shared governance and has received widespread attention. The two studies reviewed offer somewhat different perspectives on the project's implementation.

Dade County. Gomez (1989), a district administrator in Dade County, Florida, related an account of that district's involvement in SDM. Two actions set the stage for SDM in Dade County. First, prior to efforts to initiate SDM, the implementation of school-based management in the 1970s moved budgetary decision making from the district to the schools. Second, the cooperation of the local teachers' union and the school board was instrumental in initiating SDM (Gomez, 1989).
For a Dade County school to take part in the SDM project, at least two-thirds of the faculty had to vote in favor of participation. The school also had to submit a detailed proposal describing its governance plan, listing potential projects the school would undertake, and citing regulations the faculty wished to have waived. In addition, Dade County's Office of Educational Accountability established procedures for an annual districtwide review of SDM and for self-evaluations by each SDM school (Gomez, 1989).

During implementation Dade's pilot SDM schools faced a number of problems. One problem was that participants and district administrators initially had "unrealistic expectations" (Gomez, 1989, p. 22). They soon learned that SDM requires a substantial commitment of time and that results would not be immediate. Gomez recommended that schools focus on only a few high priority items at a time. Another problem was that teachers "often advocated simplistic solutions to school problems" (Gomez, 1989, p. 22). In time, as they learned about the complexity of school problems, they broadened their perspectives; as they did, other teachers stated that they "sounded like the principal" (Gomez, 1989, p. 22). Gomez recommended that meetings about SDM be open to all faculty to enhance everyone's understanding of the complexity of school issues. A third problem was that participants experienced difficulty
learning new roles. For example, teachers had limited knowledge about budget and little experience in conducting meetings. Gomez suggested training for SDM participants (Gomez, 1989).

Gomez (1989) related several other problems for which he did not propose solutions. One was that SDM increased school personnel's workloads and "burnout" (p. 22). Also, some principals feared that they would be held accountable if SDM initiatives were not successful. These principals attempted to limit the power of their school councils or tried to maintain veto power over council proposals. A final problem was that larger representative councils typically needed more time to reach agreement (Gomez, 1989).

A second account of SDM in Dade County was related by Cistone, Fernandez, and Tornillo (1989). Like Gomez, they attributed the successful initiation of SDM in Dade County to the collaboration of the school board and administration with the teachers' union. They also recounted the evolution of SDM from the 1970s, noting that the legislative emphasis in Florida was to make accountability a school concern rather than a district concern. The authors reported the following recommendations of Dade County's Office of Educational Accountability: (a) SDM participants should receive training and assistance in conflict resolution, conducting effective meetings, and in carrying out proposals; (b) SDM participants should be given time to
develop programs and to attend SDM conferences; (c) the district should consider the climate and intergroup dynamics of schools before selecting them to participate in SDM; and (d) SDM schools should be encouraged to select projects from among those that were most successful in the initial year (Cistone et al., 1989).

Accounts of benefits of SDM. Ratzki and Fisher's (1990) account of their school in Holweide, Germany, has been one of the few reports documenting improved student outcomes through SDM. In this school, teachers worked in teams of six to create schedules, determine teaching assignments, and make all curriculum decisions. Each team had responsibility for a group of 90 students for 6 years. Ratzki and Fisher noted that their school system reduced dropouts and increased significantly the percentage of their students who matriculated to the 3-year college program that leads to a university education. Although teachers stated that team teaching demanded more time, they also reported greater satisfaction due to their increased autonomy and the collegial nature of their work (Ratzki & Fisher, 1990).

Another account that suggested benefits of SDM was MacPhail-Wilcox, Forbes, and Parramore's (1990) report of Project Design in six North Carolina schools. The authors, who served as consultants in this project, "tried to foster strong norms of trust, risk taking, creativity, openness, and sets of reasonable expectations, combined with
consistent use of cooperative problem solving, consensus decision making, and process leadership skills" (p. 23). Moreover, these consultants and the six schools made a significant commitment early in the project to developing "process basics" (p. 23). Because the report of the Carnegie Forum (1986) was the impetus for Project Design, each of the schools adopted a lead teacher model in which teams of teachers assumed greater responsibility for instructional decisions with the technical support of lead teachers. MacPhail-Wilcox et al. concluded that Project Design ended teacher isolation and improved student performance, teacher morale, and community support and involvement. The authors also concluded that successful reform requires that (a) expectations for immediate results be suspended so that participants can explore creative solutions, (b) schools be granted regulatory relief, (c) teachers' and administrators' roles be redesigned, and (d) school personnel have more time to work collaboratively (p. 25).

Foster (1991) recounted her experience as a teacher in a California high school that implemented SDM. She noted that eight teachers and four administrators initiated SDM after a series of informal meetings in which they discussed the literature on restructuring. Their initial discussions were about participants' roles and change processes. To lay the groundwork for success in SDM, the group worked to
establish a climate of change in their school. Instead of attempting fundamental school changes, they initiated SDM by making decisions about budget and scheduling in order "to learn leadership, conflict resolution, and decision-making skills" (p. 28). Foster concluded that the greatest benefit of SDM was that teachers began to talk about change. She noted that teachers were energized by a 3-day retreat in which the faculty, school administration, and parents discussed issues of concern (Foster, 1991).

Accounts of the complexities of implementing SDM. Meadows (1990) noted that the process of implementing SDM has both risks and rewards for principals. Meadows asserted that the principal must be prepared to accept the blame if SDM does not succeed. She also observed that some teachers resist their new roles. When she implemented SDM at the beginning of her principalship in a Colorado school, a small group of teachers who had enjoyed considerable influence with the previous principal resisted Meadows' empowerment of all teachers and questioned her leadership. Meadows assuaged those concerns by assisting the faculty in clarifying types of decisions that would be shared and guidelines for making decisions.

Meadows (1990) also asserted that a climate of faculty trust and acceptance are essential to successful SDM. She stated that the principal must take the lead in establishing a "non-competitive, 'win-win' school climate" (p. 548).
Teachers cannot perceive that there are winners and losers when contentious issues are decided. Participants must be able to express their opinions openly, even when they engender conflict. Further, the principal must support and model risk taking and be willing to admit mistakes (Meadows, 1990).

Harrison, Killion, and Mitchell (1989) reported their experience of SDM as district administrators in Colorado. Their account focused on three dilemmas that they and other participants in their district did not anticipate. One, their district did not clarify the goals of SDM or the domains of decision making. Two, the project did not clarify the roles of district staff in SDM. As a result, conflicts arose between district and school personnel when both groups presumed to have authority in the same areas. District staff blocked some school initiatives. Three, the SDM project did not provide for training and support for school participants. The authors noted that participants especially needed training in change processes.

Sambs and Schenkat (1990), district administrators in a Minnesota school district that adopted SDM in 1984, also observed that their district failed to clarify the goals of SDM. Therefore, school personnel became preoccupied with decisions about routine, day-to-day matters, such as controlling noise in the cafeteria. By focusing their efforts on the implementation of Outcome-Based Education,
they made SDM more viable. Sambs and Schenkat concluded that the keys to SDM are giving schools regulatory relief and providing staff members with time for reflection and a clear sense of "what is fair game, ... when contemplating change" (p. 74).

Aronstein, Marlow, and Desilets (1990), the principal and two teachers in a Massachusetts middle school, provided another account of the complexities of implementing SDM. They related two episodes in their school's transition to SDM in which there was confusion and conflict because of misunderstandings about the staff's new roles and responsibilities. The authors observed that the staff benefitted from these incidents because the principal and teachers maintained strict adherence to the newly implemented process of shared governance. Their account underscored the difficulty that teachers and administrators have in altering their roles in SDM. They cautioned,

Principals must be especially careful about how and when they express their opinions. Otherwise, they will fail in an important new responsibility that they share with the faculty, the responsibility to implement and protect an innovative governance process. And, in moving toward site-based management, the credibility of the process is of paramount importance. (p. 62)

Aronstein et al. (1990) also asserted the importance of communication to the success of SDM, noting that SDM places new demands on the schools' communication systems. Shared decision making "requires that large numbers of people make
what may seem an inordinate effort at communicating" (Aronstein et al., 1990, p. 63).

In summary, these personal accounts of SDM provide some support for theoretical assertions about the benefits of SDM. The benefits that these participants in SDM observed were (a) improved teacher morale, (b) increased teacher collegiality, (c) the adoption of broader perspectives by teachers, (d) a greater recognition by teachers of the complexity of school problems, and (e) improved student outcomes.

The accounts provided by participants in SDM also suggested that its implementation is complex and problematic. One concern is that SDM is time-consuming. Consequently, it increases teachers' workloads and can contribute to teacher burnout. A second concern is that some participants and program planners expect that SDM will produce dramatic results in a short time. Third, some teachers and administrators have difficulty adopting new roles because they do not have the knowledge to perform their new roles or because they fear they will lose power. Teachers and other staff may not possess technical knowledge about school matters such as budget. They sometimes lack knowledge about change processes, conflict resolution, conducting meetings, and implementing proposed changes.

Fourth, district policymakers and administrators have sometimes failed to provide SDM participants with a clear
sense of SDM's goals, the roles stakeholders should enact, the extent of participants' authority, and the district's support of SDM.

In response to these dilemmas, the authors of personal accounts suggested that schools implementing SDM have a clear goal focus and an understanding of participants' roles and responsibilities. In addition, SDM schools must receive regulatory relief, time for participants to plan and reflect, and training for all school personnel. Schools should focus initial efforts on building trust, acceptance, and other norms that contribute to a climate of change. The principal must support SDM by encouraging participants and yielding authority to teachers. Schools must improve their communication systems, as SDM creates communication demands that are not present in traditional organizations.

The following section is a brief review of three evaluation reports. These reports add further support to many of the assertions made by SDM advocates and experienced practitioners.

Evaluation Reports of SDM Implementation Efforts

Evaluation reports provide school districts with assessments of their efforts to implement SDM. Because the intent of these reports is to facilitate implementation efforts, they identify problems encountered by SDM schools and prescribe solutions. The authors of these reports draw upon empirical evidence to support their assertions;
nonetheless, their intent is not to contribute to scholarship but to enable practitioners in specific school contexts to implement SDM more effectively.

Rothstein (1990) based his report of the first year of SDM in the Los Angeles Unified School District on interviews with principals, teachers, staff, and parents at 10 schools. Rothstein concluded that SDM did not result in major changes during the first year. Because leadership councils had limited access to discretionary funding, teachers and parents had little involvement in budget. Further, the focus of most leadership councils' efforts was on improving student behavior. Teachers sought to have administrators take a more active role in handling serious discipline problems and providing punishment rather than counseling to misbehaving students. Principals wanted to retain their discretion to counsel students and also wanted teachers to handle more of their discipline problems in the classroom. Another issue that surfaced on some leadership councils was student grouping. Here, too, principals and teachers generally disagreed, with teachers favoring homogeneous grouping more than principals. Rothstein suggested that the school board resolve that tension by providing more specific guidelines for student grouping (Rothstein, 1990).

Another problem identified by Rothstein (1990) was that a teachers' strike 1 year prior to SDM's implementation
added to the tension between teachers and administrators. Some union representatives suggested to teachers that SDM was a concession wrested from the district rather than a collaborative arrangement between the school board and teachers. Many teachers perceived that both district and school administrators were not being candid about the limits of their budgets. These teachers believed that additional funding was available but was being held back by administrators. Principals were generally hesitant to support SDM efforts because of concerns that they alone would be held accountable. Rothstein recommended clarifying the role of principals in SDM and providing them additional training. He stated that SDM does not require that principals withdraw from their leadership roles. Rather, SDM increases the leadership demands of the principalship. In addition, Rothstein suggested that leadership councils receive training annually (Rothstein, 1990).

A second report was Strusinski's (1991) evaluation of SDM in Dade County during 1989-90, its third year of implementation. Strusinski's data consisted of interviews with principals and "other informed individuals" (p. 1) in schools participating in SDM. She noted that in the first 2 years of SDM, ambiguity about implementation meant that schools spent much time refining the decision-making process. Most interview respondents stated that SDM participants needed additional training in professional and
interpersonal skills, such as team building and group relations. Strusinski commented that teachers do not learn these skills in their preservice preparation and are unlikely to acquire such skills on the job. She recommended that schools receive followup training, especially for new teachers. Strusinski also observed that the time and effort required by SDM are barriers to teacher participation in the absence of compensation or a reduction in other work (Strusinski, 1991).

A third report was Collins and Hanson's (1991) evaluation of the progress of SDM in Dade County. They provided a summative evaluation of Dade's 3-year SDM pilot program in 33 participating schools. The report used data from four countywide administrations of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire, other teacher and principal surveys, and school records such as student test scores, student and teacher attendance, and student drop-out percentages. Collins and Hanson also drew upon schools' annual self-evaluation reports in making recommendations to project schools.

In reporting the results of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire, which measures 10 indicators of school climate, Collins and Hanson (1991) noted that teacher status scores in SDM schools increased significantly from the beginning to the end of the pilot program. However, the measure of teachers' rapport with principals in secondary
schools was lower for SDM schools than non-SDM schools. Further, although Collins and Hanson noted that "SBM scores are higher than non-SBM scores for more than half of the 10 factors assessed" (p. iii), teacher status was the only school climate indicator that had a statistically significant increase.

Teacher surveys revealed a decline from the first year of implementation to the third in teachers' (a) attitudes toward SDM, (b) expectations for the accomplishment of program objectives, (c) participation in nontraditional roles, and (d) awareness of project features. However, teachers reported that collegiality was "increasingly characteristic" of SDM schools and "autocracy" was less characteristic (Collins & Hanson, 1991, p. iii). Over 38% of the teachers stated that lack of time was a constraint to participation.

The principal survey indicated that the project increased staff participation but that "intensity of involvement" (Collins & Hanson, 1991, p. iii) decreased during the 3-year period. Most principals reported that the project made their jobs more difficult. Collins and Hanson noted that only 10 of the 33 pilot schools retained their principals over the 3 years.

Collins and Hanson (1991) also observed that SDM did not improve student achievement or attendance by students or staff. However, suspension and dropout percentages in
project schools declined in comparison to non-SDM schools. Overall, the results from the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire, teacher and principal surveys, and these school data did not substantiate many of the claims of SDM's advocates. Collins and Hanson noted, however, that the "primary thrust" (p. ii) of the SDM project in Dade County was the professionalization of teaching. They suggested that improvements in teacher status and collegiality, as well as increased involvement of teachers in decision making, were indications that the project was accomplishing its stated intent. The authors recommended that participants receive support and technical assistance. They also suggested that participants receive inservice in communication skills, group processes, methods for increasing the participation of "uninvolved parties" (p. viii), and means for implementing and assessing innovations. They stated that training should be continual because SDM involves new participants each year (Collins & Hanson, 1991).

In summary, these evaluation reports revealed a number of problems faced by schools implementing SDM. The reports suggested that principals and teachers had difficulty altering their roles. Lack of time was a constraint to teacher involvement in SDM. In addition, staff participating in new roles needed additional knowledge and skills that their traditional roles did not require. Thus, districts should provide inservice to participants in the
beginning of implementation and should repeat the training as new participants become involved. Program planners should provide participants with a clear sense of their new roles and guidance in carrying out SDM.

The authors of these reports concluded that schools implementing SDM did not change substantially. However, Collins and Hanson's (1991) suggestion that SDM was successful in professionalizing teaching is significant because it implies that teachers' roles changed. Further, methodological limitations precluded Rothstein (1990) and Strusinski (1991) from observing more fundamental change. Rothstein's evaluation of SDM was conducted only 1 year after its implementation in a district plagued by financial difficulties and teacher-administrative strife. Because Strusinski (1991) conducted interviews primarily with principals, her data were not likely to reveal the improvements in teacher status and collegiality that Collins and Hanson observed. Moreover, changes resulting in more professional roles for teachers will probably be gradual and subtle.

The conceptual literature, personal accounts, and evaluation reports about SDM provide insights about its potential benefits and the complexities of implementation. The following section is a review of empirical research that establishes what we know about SDM from more systematic inquiry.
Empirical Research on SDM

Because SDM's emergence as a strategy for improving schools has been quite recent, empirical research on SDM has been limited. Nonetheless, systematic inquiry about SDM has increased within the last few years. Although there is much to be learned about SDM and its impact upon schools, the studies that are reviewed below provide insights about SDM's effects and problems of implementation.

This review begins with four studies based on questionnaire data. In one study, Schneider (1984) surveyed teachers in 23 middle and junior high schools in Wisconsin to determine their level of involvement in decision making and their degree of job satisfaction. She randomly selected 12 teachers from each of the 23 schools. Of the 276 teachers selected to participate in the study, 266 completed and returned the questionnaire. Using analysis of variance, Schneider found a significant relationship between teachers' level of decision involvement and job satisfaction. She also found that teachers wanted to be more involved in schoolwide decision making (Schneider, 1984).

In another study, Duke et al. (1980) surveyed teachers to determine the reasons for their involvement or lack of involvement in SDM. The researchers suggested that teachers' satisfaction with SDM would depend upon their perceptions of its relative costs and benefits. They speculated that teachers would perceive the following costs:
(a) greater time demands, (b) loss of autonomy, (c) fear of being identified unfavorably with administrators, (d) concern about loss of collective bargaining influence, and (e) concern by teachers with administrative aspirations that active participation would endanger their advancement. The researchers suggested that teachers would perceive these benefits: (a) feelings of self-efficacy, (b) increased sense of ownership, and (c) workplace democracy. Duke et al. then constructed an "interview form" (p. 99) in which respondents rated each of these costs and benefits on a scale of 1 to 7. They also interviewed respondents to determine if they perceived other benefits or costs not included on the form.

The study included 50 teachers in five secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area that were participating in SDM (Duke et al., 1980).

Of the five costs suggested by Duke et al. (1980), the only significant concern was increased demands on teachers' time. Other costs suggested by teachers in interviews were (a) increased responsibilities, (b) fear of being blamed for ineffective decisions, (c) concerns that the quality of decisions would diminish, and (d) a concern that SDM might result in teachers "rubber-stamping" (p. 102) administrators' decisions. The respondents gave high ratings to all three of the perceived benefits. In interviews, they also stated that SDM results in higher quality decisions. In addition, they noted that teachers
are more likely to comply with decisions made democratically and that SDM increases teachers' understandings of school problems. Twenty teachers stated that SDM enhances opportunities for career advancement. However, only 10 of the 50 teachers stated that SDM resulted in improved student outcomes (Duke et al., 1980).

A third questionnaire study was conducted by Mutchler and Duttweiler (1990). They administered a written survey to personnel in schools implementing SDM. The 230 people who were surveyed included 135 principals, 90 central office staff, and 5 teachers. Mutchler and Duttweiler defended their decision to include such a large proportion of administrators, stating that these were administrators who advocated sharing decisions with teachers.

Although Mutchler and Duttweiler's (1990) survey received only a 30% return rate, its findings are worth noting. They asked respondents (a) to describe the difficulties they faced in implementing SDM, (b) what type of training SDM requires, and (c) what training they had received that they would recommend. The study revealed eight major barriers to changing SDM participants' traditional behavior. The barriers, in descending order from most frequently to least frequently mentioned, were "resistance to changing roles and responsibilities, fear of losing power, inadequate or inappropriate resources, lack of definition and clarity, lack of skills, lack of trust, lack
of hierarchical support, and fear of taking risks" (p. 4). Respondents suggested training to provide SDM participants with additional information and knowledge, as well as skills in decision making and collaboration.

A fourth survey study was conducted by Jenni and Mauriel (1990). They administered questionnaires to members of 16 site councils in four school districts in Minnesota. Jenni and Mauriel also observed council meetings and interviewed SDM participants. They found that SDM participants did not feel empowered, even though they gave SDM a positive assessment overall and stated that SDM was achieving its objectives. Jenni and Mauriel also found that participants' levels of influence on decisions did not correlate with their overall assessment of SDM. Significantly, the study indicated that perceptions of principals' support of SDM were highly related to staff assessments of SDM. The authors concluded that, after several years of implementation, SDM had little influence on classroom practices. They also suggested that SDM did not substantially increase teachers' influence in decision making.

The next set of studies drew upon data gathered through interviews conducted in a single sampling. The first of these studies was by David (1990), who focused on SDM in Poway, California; Dade County, Florida; and Jefferson County, Kentucky. Two researchers spent 2 to 3 days
conducting interviews with central office and school staff in each district. The researchers also visited schools that "best exemplified new roles and arrangements" (pp. 212, 213). David noted that this approach resulted in a bias toward successful SDM projects but that her intent was to reveal lessons that could be absorbed by other districts attempting restructuring. David concluded that three themes characterized the efforts of Poway, Dade, and Jefferson Counties. One, the goal of these districts was "long-term, comprehensive change guided by a conception of schools as stimulating workplaces and learning environments" (p. 223). She stated that for fundamental change to occur, school people must be encouraged to experiment and take risks. Two, school personnel "need the skills, authority, and time to create new roles and environments appropriate for them" (p. 223). Three, restructuring schools requires that "historical adversaries" (p. 224) build new partnerships on the basis of shared goals and that they reconceptualize methods of accountability. David asserted that these changes do not occur rapidly or easily, as changes in organizations require changes in people's attitudes, roles, and relationships (p. 225).

In a second interview study, Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1991) conducted interviews with 15 principals from New York, Illinois, and Tennessee to determine their perceptions of fundamental school reform. The principals
reported that the greatest impact of restructuring would be on teachers' roles. Respondents indicated that increasing teachers' ownership of decisions would enhance their self-esteem, motivation, and participation. The principals also asserted that all participants would need training to prepare them for their new roles and responsibilities and that teachers would need additional time for collegial planning. Hallinger et al. concluded that principals generally supported school restructuring; nonetheless, they did not believe that students would benefit from restructuring. The authors noted, however, that these principals, as well as teachers they had previously studied, had difficulty reconceptualizing schooling. Instead, "their responses reflected assumptions of schooling as we know it" (p. 26).

A third interview study was conducted by Goldman, Dunlap, and Conley (1991). They conducted interviews with the principal and at least one teacher--often the leader of the site council--from each of 16 Oregon schools implementing SDM. Goldman et al. concluded that lack of definition or clarity about SDM did not prevent action. They posited that change occurred when site participants had a shared desire to change their current situation. In addition, successful schools had supportive principals, few constraints to change, and adequate financial resources. Teachers described supportive principals as those who were
neither too directive or too non-directive (Goldman et al., 1991).

The final set of empirical studies to be reviewed includes five longitudinal studies that drew upon interviews, site observations, and archival analysis. The first of these is Wasley's (1991) in-depth study of three teacher leaders. Wasley conducted numerous interviews with each of the teacher leaders, their colleagues, and other staff who worked with them. She made extensive on-site observations of the three teacher leaders at work and in informal settings outside of school (Wasley, 1991).

Wasley's (1991) teacher leaders benefitted in various ways from their leadership experiences. The leadership roles of two of the teacher leaders gave them opportunities to receive extensive training in instructional practices. All three leaders experienced changes in their relationships with colleagues. Two of them worked collaboratively with other teachers; the third was in a supervisory role that was respected and appreciated by some, but not all, teachers. All of them enhanced their leadership skills and their understandings of school organization.

The three teachers in Wasley's (1991) study possessed extraordinary commitment and competence as classroom teachers and were well trained in their specialty areas. Nonetheless,

none of them had had any exposure to the literature on educational change, . . . to the
work on leadership, . . . or to the material on conflict resolution. In addition, they lacked information on how to work in groups, how to diagnose the needs of their colleagues and the school and how to read the culture of the school. As a result, they had little understanding of how other adults felt about their suggestions, nor did they have the awareness of other ways in which they might have approached their colleagues. (p. 142)

Wasley's (1991) study indicated that placing teachers in leadership roles changes their job requirements and the competencies needed to perform them and alters the leaders' relationships to other personnel. Teacher leaders must be skilled in assessing school cultures, identifying problems, resolving conflicts, and galvanizing support for solving problems. In addition, they must learn to function in school organizations in which traditional working relationships have been altered.

Another study that drew upon interview, observational, and archival data was conducted by Lindquist and Mauriel (1989). They observed more than 25 SDM council meetings and conducted almost 50 interviews during their 4-year investigation of SDM in two school districts. Linquist and Mauriel concluded that SDM did not succeed in bringing about expected changes in the schools they studied because implementation efforts did not match "the theoretical framework that is advocated by the literature and in reform proposals" (p. 411). In particular, lack of administrative or school board support hampered individual school efforts. In some instances the superintendent advocated SDM, but
principals were less supportive. In one case, the school principal supported SDM, but the superintendent and school board did not. Linguist and Mauriel concluded that the school board's rejection of an SDM council proposal from this school was "a major discouragement for most of the council members" (p. 411). The authors concluded that advocacy by principals, superintendents, and school boards is imperative to SDM's success.

Linguist and Mauriel (1989) also observed that lack of clarity about participants' roles and responsibilities limited the success of SDM. Shared decision-making councils were uncertain about the kinds of decisions they were authorized to make. Linguist and Mauriel suggested that this ambiguity may lead councils to conclude that they serve merely an advisory function. Last, they noted that SDM demands of participants "formidable requirements for time and skill" (p. 403).

A third study that used observational, interview, and archival data was Etheridge and Hall's (1991) research of SDM in seven schools in Memphis, Tennessee. The researchers observed planning meetings, school board meetings, school council and PTA meetings, and council training sessions. They also interviewed school and district administrators, teachers, parents, and community members over an 18-month period.
Etheridge and Hall (1991) identified three leadership styles of principals in the seven schools: (a) laissez-faire, (b) authoritarian, and (c) democratic. Laissez-faire principals were passive and willing to give control of decisions to others. Authoritarian principals centralized authority and used their power and influence to control decisions. Democratic principals were able to accomplish tasks by gaining the commitment of others and then acting as consultants to the group. Etheridge and Hall observed that each council's working style evolved differently. Nonetheless, the research revealed several patterns. First, laissez-faire leadership styles did not directly foster cooperative and effective council functioning. Two councils with laissez-faire principals did evolve into effective decision-making groups, but only because their chairs were strong leaders. Second, democratic leaders fostered the development of smoothly functioning cooperative groups. Third, authoritarian principals inhibited cooperative council functioning. However, one principal's efforts to control decision making mobilized members of the faculty to confront the principal by obtaining the support of district office staff and the teachers' association. Etheridge and Hall concluded that the teachers were able to assert their demand for legitimate authority because of that support and because they began the SDM project with a clear expectation that they would share in substantive decision making.
In a fourth longitudinal study, Malen and Ogawa (1988) drew upon data from 101 interviews, supplemented by council archives and faculty surveys, to construct case studies of eight selected SDM councils in Salt Lake City. The researchers' intent was "to capture a detailed description of council dynamics" (p. 255).

Malen and Ogawa (1988) called their investigation "a confounding case study" (p. 252) because participants maintained their traditional roles even though changes in school governance indicated that parents, teachers, and principals would share equal influence in school decision making. Principals continued to have greater influence than teachers, and teachers greater influence than parents. Malen and Ogawa concluded that participants' uncertainty about their new roles precluded significant changes in traditional decision-making relationships. Principals viewed council meetings as opportunities to communicate their ideas, gather input from teachers and parents, and build support for their proposals. Principals typically determined the time and agenda of council meetings and controlled the dispersal of information. In addition, they possessed positional resources, such as knowledge about school operations, and personal resources, such as verbal skills, that they used to their advantage. Malen and Ogawa noted that many teachers also had these skills but that principals were more willing and accustomed to using them.
Teachers assumed that principals possessed expertise in making decisions in those areas that were traditionally the principals' exclusive domains. Teachers and parents also adhered to the "norm of civility" (p. 264). That is, dissenting views were suppressed and conflicts smoothed over to promote civil and cordial interactions. Consequently, ingrained norms prevented councils from dealing with substantive issues and precluded the restructuring of participants' roles and responsibilities.

A fifth in-depth study, conducted by Hamilton (1981), indicated that clarification of participants' roles and the goals of SDM is essential to its success. Hamilton's case study of an alternative school implementing SDM drew upon archival data, observations of staff meetings, and interviews with all staff over a 1-year period. Hamilton reported that the school staff initiated its project by clarifying the roles of the principal, assistant principal, teachers, and counselors. In addition, staff delineated decision-making domains for administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Hamilton noted that new roles "were directly and explicitly related to the school's goals and principles" (p. 138). That is, staff defined roles in terms of their perceived effectiveness in fostering the attainment of the goals of the SDM project. Consequently, the staff was successful in restructuring the school to achieve its goals.
In summary, empirical studies of SDM have contributed to our understanding of its benefits, the difficulties of implementation, and conditions that foster its success. So far, SDM has not achieved the benefits its advocates have predicted. There is some evidence that teachers' skills and knowledge are enhanced when they assume leadership roles (Wasley, 1991), and SDM may enable teachers and administrators to restructure their schools to provide better experiences for their students (Hamilton, 1981). Most researchers and participants in SDM, however, have not reported that it improved the experience of schooling for students. That failure has three possible explanations. One, SDM's impact on classroom teaching and learning will not be immediate but, instead, will be the long-term result of other improvements that SDM has fostered. Two, SDM's real impact simply may not match advocates' predictions. Three, SDM's implementation may be fraught with difficulties for which schools have not accounted.

Empirical studies have revealed a number of difficulties in the implementation of SDM. In particular, participants have problems adopting new roles and assuming new responsibilities. Most teachers and administrators lack the knowledge and skills to assume new roles. Changing roles has been especially problematic when those roles have not been clearly defined. Lack of role clarity has meant that participants adhere to ingrained norms. Teachers
continue to defer to administrators, and administrators continue to control substantive decision making. Lack of support for SDM by district administrators and school boards adds to site participants' uncertainty about the meaning of SDM and their roles within it. Clearly, school principals can foster SDM by assuming an appropriate leadership role: Principals are most facilitative when they are willing to yield authority to others but able to provide support, encouragement, and information. Last, SDM is extremely time-consuming and, thus, is especially problematic for school people who already have limited time to meet their professional responsibilities.

Conditions that foster SDM have also been clarified by these studies. First, administrative support at all levels must be genuine and must be communicated to site participants. Second, those who initiate SDM projects must delineate participants' roles, program goals, and domains of decision making. Third, administrators must provide school sites with legitimate authority and the resources to make substantive changes.

Many educational reforms have failed because they have ignored the complexity of schools (Ball, 1987; Griffin, 1988) and their resistance to change (Goodlad, 1984). Similarly, the impact of SDM on teachers' roles cannot be understood without considering the contexts in which teachers work. The intent of the following discussion is to
illuminate the influence of school cultures on teachers' roles.

**School Cultures: The Conditions of Teaching and Their Effects on Teachers' Roles**

Studies of SDM have shown that it has potential for restructuring teachers' roles (Collins & Hanson, 1991) and for improving the experience of schooling for students (Hamilton, 1981). By definition, SDM transforms schools from rigidly hierarchical institutions to more democratic organizations (Cistone, 1989; Duke et al., 1980). Schools, however, have proven to be extremely resistant to reforms imposed upon them (Sarason, 1982). As Timar (1989) noted, "Although school reform has been ubiquitous for the past century, little of importance has changed" (p. 267).

Much of schools' resistance to change can be attributed to the ingrained institutional norms and beliefs of school people (Timar, 1989). This culture of schools "defines their ideas, commitments, and social order and . . . determines their rules and standard operating procedures" (Timar, 1989, p. 266). Moreover, the hierarchical nature of school organizations contributes to a culture characterized by rigid role differentiation and the isolation of school personnel. The paradox of SDM is that it proposes to alter the hierarchical culture of schools and to reduce the isolation of teaching--and yet, the persistence of hierarchical norms and teacher isolation may be the most significant obstacle to SDM's success.
Studies of school culture typically have drawn upon data gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and observations in school settings. Although scholars have used various methodologies in their research on school culture, their findings have not differed substantially. The congruence of these findings, as well as the resilience of the school cultures being studied, can be understood by considering an assertion by Bredemeier and Bredemeier (1979). In a discussion of school cultures and teaching, they stated, "People will try to maintain their self-respect at all costs" (Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979, p. 282). The Bredemeiers' assertion helps us to understand the impact of school culture upon teacher behavior. Quite simply, the conditions of teaching make it difficult for teachers to maintain their self-regard; thus, teachers' behaviors can be understood by viewing them as efforts by beleaguered practitioners to maintain their self-respect under trying conditions. These conditions are (a) isolation and lack of collegial or administrative support, (b) the uncertainty of teaching, (c) the nature of teaching rewards, (d) lack of time for reflection, and (e) lack of status and a related sense of powerlessness.

A pervasive theme in the literature on teachers' work is the isolation of teaching (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Goodlad, 1984; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lortie, 1975; Sizer, 1984). Although teachers are surrounded by children, opportunities
to work collegially are rare. Indeed, opportunities for teachers to talk with each other are usually limited to brief, hurried lunch periods in which an "unspoken code" may make the discussion of teaching taboo (Wasley, 1991).

The results of teachers' isolation are profound. Lortie (1975) found that teachers took pride in classroom events rather than schoolwide activities or professional association. Similarly, teachers' satisfaction accrues from students' achievements and from their relationships with students (Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lortie, 1975). Isolation also affects teachers' professional knowledge as it limits their ability to share understandings about their craft (Lortie, 1975).

Teachers receive little support from administrators or colleagues (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Administrators believe they have little influence on teachers and, therefore, offer them minimal instructional support (Cooper, 1989). Although teachers are more likely to seek support from colleagues than from administrators (Lortie, 1975; McPherson, 1972), the uncertainty of teachers' work compels them to maintain their self-regard by appearing not to need the support or advice of others (Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979). Thus, isolation is functional in that it protects teachers from criticism (Ashton & Webb, 1986) and preserves their classroom autonomy (Bullough, 1987, p. 92). Needing to maintain their self-regard and to sustain the one dimension
of autonomy they have, teachers learn to solve their problems on their own (Lortie, 1975). Because policies designed to increase public school accountability have increasingly eroded teachers' autonomy (Ball, 1987), their motivation to protect their remaining autonomy has become even more compelling.

A second condition of teaching is that it is characterized by uncertainty. That is, it is difficult for teachers to know from day to day if they are having a positive effect on their students (Lortie, 1975). As Lortie noted, "The teachers' craft, . . . is marked by the absence of concrete models for emulation, unclear lines of influence, multiple and controversial criteria, ambiguity about assessment timing, and instability in the product" (p. 136).

Teachers' uncertainty is exacerbated by their isolation from peers and the absence of administrative support. Most teachers are unable to "develop a clear sense of the quality of [their] own teaching" (Lieberman & Miller, 1984, p. 13). Lortie (1975) contended that the uncertainty and isolation of teaching contribute to conservatism in practice. These conditions also lead teachers to avoid the conflict of cooperative situations. Isolation protects them from criticism and, thus, protects their self-esteem (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979).
A third condition of teaching is that its rewards differ from those of other professions. Teaching lacks structures for vertical career advancement (Becker, 1970), and teachers who desire such opportunities often leave the profession (Griffin, 1988). Becker concluded that satisfaction in teaching comes from positive relations with students, parents, peers, and the principal. Lortie (1975) reported that teachers' satisfaction comes from the "psychic rewards" (p. 103) of successes with students, a conclusion that is supported by his finding that 91% of the teachers in his study preferred teaching-related activities over out-of-class activities (p. 164).

According to Johnson (1990a), policies that have attempted to motivate teachers with external rewards have not been widely successful because teachers value most the psychic rewards derived from their work with students. Little (1988) observed that teachers do want decent salaries, but they reject merit pay in the belief that it will undermine teacher unity.

Johnson's (1990a) and Little's (1988) assertions make it clear that external rewards alone do not motivate most teachers. Indeed, teaching's psychic rewards alone may not provide sufficient incentives for all teachers. Nonetheless, policy innovations are more likely to succeed if they foster teaching environments in which teachers can attain the intrinsic rewards of their profession. Goodlad
(1984) found that teachers who have more control over decisions affecting their work identified their schools as "more satisfying" (p. 179).

A fourth condition of teaching is the lack of time for reflection (Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Sykes, 1983). Because teachers are continually required to make decisions that require "considerable judgment" and call upon their use of "intuition as well as explicit reasoning" (Lortie, 1975, p. 167), the lack of time to reflect, coupled with the lack of collegial interaction, impairs the ability of teachers to render quality decisions (Lortie, 1975). Further, the lack of time, together with teachers' identification with classroom successes, supports Lortie's finding that few teachers prefer out-of-class school activities over classroom teaching. The classroom demands on teachers' time tend to discourage their involvement in schoolwide functions.

A fifth characteristic of school culture involves two related conditions: teaching's lack of status and the associated sense of powerlessness felt by teachers. Ashton and Webb (1986) posited the relationship between these two conditions, stating that powerlessness is both a state of mind and a statement about status. They concluded that teachers' sense of powerlessness negatively affects their ability to solve teaching dilemmas.
In his influential study of teaching, Lortie (1975) noted that teachers historically have not been afforded the trust or status of other professions. They have had fewer resources to do their work and less discretion over the resources available to them than members of any other profession (Lortie, 1975).

Legislated mandates of recent years have exacerbated teachers' sense of powerlessness and further eroded their status (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Efforts to standardize teaching have deprofessionalized it further (Wise, 1986) and have lowered teachers' enthusiasm and morale (Frymier, 1986). Sykes (1990) has observed that the recent growth in award programs for teachers is evidence of the current lack of regard for teaching. Providing incentives and awards for teaching implies that teachers are unlikely to perform admirably without extrinsic rewards (Sykes, 1990).

The low status and powerlessness of teachers prompted Sizer (1984) to conclude that they are "treated like hired hands" (p. 184). Apple and Teitlebaum (1986) suggested the metaphor of the industrial assembly line to describe what they called the "deskilling" of teachers. In industry's transition to assembly line production, the complex tasks formerly performed by skilled craftsmen were reduced to a series of simple discrete functions, with the result that each could be performed by an unskilled worker. In time, those workers became deskillled. Their former proficiencies
atrophied, and new employees were able to function without ever acquiring advanced skills. Apple and Teitlebaum warned that teachers are being deskilled in much the same manner.

This discussion of the conditions of teaching suggests the powerful influence of school contexts upon teachers' behavior and effectiveness. Nonetheless, my intent is not to suggest that teachers are completely constrained by these conditions or that teachers do not have an impact on school cultures. Bullough (1987), for example, observed that teachers are influenced by their contexts but that their personal values also influence their behavior, even when those values conflict with the organization's values. Bullough concluded that teachers act upon school cultures and participate in the defining of their professional roles. As Bredemeier and Bredemeier (1979) stated, "We need to continually remind ourselves that while the constraints on our actions are in the environment, the controls are in our heads" (p. 237).

My intent in this discussion is to suggest that teacher role change may be a slow and complex process, due in part to the persistence of school cultures that are defined by teachers' responses to the conditions of teaching. Inasmuch as roles are cultural scripts (Bredemeier & Bredemeier, 1979), analyses of role change must attend to the cultures in which roles are enacted.
In addition, role theory provides frameworks with which to interpret teacher role change. The following section provides a brief overview of role theory and a description of theories with explanatory power for the process of teacher role change.

Role Theory

As noted in Chapter 1, Hewitt (1988) defined a role "as a cluster of duties, rights, and obligations associated with a particular social position" (p. 79). In essence, roles provide scripts for behavior in social situations. Nonetheless, people are not rigidly bound by their roles. They may actively construct their roles by altering the scripts ascribed to them or by creating new roles, especially when they find themselves in new and unexpected settings. Because people carry out their roles in social contexts, role enactment is an interactive process. Thus, people behave in accordance with their perceptions of the meanings of other participants' actions and others' evaluations of their behavior (Hewitt, 1988).

Role theory provides a useful interpretive framework for this study of teacher role change. To date, empirical evidence of SDM's effectiveness has not supported many advocates' claims. In conceptual, experiential, and empirical discussions of SDM, the reconceptualization of teachers' roles has been a central issue. On one hand, advocates have suggested that SDM will result in more
professional roles for teachers (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Griffin, 1988; Wise, 1990); on the other hand, changing teachers' roles is considered a requisite condition for the successful restructuring of schools (David, 1990). Empirical studies of SDM have indicated that teacher role change is problematic (Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Muttchler & Duttweiler, 1990), but these studies have failed to explain adequately why teachers' roles have not changed significantly or what might be done to foster role change. Nor have these inquiries explored the varying experiences of teachers during the implementation of SDM. That is, they have failed to assess the impact of differing types of SDM involvement on teachers. Role theory provides a lens for examining the process of role change so that these issues can be better understood. Moreover, role theory has power for explaining organizational behavior in that roles define each individual's relationship to the social system and to others within it (Bertrand, 1972; Goffman, 1961; Hamilton, 1988). Consequently, insights about teachers' roles in SDM should inform our understanding of SDM as an organizational innovation.

The literature on role theory contains many conceptions of role. In general, differences in theorists' perceptions of role reflect differences in disciplinary perspective (Gordon, 1966; Jackson, 1972). For example, anthropologists
consider roles from a macrocultural orientation, whereas psychologists conceive of role "as a mediating factor between social system pressures and individual behavior" (Gordon, 1966, p. 24). The sociologist's interest in social phenomena makes the interaction of individuals the central focus of role studies. Each of these orientations has particular strengths and limitations, depending upon the analysis desired (Gordon, 1966). This study's focus suggests a sociological view, as SDM is a social and interactive process.

Within a sociological perspective, role theories may reflect either a structuralist view or a symbolic interactionist view (Zurcher, 1983). The structuralist position is that people conform to expectations shaped by "historical factors, power distributions, and cultural values. . . . The symbolic interactionist view assumes that roles emerge from or are significantly shaped by interactions in specific social settings" (Zurcher, 1983, p. 14). Although both views reflect certain aspects of social reality, symbolic interactionism provides a more useful interpretive perspective for this dissertation. One tenet of symbolic interactionism is that "people act in relation to definitions of situations" (Hewitt, 1988, p. 77). Having defined a situation, participants know what roles it will contain and how people are expected to act toward each other in the situation (Hewitt, 1988). This proposition of
symbolic interactionism has three important implications for this study. First, because organizational changes alter roles and situations (Becker, 1970), such changes increase the likelihood that individuals within a situation will interpret it differently and thus behave in ways that are not congruent with each other's expectations (Hewitt, 1988). Second, an individual can influence the behavior of others by influencing the initial definition of the situation (Goffman, 1973). According to Goffman, the initial definition of a situation "tends to provide a plan for the co-operative activity that follows" (p. 12). Third, if people do not perceive that a situation has changed, it is unlikely that they will change their behavior. The literature on SDM suggests that participants will interpret situations in each of these three ways. Symbolic interactionism suggests that these participants will behave in accordance with their interpretations.

In summary, differences among role theories typically reflect differences in theorists' disciplinary perspectives. I have chosen the perspective of symbolic interactionism to interpret teacher role change, because symbolic interactionism assigns primacy to people's perceptions and to their interactions with others. Organizational changes such as SDM create new and problematic situations that require people to render interpretations of what is happening and how they should act. Because their
interpretations will reflect their perceptions of these new situations and of others' judgments about their behavior, symbolic interactionism has applicability to this study of teacher role change in SDM.

As noted in Chapter 1, theorists have defined roles in terms of several dimensions. According to Hewitt (1988), people's rights and responsibilities are central to their roles. Zurcher (1983) has posited the relationship of individuals' self-concepts to their dominant roles. Roles are also defined in terms of people's relationships with their various role partners (Bredemeier, 1979; Hewitt, 1988). These dimensions—teachers' rights and responsibilities, their self-perceptions and personal changes, and their relationships with others—are the focus of this study of role change in SDM.

The purposes of this discussion have been (a) to establish the value of role theory in explaining teacher behavior during the implementation of SDM, (b) to posit the importance of people's perceptions of situations to their subsequent behavior, (c) to explain the theories that are used to interpret teacher role change in this study, and (d) to clarify the dimensions of teachers' roles that are examined in this study. The concluding section of this review of literature summarizes and critiques research on SDM and teachers' roles and suggests the need for studies of the type proposed in this dissertation.
Summary and Conclusions

The literature reviewed in this chapter has contributed to our understanding of SDM. However, many unanswered questions remain. There is a need for research that employs different methodologies and that focuses on these unanswered questions.

Methodological shortcomings have limited the contributions of empirical research on SDM. The four questionnaire studies reviewed above (Duke et al., 1980; Jenni & Mauriel, 1990; Mutchler & Duttweiler, 1990; Schneider, 1984) indicated that SDM has not fulfilled the predictions of the conceptual literature. In addition, these studies suggested the complexities of SDM implementation. Questionnaire studies, however, cannot explain adequately the reasons for the successes and shortcomings of SDM, and they cannot illuminate the process of implementation.

Three studies that drew upon interview data gathered in a single sampling were reviewed in this chapter (David, 1990; Goldman et al., 1991; Hallinger et al., 1991). These studies are useful in that they reveal the perspectives of SDM participants, but they, too, fail to uncover the complexities of the implementation process as it occurs over time, and they do not adequately answer questions about teacher role change.
Five longitudinal studies were included in this review (Etheridge & Hall, 1991; Hamilton, 1981; Linguist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Wasley, 1991). Although these longitudinal studies have increased our understanding of the process of SDM implementation, each of them has limitations for informing certain critical issues. For example, Wasley's study was included in this review because of its contributions to knowledge about teacher leadership. However, the three teacher leaders in Wasley's study were not engaged in SDM. Hamilton's research was in-depth but was conducted over only a 1-year span. It suggested the importance of clarifying participants' roles, but a 1-year study cannot illuminate the slow and subtle process of role change. Linguist and Mauriel conducted 50 interviews over 4 years in two school districts. The length of their inquiry suggests that they were able to gain important insights about the process of SDM implementation. However, because the 50 interviews were conducted in several schools, it is unlikely that they gained intimate understandings of any of the school contexts they were observing. Malen and Ogawa's study, which drew upon 101 interviews in eight schools, suffers from the same limitation. Etheridge and Hall's research is important because of its generalizations about principal style; however, the researchers' attention was divided among seven schools and was not focused on the central issue of teachers' roles in SDM.
Authors of the conceptual literature about SDM have posited teacher role as a central issue. However, teacher role change during SDM has received little attention in empirical research. A few of the studies reviewed above have suggested the difficulty in changing teachers' roles, but they have failed to indicate reasons for that difficulty. Although it is clear that teacher role change is complex and problematic, the methodological limitations of these studies do not give warrant to the conclusion that SDM fails to provide a context for teacher role change. Moreover, the methodologies employed by these researchers have precluded findings of significant role change.

None of the studies reviewed here has investigated teachers' roles through a longitudinal and in-depth examination of teachers in a single school. Although studies of school culture provide many generalizations about school contexts, every school is nonetheless a unique and dynamic organization with its own distinctive culture. To answer the questions posed in this dissertation, inquiry must be longitudinal, in-depth, and attentive to teachers' perspectives and their school's cultural norms. In the following chapter, I explain how those and other methodological issues were addressed.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to describe the process of teacher role change as it was perceived and understood by teachers in an elementary school during the implementation of shared decision making. The guiding question for this research was

How do teachers' roles, as they perceive them, change during the implementation of shared decision making?

The following subsidiary questions were also addressed:

1. From the perspective of SDM participants, how has SDM evolved during its first two years, and what effect has it had on their school?

2. From the perspective of SDM participants, have teachers' roles changed? In what ways?

3. From the perspective of SDM participants, did the experience of role change vary from teacher to teacher? If so, what were the differences, and why did participants believe these differences occurred?

4. From the perspective of SDM participants, what contextual factors have fostered teacher role change in SDM, and what factors have constrained it?

5. How does role theory help to explain the experiences and perceptions of teachers at this school, and how does it contribute to our understandings of SDM?
The investigation of these questions suggested to me a number of methodological issues. In particular, I gave attention to (a) the complex array of roles enacted by teachers and other school personnel, (b) the perspectives and interpretations of the people being studied, and (c) the interactional nature of events in the school. A brief discussion of these methodological concerns follows.

Researchers who inquire into the behavior of individuals within an organization must give attention to the complexity of that social system (Williams, 1976, p. 103). According to Sarason (1982), researchers often misinterpret organizational change in schools because they do not recognize that the response of the school person reflects in some measure the fact that he or she is in a role that is characterized by duties and responsibilities and is defined by a complicated set of personal and professional relationships with many other people in the setting. (p. 25)

Investigation of the questions posed in this study required that I attend to the views of the participants in the study and the meanings they attached to events in the social setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Fetterman, 1988; Soltis, 1984; Spindler, 1982a). "Since it is the people in the setting that must live with the change, it is their definitions of the situation that are crucial if change is going to work" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 193). Or, as Fetterman observed, "What people believe to be true is more important than any objective reality; people act on what they believe" (p. 18).
According to Becker (1970), society may be viewed as "collective action" (p. v). Becker's view requires that researchers studying social institutions take a transactional view:

You cannot avoid the knowledge that events are transactional or interactional, that you understand what one person does by knowing the network of interactions he operates in and what all those other people are doing and how that conditions and is conditioned by what he does. (Becker, 1970, p. vi)

Attention to the complex array of relationships in schools, to the perspectives of the people being studied, and to the interactional nature of events within the organization implies a particular research methodology and orientation. In the remainder of this chapter I discuss the methods that I used in this study and the theoretical orientation that framed the research. The following section is a rationale for the investigative perspective chosen.

Rationale

In response to the methodological issues posed above, I conducted this study by assuming the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism, by using ethnographic techniques, and by inquiring within a single bounded system, or case. The following discussion includes sections about symbolic interactionism, ethnographic techniques, and case studies.

Symbolic Interactionism

Theory, whether explicit or implicit, is always present in research (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 14; Phillips, 1983, p.
That is, every study rests upon a set of assumptions that organize the researcher's understanding of the data collected (Kirk & Miller, 1988, p. 15). In qualitative research this collection of assumptions is the theoretical perspective that guides the inquiry (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

The theoretical framework for this research was symbolic interactionism, which has its roots in the philosophy of pragmatism (Hewitt, 1988). Hewitt noted that the pragmatists "viewed living things as attempting to make practical adjustments to their surroundings" (p. 8). Pragmatists were concerned with how people know and act, and they viewed knowing and acting as "intimately linked," positing that individuals act in accordance with their "ideas about the world" (Hewitt, p. 8).

Mead, to whom Becker (1970) credited the emergence of symbolic interactionism, viewed even individual behavior as a kind of collective human action. That is, "in any activity involving two or more people . . . individual lines of action are adjusted to one another" (Becker, 1970, p. 291). Mead argued that humans are able to view themselves as "objects" and to anticipate the interpretations and responses of others to their imagined future actions. In that manner, humans can assess the consequences of their actions prior to committing them (Miller, 1982). This "reflective consciousness, . . . requires a consciousness of meanings" (Miller, 1982, p. 7), and, thus, implies that behavior is social in nature (Becker,
Symbolic interactionists place primacy upon human meaning. They hold that humans— in contrast to animals, who act on the basis of instinct and conditioning— "act toward things on the basis of the meanings those objects have for them" (Jacob, 1988, pp. 12-13). Meanings derive from past experience and from interactions, but humans do not act automatically or unwittingly. Rather, they actively construct meanings according to the situations in which they are placed and their intents (Jacob, 1988).

The relevance of a symbolic interactionist perspective for this study may be understood by considering shared decision making in light of the assertions about symbolic interactionism made above. Becker's (1971) theory of situational adjustment is useful to this understanding. Becker believed that adults undergo meaningful personal changes in their beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. Understanding these changes requires that researchers consider the situations adults enter and their ability to adjust to the perceived demands of these situations. Thus, the researcher must examine changes in adults' lives from the participants' perspectives. Becker stated, Situations occur in institutions; stable institutions provide stable situations in which little change takes place. When the institutions themselves change, the situations they provide for their participants shift and necessitate development of new patterns of belief and action. (p. 131)
Moreover, the degree to which individuals vary in their responses to changed situations may be attributed to differences in their experiences of, or their perceptions of, these situations.

Shared decision making is intended as a way of restructuring the school environment and altering teachers' organizational relationships (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986, p. 3). It has the potential to change a traditionally stable institution and, thus, many of the situations in which teachers work. As Becker (1971) suggested, changes in school situations require teachers to adjust to new demands. Only by examining teachers' perspectives and inferring their interpretations of situations can we understand their adjustment. The symbolic interactionist perspective meets these methodological demands. By assuming that perspective, I was able to interpret participants' definitions of the roles they believed they were to enact, as well as the reasons they embraced those roles or remained committed to more traditional roles.

Ethnographic Techniques

I decided that ethnographic techniques would be most appropriate for this inquiry primarily for three reasons. First, ethnographic methods enable researchers to examine the perspectives of the people studied. Second, ethnographies attend to the complexity of social situations and to multiple
influences on the actions and understandings of participants. Third, ethnographers give close attention to the contexts of their research.

According to Spradley (1980) ethnography, reveals what people think and shows us the cultural meanings they use daily. It is the one systematic approach in the social sciences that leads us into those separate realities which others have learned and which they use to make sense out of their worlds (p. vii).

To achieve those ends, ethnographers "attend to the native view of reality" (Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 19). That is, ethnographers explain behavior from the perspective of the people studied.

The ethnographic perspective, called by Spindler (1982a) the "ethnographic world view," has other implications for the manner in which ethnographic inquiry is conducted. First, in contrast to experimental researchers, ethnographers view their subjects not only as informants but literally as experts in their native culture (Spindler, 1982a). Second, ethnographers believe that their role is not to judge but, rather, to gather informants' views (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Third, ethnographers believe that much of the cultural knowledge held by informants is tacit. To unearth and make explicit informants' tacit understandings, the ethnographer must conduct systematic and repeated observations. The resulting account informs the "native" of the culture, as
well as those to whom the culture is foreign (Spindler, 1982a).

"The ethnographic world view also holds that all behaviors occur in contexts, and that not only do contexts continuously change but people change with contexts" (Spindler, 1982a, p. 491). Like other qualitative approaches, ethnography is context sensitive because ethnographers believe that context influences people's thoughts and actions (Smith, 1987). Ethnographers regard the context in which an event occurs as vital to their understanding of it. Rather than seeking to disentangle the effects of context upon a phenomenon, ethnographers call attention to those effects and consider them to be of special interest.

Because of these qualities, ethnographic techniques were especially useful in examining teacher role change during the implementation of shared decision making. By examining the perspectives of teachers, I was able to discern the meanings and intents of teachers as they responded to new and problematic situations. By attending closely to context, I was able to identify factors that fostered or constrained teacher role change. Indeed, the focus of this study upon individuals' experiences of an organizational change was a focus on context and the interactive effects of the unique culture of the school, the macroculture that surrounded it, and the innovation that was being imposed upon it. As
Wolcott (1988a, p. 203) noted, instead of clearly identifying answers to educational problems, ethnographies tend to reveal their complexity. The attention of this study to the complexity of SDM's implementation and to teachers' diverse experiences in SDM required the use of ethnographic approaches.

The purpose of this discussion has been to establish the appropriateness of ethnographic inquiry for the study of teacher role change during the implementation of shared decision making. Like most educational studies that are called ethnographies, this investigation was in fact a case study conducted from an ethnographic perspective (Spindler & Spindler, 1987).

**Case Study**

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) defined a case study as "a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 58). By focusing on a single setting, I was able to attain a comprehensive understanding of the case, as well as "to develop more general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process" (Becker, 1970, p. 76).

By focusing on a single case, I also was able to give adequate attention to the context in which SDM was being implemented (Stake, 1985). Case study methodology is especially appropriate for examining innovations like SDM.
Policymakers often regard such programs as biological, assuming that an innovation can be implemented at one site as successfully as it was at another (Fetterman, 1988). In truth, organizational change should be viewed as sociological. Although schools may share certain characteristics, every school is unique and is embedded in a unique context. In this study I gave careful attention to the idiosyncratic nature of the context and considered its implications for SDM success and teacher role change.

In addition, by focusing my investigation on a single case, I was able to give more attention to the process of implementation. According to Fetterman (1988), "the process of adaptation should be the focus of inquiry" (p. 62) in studies of innovations. Individual role change is a process of adaptation (Becker, 1970), and an organization's response to an innovation is, likewise, a process of adaptation. For this reason and those discussed above, I investigated a single case to learn about teacher role change during SDM.

As I explained above, I gave careful attention in this study to the context in which teachers implemented SDM and enacted their roles. In the following section I describe the setting in which I conducted this study.

The Setting

To understand SDM and teacher role change at Silver Hill, readers need to be aware of three aspects of the setting for this study. The discussion that follows includes
separate sections on (a) the initiation of the shared decision making project in Palmetto County, (b) the role of the Research and Development Center, and (c) a description of the site.

The Initiation of the Shared Decision-Making Project

Several factors influenced Palmetto County's adoption of shared decision making during the 1989-1990 school year. The district had 15 years of experience with school-based management. Further, school personnel said the district was innovative and had been engaged in numerous school improvement projects. In addition, the leadership of the local teachers' union worked collaboratively with the school board to initiate the SDM project. Brochures published by the district called attention to the joint support of the school board and the teachers' union.

The school board and teachers' union determined that the goals of the SDM project would be the professionalization of teaching and the improvement of student achievement. The union leadership viewed SDM as a means to professionalize teaching, whereas the school board's primary concern was to improve student achievement. Nonetheless, when SDM began, both groups endorsed both goals.

Three aspects of the district's plan are salient to an understanding of SDM's implementation at Silver Hill and to my role in this study. First, pilot schools were allowed to request waivers from school board policy and from the union
contract. Requests for waivers were submitted to the Palmetto County SDM Steering Committee. Upon approval by that group, waiver requests were forwarded to the head of the teachers' union and the school superintendent. If both approved the waiver, it went to the school board for final approval. The waiver provision of Palmetto County's SDM project meant that school personnel ostensibly were able to enact any changes they deemed necessary to improve their schools.

Second, the district encouraged schools to be innovative in devising SDM governance structures and in proposing initiatives for school improvement. Pilot schools had flexibility and control, and central office administrators expected SDM schools to propose bold innovations. Faculty at SDM schools did not know what to make of their newfound freedom. Although the seven teachers I interviewed in February, 1990, agreed that SDM would give them more of a say in school decisions, only three envisioned SDM as a means for teachers to enact sweeping changes. The majority of the teachers interviewed did not talk about SDM as a way to restructure schools; rather, they spoke of SDM as a way to improve the effectiveness of schools. Faculty at Silver Hill held widely divergent views about the goals of SDM, and they were uncertain about how SDM would function. Consequently, they committed considerable time and effort to establishing a
form of school governance and clarifying the domains of decision making in which staff would participate.

A third aspect of the district's plan for pilot schools was significant not only for its role in the evolution of SDM at Silver Hill but also for my role as the researcher in this study. The district's project included a formative evaluation component. The following section is a discussion of that evaluation and its influence on my role as researcher.

The Role of the Research and Development Center

In the fall of 1989, Palmetto County contracted with the Research and Development Center on School Improvement at the University of Florida to conduct a formative evaluation of SDM in six of its pilot schools. Dr. Rodman Webb, the project director, invited me to join the evaluation team, and I continued in that role through 1992. Each of five team members was assigned as the evaluator for one pilot school. Two more researchers worked collaboratively at a sixth school. As the evaluator for Silver Hill, I followed the progress of SDM and wrote status reports to the staff twice a year. The research team collaboratively designed the study, analyzed data across the six pilot schools, and wrote reports to the school district at the end of each school year.

Between February, 1990, and May, 1992, the research team made seven on-site visits to conduct interviews and provided status reports to the individual schools following each of
the visits. When the team made its initial visit to Palmetto County on February 26, 1990, I spoke to the Silver Hill faculty at a 10-minute early-morning meeting in the media center. I briefly discussed my role as evaluator and their roles as participants in the study. I distributed a 1-page flier (see Appendix A) that further explained the research. I emphasized that I was conducting a formative evaluation and that my role was not to judge their work but to understand it. I said that I wanted to learn about SDM from their perspectives and to report to them their collective perceptions.

My involvement in the formative evaluation of SDM in Palmetto County has several implications for this study. Most important, my work on the evaluation team gave me easy access to SDM participants and to archival data. I was essentially invited into the school, and the school staff became increasingly comfortable about my work and their participation in the research. Although some staff displayed anxiety in initial interviews and were reluctant to answer certain questions, respondents over time became less anxious about participating in interviews. Some teachers said they enjoyed giving interviews and that the interviews helped them to reflect about SDM. My status reports to the school helped to allay participants' concerns about the use of their interview responses and helped to assure that they discussed SDM candidly.
One cannot understand the progress of SDM at Silver Hill without considering its unique context. The following section includes a brief discussion of Silver Hill's selection as a pilot SDM school and a description of the school site.

Description of the Site

Silver Hill was 1 of 42 schools in Palmetto County that applied in 1989 to become SDM schools. At that time there were 57 teachers on the faculty. Of those, 49 were present for the vote to determine if the school would apply for SDM status, and 42 teachers, or 92% of those present, voted in favor of the application.

The application submitted to the school board included the following rationale:

Silver Hill Elementary School was designed for 450 students. Now the student population is nearing one thousand. Space is very limited, so we have had to resort to creative solutions, such as dozens of portable classrooms and a soon-to-be-assembled annex. Add to our burgeoning growth, the fact that many of our students have special problems stemming from socio-economic and/or cultural backgrounds, and you can understand our rationale for applying to participate in shared-decision making. Faculty and staff alike see this new process as a great potential source for planning and problem solving in meeting the special challenges facing Silver Hill.

The application, which was submitted jointly by the principal, the union steward, and the advisory committee chairperson, stated that the faculty had discussed the implications of the program and was committed to its
implementation. In addition, the application included a statement of the school's readiness for SDM. It asserted,

Silver Hill has been evolving towards shared decision making over the past two years. We have a united faculty with very high morale. We have regular processes in place for involvement and input year-round (faculty council, school improvement team, PTA, School Advisory Committee, social committee, etc.). We are used to working together at Silver Hill and eagerly look forward to showing the Board and the Community that shared decision making can work to improve education.

When I asked the union steward why Silver Hill was selected as an SDM school, he stated, "I think we submitted the most sincere and noteworthy application. . . . We said in candor, 'We've got serious problems.' And there's no one to blame for those problems, but we have very serious problems here."

The teachers I interviewed on my first visit to Silver Hill agreed with the union steward's assessment. My initial observations of the school confirmed their assertion that Silver Hill faced complex and difficult challenges. As I sat in the principal's office to conduct my first set of interviews at Silver Hill, I was able to observe activities in the office throughout the day. Having worked for 14 years as a teacher and administrator, I expected that the school office would be a constant stream of activity. However, I did not anticipate the volume of activity that took place that day in the crowded office in which administrators and office staff did their work.
The school building on Silver Hill's main campus is a twostory structure that was built in 1927. The entrances in the front of the school lead through two breezeways that open onto a central courtyard. The courtyard is enclosed on three sides by the horseshoe-shaped main building and on the fourth side by a one-story addition of a later era. Neatly landscaped and surrounded by open corridors on the first and second floors of the main building, the courtyard is an attractive and serene retreat from the urban activity a short distance beyond the school's walls. In sharp contrast to the order and tranquility of this area are the rows of brown portable classrooms that are squeezed into every available cranny along the sides of the building.

Access to the school's main office is from an outside corridor on the first floor of the original structure. When I entered the office for the first time, I had to stop abruptly to avoid running into a counter located 4 feet from the outside door. Looking across this counter, which separates visitors from office workers, one is able to see the street in front of the school through a window that spans the width of the office and extends almost to the top of the 10-foot ceiling. The counter cuts across the width of the office and separates visitors from the area in which the office staff work. This central work area measures 12 by 20 feet, and the area in which visitors, students, teachers, and other staff wait for attention from the office staff is 4 by
12 feet. The work area contains three desks (the intercom is on one desk), a copy machine, and the numerous shelves and stacks of papers and materials typical of school offices. Even in the absence of the office staff, moving about the work area requires some negotiation, especially to reach the assistant principal, whose office is located behind the counter and to the right of the room as one enters from the outside. The assistant principal's office is 8 by 8 feet, and on my initial visit was occupied by two assistant principals. The principal's office of the same size opens onto the central work area at the end of the room opposite the visitors' area. Across the central office space from the principal's office is a 5 by 12 work area that appears to be a converted closet. This room is filled with office equipment and provides access to the lavatory used by office staff. Even the lavatory is crowded with shelves of office materials and supplies.

In this cramped office space, secretaries, clerks, administrators, and other personnel--numbering perhaps 10 or more at times--attend to their daily routines and to an endless stream of students, parents, and school staff. On a typical morning several families may be crowded behind the visitors' counter, presumably to register their children. I was surprised on my first site visit how frequently office staff conversed with non-English-speaking children and parents. I learned that day that Silver Hill has a large
population of bilingual students and that some office staff were hired specifically for their ability to converse with these children and their parents.

The overriding impression I took from Silver Hill after that first visit was of a school experiencing an almost incomprehensible measure of transition. My initial perceptions of the school's growth and transition have since been confirmed. Silver Hill's Five Year Plan for 1991-1996 indicated that the student turnover rate for the 1990-1991 school year was 47%. At the same time the student population was growing as fast as the school could truck in portable classrooms. The school's progress report for 1986 indicated that the student population that year was 560. In formal interviews and conversations with faculty in 1990, several staff members noted that the number of students at Silver Hill had grown to more than 1,000. Respondents said in 1992 that the student population exceeded 1,200.

The ethnic composition of the student population also changed significantly between 1986 and 1990. The school's progress report for 1986 indicated that 68% of the students were minority students. According to the 1989 progress report, 87% were minorities. As a veteran member of the staff noted, however, the change in the school's ethnic composition was more dramatic than these figures suggest. In 1986, the minority population consisted almost entirely of African Americans, whereas in 1989 many of the school's
minority students were recent immigrants who did not speak English. Teachers and staff had little training in multicultural education and described the change in the school's ethnic character as "culture shock."

The description of the school office and campus as I observed them in February, 1990, and the population data provided above are presented to give readers a sense of the environment in which staff at Silver Hill worked. The crowded and challenging conditions that characterized the office were consistent with teachers' descriptions of their professional lives. The challenge of working with a rapidly growing and changing student population and the difficulty of meeting that challenge without adequate facilities strongly influenced the faculty's decision to become an SDM school. In addition, readers should consider these influences in analyzing the responses of Silver Hill's teachers to SDM implementation.

As I noted earlier, inquiry about teacher role change during SDM suggested to me certain methodological considerations. In the next section I explain the research methods and procedures for this study.

Research Methods and Procedures

This discussion of research methods and procedures includes three sections. The first is an overview of the qualitative methods and procedures I used.
Overview

For this case study of teacher role change during the implementation of shared decision making, I used ethnographic techniques. The research pattern I followed was cyclical rather than linear (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Spradley, 1980). That is, I began analysis immediately after my first interviews, and I continued to analyze data throughout the research (Becker, 1970; Spradley, 1980; Strauss, 1987). I raised new questions even as I answered others (Spradley, 1980). From the beginning until the end of the study I engaged in hypothesizing and testing of my provisional hypotheses. Throughout the study my analysis of data guided future data collection (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

I began the study by asking interview respondents broad descriptive questions. Analysis of data led to more focused observations and subsequent analysis to selective observations. I became increasingly selective as the inquiry proceeded. This process enabled me to explore certain features of the cultural scene in depth while retaining an understanding of the relationship of those selected features to the larger context (Spradley, 1980).

As I proceeded from broad descriptive questions to more selective data collection, I speculated about the meaning of my observations, but always with an awareness that my musings were provisional theories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Kirk & Miller, 1986; Strauss, 1987). Numerous qualitative
researchers have written about this process. Spradley (1980) suggested that the investigator record analytical and interpretive comments separately from verbatim accounts of the cultural scene. Strauss (1987) advocated the use of theoretical memoranda, encouraging the researcher to limit each memo to one topic and to write them as theories occur. Kirk and Miller (1986) stated that the advantage of recording one's musings and reflections is that they facilitate serendipitous discoveries that would otherwise be unlikely. Wolcott (1988a) suggested that ethnographers write while collecting data as a way of recognizing gaps in data collection. During this study I wrote 54 pages of theoretical memoranda and journal entries. This practice allowed me to record momentary insights that I might have forgotten if I had waited until the end of data collection to begin interpreting my findings.

In summary, I followed the tradition of qualitative researchers who (a) discover their questions in the field, (b) ongoingly hypothesize and test their hypotheses during data collection, and (c) analyze and write throughout the study in order to guide subsequent data collection. Spradley (1980) described this process as cyclical; Wolcott (1988b) called it a "dialectical process in which ideas inform observations, observations inform ideas, and all critical [his emphasis] judgments are made by humans" (p. 27).
In ethnographic inquiry the researcher is the instrument for observing and interpreting human behavior. This ethnographic view guided my decisions about data collection. 

**Data Collection**

The use of a particular method of inquiry depends on the purpose of the study, the questions asked, and the setting in which the observations are occurring (Evertson & Green, 1986; Shulman, 1981). According to Becker (1970), research must be conducted first hand in studies of collective action. In this study, I used three forms of data collection. Two methods, participant interviewing and participant observation, are forms of inquiry that meet Becker's requirement of situating the researcher on the scene. Participant interviewing was the primary method of data collection, but I also used participant observation and analysis of archival data to supplement and triangulate the data collected in interviews. A discussion of the primary method of data collection, participant interviewing, follows.

**Participant Interviewing.** According to Spradley (1980), "All informants are participant observers without knowing it" (p. 124). That is, people in any setting are engaged in continual observation and sense-making of that setting. When insiders act as research informants, they share interpretations that are based on numerous observations over time.
Interviewing multiple respondents at Silver Hill gave me access to the knowledge and interpretations of numerous on-site observers who were—like researchers—making sense of their situation. However, eliciting those understandings can be problematic for the researcher because informants' understandings are often tacit.

In a study of Chicago schoolteachers, Becker (1970) reported that he interviewed many teachers who were initially reluctant to discuss their professional roles and relationships for fear of reprisals. Becker overcame that problem by beginning interviews with a question with "a high level of generality" (p. 60). He then probed with follow-up questions to get respondents to discuss the generalizations they mentioned. Becker said he often "played dumb" (p. 60) and asked informants to elaborate on their answers. In this way he was able to help respondents to overcome their anxiety about interviewing and to answer candidly. The rich descriptions of teachers' experiences that Becker was able to elicit allowed him to infer their tacit understandings.

Wolcott (1987) also suggested beginning interviews with a very general question with the intent of identifying themes in respondents' lives. He suggested that the interviewer begin the interview by asking "informants to recount the events of their daily lives and routines" (p. 49). Like Becker, Wolcott observed that this strategy reveals topics that the interviewer can probe for elaboration.
In my research of SDM at Silver Hill, I conducted 100 formal interviews (totalling 64 hours) with 54 different respondents. Typically, I began interviews with a general question such as, "What's going on in shared decision making at Silver Hill?" In each interview I used a script that included 12 to 15 general questions. For each general question there were follow-up questions. I used the follow-up questions, only as needed, to elicit more detailed answers. The interview script provided a guide, but I worked to keep the dialogue conversational. I also asked questions that were not on the guide when respondents initiated unanticipated lines of conversation. Often these spontaneous discussions led to important insights. Interviews averaged about 39 minutes, although a few were as short as 20 minutes and others as long as 50.

I conducted 94 of the 100 interviews at Silver Hill during seven different site visits and spent a total of 14 days on site collecting interview data. I conducted six interviews over the telephone. In six of the seven site visits I interviewed some people for the first time. By continually adding new respondents, I was able to broaden the range of perspectives that participants were sharing with me. In each on-site visit after the first, I interviewed some participants who had been interviewed before. Their prior experience of interviews with me provided them with a sense of security that facilitated data collection. These repeat
interviews also enabled me to document changes in participants' interpretations.

All 100 interviews were recorded and transcribed from audio tape to provide a verbatim record of informants' comments. As soon as possible after each interview, I wrote a summary of the interview on a 2- or 3-page data analysis form. The form included headings that coincided with the major interview questions. It also had space for my reflections, including thoughts about future data collection suggested by the interview.

I used typed protocols of the interviews for data analysis. These transcriptions total approximately 800 pages. I occasionally listened to the tapes as well because audiotapes often provide nuances of meaning that are not evident in the written transcripts.

I conducted 14 of the interviews during a 4-day visit to Silver Hill in November, 1991. The script that I constructed for this visit focused on teachers' roles (see Appendix B). Each interview began with a general question, in which I asked the informants, all of whom were teachers, to describe the multiple tasks that they do in their work. Follow-up questions were designed to elicit information about their involvement in SDM and its effect upon their teaching roles.

I selected the 14 respondents for the interviews specific to teacher role with several considerations in mind. All but 2 were teachers whom I had interviewed before. They
were comfortable with the interview process and had been candid and responsive during our previous conversations. I had interviewed some of them two or three times during the SDM project. I purposely selected teachers with varying levels of involvement in SDM and identified them as either performers, audience, or outsiders, based on Goffman's (1973) metaphor of the performance (p. 145). Performers were teachers who were actively involved in SDM, audience members were concerned and supportive but less actively involved, and outsiders were uninvolved. Of the 14 teachers, 6 were SDM performers, 4 were members of the SDM audience, and 4 were project outsiders. I identified one of the teachers whom I had not interviewed before as a performer because of her recent election to the SDM Council. The other teacher was in her first year at Silver Hill and was not a member of the SDM Council. On the basis of these considerations and insights provided by the school liaison I identified her as an outsider.

In February, 1992, I made another on-site visit to Silver Hill to conduct follow-up interviews with these 14 teachers. As in previous interviews, I used a script (see Appendix C) that elicited information on predetermined themes but also allowed interviewees the freedom of response that often leads to unexpected insights. These interviews were more selective than previous interviews. I based the questions for these interviews on a provisional analysis of
previously collected data. In particular, I attempted to clarify issues that emerged in the November, 1991, data, especially those related to teachers' roles in SDM. During these interviews, I shared some of my tentative conclusions about teacher role change, and the respondents had the opportunity to validate, clarify, and elaborate upon my provisional analysis. These interviews averaged approximately 45 minutes.

In this study I also wrote field notes about informal interviews and my observations at Silver Hill. In the following section, I discuss informal interview and observation data and their role in this study.

**Informal interview and observation data.** I collected field notes on two SDM Council meetings, one meeting of the school's disciplinary committee, and one special meeting of four Council members and the district SDM liaison. These observations of SDM in action provided one means of triangulation of teachers' interview responses. In particular, these observations provided insights into the effects of SDM on traditional roles and relationships.

In my seven visits to Silver Hill I wrote 183 pages of field notes. The notes included observations of administrators, teachers, office staff, and students in the office, cafeteria, media center, halls, and other areas of the school. Field notes of my observations and people's comments during informal interviews were a rich source of
data. They helped me to understand the study's context and to validate and clarify statements made in formal interviews. Informal interviews often occurred immediately before or after formal interviews, as well as in my interactions with school staff before and after school and during breaks between interviews.

Archives were also a useful data source. I discuss them in the following section.

Archives. At the start of the project, the research team requested that each school provide archival data. The principal of Silver Hill provided an abundance of data, including a Five-Year Interim Review submitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, annual progress reports from 1986 through 1989, a parent-student handbook for the 1989-1990 school year, and a staff handbook outlining policies and procedures for teachers and other staff.

During the study I collected minutes of SDM Council meetings, school memoranda, archives from the district office, reports submitted by the SDM Council to the school board, and other Council documents. These archives total 547 pages. They formed a rich source of contextual information and also served to triangulate the data collected through interviews and observations.

Formal interviews, informal interviews and observations, and archives provided the data for this study. In the following section, I explain how I analyzed these data.
Analysis of Data

The key distinction among different types of research is in how the researcher treats data analytically (Strauss, 1987). Two significant features distinguish ethnographic analysis. First, as noted earlier, analysis of ethnographic data begins soon after initial data collection and informs subsequent data collection. Thus, analysis is ongoing in ethnographic studies as part of a cyclical pattern of inquiry, which Spradley (1980) has called "a process of question-discovery" (p. 33). Second, ethnographic analysis is interpretive. Spindler and Spindler (1987) have called it "inference governed by systematic models, paradigms, and theory" (p. 22). Spradley (1980), whose analytic model I have used in this research, stated, "Analysis . . . refers to the systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship among parts, and their relationship to the whole. Analysis is a search for patterns" (p. 85).

To identify patterns, Spradley suggested four types of analysis that occur in the research cycle. They are domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and theme analysis.

In domain analysis the researcher identifies domains, or categories of meaning. In addition to objects, these categories may include events or activities. Because cultures, even microcultures such as schools, create categories by grouping together and classifying unique
things, the identification of categories or domains leads to insights about the culture being studied (Spradley, 1980, p. 88).

Domains are sometimes identified by "folk terms" (Spradley, 1980, p. 89), expressions used by informants that identify objects, events, or activities in the cultural scene. At other times cultural meanings are tacit and are embedded in the data. Then the researcher must infer their meanings and provide "analytic terms" to identify those domains (Spradley, 1980, p. 90). Domain analysis should be initiated shortly after data collection begins and should be repeated periodically throughout the research cycle to identify new domains.

Spradley's (1980) second stage of analysis, taxonomic analysis, "involves a search for the way cultural domains are organized" (p. 87). The researcher examines domains to discover subsets and relationships of elements within the domains. Taxonomic analysis was especially useful in this study in revealing levels of teachers' involvement in SDM and varying dimensions of teacher role change.

Spradley's (1980) third stage of analysis, componential analysis, occurs after contrasts have been identified in domains through selective observations or interviewing. In this stage the researcher identifies "attributes (components of meaning) associated with cultural categories" (Spradley, 1980, p. 131). Spradley recommended that the researcher
construct a paradigm, which is a chart representing the attributes of all cultural categories within a given domain. The paradigm delineates the dimensions of contrast between categories. I used componential analysis in this study to clarify dimensions of contrast in teachers' experiences of SDM and role change.

The last stage of analysis is theme analysis, in which the researcher searches for themes that clarify the relationships among domains and that link them to the culture being studied (Spradley, 1980, pp. 87-88). As Spradley noted, "Every culture, and every cultural scene, is more than a jumble of parts. It consists of a system of meaning that is integrated into some kind of larger pattern" (p. 141). The researcher attains understanding of that larger pattern by identifying themes that are found in numerous domains and "have a high degree of generality" in various domains and situations (Spradley, p. 141). Thus, theme analysis culminates a process in which the researcher begins by fragmenting the data and then reconstructs it in stages to render a holistic conception of the culture under study.

The following discussion is of methodological issues. It includes sections on validity, generalizability, and researcher qualifications and biases.
Methodological Issues

Validity

"Validity necessitates demonstration that the propositions generated, refined, or tested match the causal conditions which obtain in human life" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 43). According to LeCompte and Goetz, a strength of ethnography is its attention to issues related to validity. In particular, researchers using ethnographic techniques achieve validity by spending considerable time in the research setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Kirk & Miller, 1986; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Kirk and Miller (1986) suggested that ethnographers remain on the cultural scene long enough "to witness the full cycles of cultural routines, as well as long enough to dispel native anxieties concerning the fate of collected information" (p. 68). Becker (1970) contended that validity is achieved through multiple observations over time. A strength of this study is that I collected data through periodic visits to the site over 2-1/2 years, which is, to say, over several annual cycles of school routines.

By collecting data at Silver Hill over more than 2 years, I was able to engage in repeated hypothesis testing (Kirk & Miller, 1986). Kirk and Miller explained, "The fieldworker . . . draws tentative conclusions from his or her current understanding of the situation as a whole, and acts upon them. Where, for unanticipated reasons, this understanding is invalid, the qualitative researcher will
sooner or later find out about it" (p. 25). The testing of provisional theories is especially effective when the researcher is part of a team studying the same process on different sites (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982), as was the case in this study. Following each of the seven site visits, the team from the Research and Development Center discussed findings at each of the schools in the study. To test provisional theories, I also recorded my reflections throughout the research study in a journal and in reflective memoranda. These two kinds of records allowed me to document tentative theories and then to reflect upon the theories as subsequent data collection either confirmed or invalidated them.

To assess the validity of tentative conclusions, researchers must continue to confront personal biases while reexamining the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Ethnographers continually self-monitor their research methods, the effects of their presence on research settings, and the interpretations they render. My journal entries and reflective memoranda helped me to confront and assess the effect of personal biases. These reflections also helped me to evaluate the influence on SDM and teacher role change of my research and my reports to Silver Hill. For example, early in the study I was concerned about my relationship to key informants. I worried that data might not be valid if my relationships with members of the staff became too cordial.
and informal. I also was ambivalent about discussing SDM and suggesting ideas to participants. By recording these concerns and reflecting upon them over time, and by discussing them with research team colleagues, I was able to resolve these concerns about validity.

Another way in which qualitative researchers avoid spurious conclusions is by confirming their provisional analyses with informants (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). As noted earlier, I provided to Silver Hill a report following each on-site visit. In subsequent visits and telephone conversations with school personnel, teachers and administrators sometimes shared with me their reactions to these reports, thus providing a check to my provisional theories and conclusions. In addition, in the final set of interviews conducted in February, 1992, I shared my provisional conclusions with respondents to elicit their reactions.

To be assured that the data reflected the views and understandings of informants in the population studied, researchers consciously determine the range of possible informants and collect data from all participant types (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Mathison (1988) asserted that validity can be established by the triangulation of data, which can be accomplished by collecting data from different people at different times. During this study, I selected interviewees with the assistance of a school liaison, who
worked with me to identify informants representing all segments of the school faculty. Also, as noted above, I chose 12 of the 14 interview respondents who represented Goffman's (1973) three levels of participation on the basis of previous interviews. I selected the remaining 2 with the assistance of the school liaison.

According to Mathison (1988), the researcher must be explicit about the research process. I have provided this discussion, as well as the one that follows, in that interest. By being explicit, researchers enhance their studies' credibility and generalizability.

**Generalizability**

As traditionally conceived, generalizability is problematic for research conducted on a single case. However, numerous researchers (Eisner, 1981; Spindler, 1982b; Stake, 1978; Stake, 1985; Wolcott, 1988a) have argued that case studies have a strong claim to generalizability. Spindler (1982b) noted that case studies are more generalizable than positivistic studies because they present a complete picture of the phenomenon being studied, with particular attention to context and meaning. According to Stake (1978), the case study provides generalizations about other cases in the population that are like the one studied. Such generalizations are especially valuable in evaluating the success of an implementation process and the reasons for its success or failure. Case studies enable the researcher
and the reader to understand the complexity and contextuality of individual situations (Stake, 1985). My goal in this study was to achieve that type of generalizability. I worked to portray the uniqueness of the school and the larger context in which the case was embedded. I gave attention to the model of SDM that participants enacted and to teachers' different levels of SDM involvement. I wanted to give readers an understanding of SDM implementation at Silver Hill so they could understand the context in which teachers changed their roles.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), qualitative researchers are not as concerned with the question of whether their findings are generalizable across the population of interest as they are "with the question of to which other settings and subjects they are generalizable" (p. 41). Readers of this study should decide for themselves if the case I have represented is similar to theirs. If the case is atypical, they should consider how it provides insight into more typical cases (Stake, 1985). Readers should also know the qualifications and biases I brought to this research.

Researcher Qualifications and Biases

Wolcott (1988a) asserted that the best instruments for observing and understanding human behavior are ethnographers themselves. He noted that in order to survive every person must make sense of the expectations and rules, both tacit and
explicit, of a number of cultures. Wolcott did not intend to suggest that anyone can conduct ethnographic inquiry. Ethnography is as demanding and rigorous as more traditional, nonqualitative research (Spindler, 1982b). Nonetheless, because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative research (Eisner, 1981), those who conduct such inquiry should be explicit about their qualifications and biases. In the following list, I discuss my educational background and experiences that I believe qualify me for this study:

1. I taught in public schools for 11 years at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. I was an assistant principal for 2 years, a district level administrator for 2 years, and an elementary school principal for 3 years. In my public school career I worked in five schools and four school districts. My experiences in different systems and at different positions have allowed me to view schools and people's relationships within them from diverse perspectives.

2. I earned a Master of Arts in Teaching degree, with a specialization in American history.

3. I have completed course work for a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction, with a specialization in elementary education and teacher education. As a graduate assistant, I supervised preservice teachers in seven different schools and, thus, had opportunities to observe teachers and administrators in each of those schools.
4. I completed two courses in qualitative research methodology. In addition, I participated in a qualitative study that was presented at a national conference.

5. I have read extensively in role theory and in the conceptual, experiential, and empirical literature about shared decision making.

6. I am a member of a research team that has been evaluating shared decision making in Palmetto County for more than 2 years. This guided experience has been an invaluable apprenticeship in qualitative research. As a member of this team I have been able to observe and work with a respected and experienced group of educational scholars.

Wolcott also (1988b) stated, "I cannot imagine initiating a study in which I had no personal feelings, felt no concern for the humans whose lives touched mine, or failed to find in my feelings a vital source of personal energy" (pp. 19-20). Like Wolcott, I brought to this study feelings and concerns about the participants and the change they were trying to implement. In the following paragraphs I discuss those biases.

I care deeply about teachers and administrators and the contributions they make to children's lives. I believe I understand their struggles, and I empathize with both groups. I also expect much of educators. I want to believe that all teachers and administrators are driven by a sense of commitment to do what is best for children.
In addition, my interest in SDM and teacher role change is grounded in my experiences as a teacher and administrator. I decided to teach because I believed I could be a change agent, and I made successive career moves because I thought they enabled me to become more active in educational change. My experiences in public schools have led me to believe that schools are no better than the people who work in them. Unfortunately, schools are sometimes not as good as the people working in them because the organization of most schools does not tap the creative energies and abilities of all school personnel. The promise of SDM is that it will enable schools to attract the most capable teachers and administrators and will provide contexts where they can do their best work.
CHAPTER 4
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDM AT SILVER HILL:
UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT FOR TEACHER ROLE CHANGE

This chapter is a case study of the implementation of SDM at Silver Hill from February, 1990, to May, 1992. I have included this brief history of SDM at Silver Hill for two reasons. One, this overview of SDM's first 2 years of implementation specifically addresses one of the study's questions: From the perspective of SDM participants, how has SDM evolved during its first 2 years, and what effect has it had on their school? Two, this chapter should give readers an understanding of the background in which Silver Hill's teachers enacted their roles. Teachers' experiences of role change during SDM's implementation may be influenced by numerous factors, including the unique contexts in which they work, their definitions of SDM, the decision domains in which they are involved, the level of their SDM involvement, and the models of SDM their schools implement. Thus, it is important to understand how SDM evolved at Silver Hill before examining teacher role change in the school.

This chapter has six sections. The first is a description of the context in which teachers at Silver Hill worked. The second section is a discussion of teachers'
evolving definitions of SDM. Teachers' conceptions of SDM influenced its implementation and are important to consider. The third section of this chapter is an examination of barriers to SDM progress. In the fourth section I discuss a problem with faculty-administration trust that emerged during SDM implementation and posed an obstacle to SDM success. Through the faculty's resolution of this problem, SDM became stronger as participants learned about themselves and the SDM process. The fifth section is a discussion of SDM accomplishments at Silver Hill, with special emphasis on understandings participants gained through SDM. The sixth section is a summary of the chapter.

The Context: A Description of Silver Hill

This portrait of Silver Hill has three parts. First, I describe the school's facilities. Second, I describe Silver Hill's teachers, students, and parents. Third, I discuss the school's readiness for SDM.

Silver Hill: The Physical Plant

Silver Hill Elementary School was built in 1927. In 1991, when the SDM Council discussed improving the aesthetics of the school, Council members noted the building's architectural charm and wanted to retain its character. They also noted that the building badly needed renovation and that the grounds needed attention. Interview respondents agreed and emphasized during the spring of 1990
the inadequacy of school facilities for the growing student population.

At the beginning of the 1990-1991 school year, Silver Hill opened an annex as a temporary solution to the overcrowding problem. The annex, approximately one mile from the main campus, consists of a renovated one-story restaurant and 35 portables. Many of the portables sit on pavement that previously served as a parking lot. The refurbished restaurant houses the school's offices, cafeteria, media center, computer lab, and one classroom. City streets border the campus on three sides and a parking lot on the fourth. The only play areas for the approximately 600 children are a basketball court and a small grassy area that is approximately 25 yards by 60 yards. Although intended to be temporary, the annex was still in use at the beginning of the 1992-1993 school year.

Prior to the opening of the annex, overcrowding at Silver Hill was severe. A few interview respondents said that the crowded conditions exacerbated problems in student behavior and made teaching more difficult. Numerous portables--some so close together that teachers and students could barely file between them--were located behind the building and along both sides. Every available space in the main structure was used for offices or classrooms. In May, 1990, I visited a teacher who taught in a small area located behind what appeared to be a stage.
Opening the annex relieved some of the overcrowding, but it also spread the faculty across two campuses and created physical barriers to collaboration. In many ways, Silver Hill became two schools. Boundary lines determined which of the two campuses children attended. Although teachers did not discuss with me the decision-making process for faculty assignment, many respondents called attention to the large number of annual-contract teachers at the annex. Teachers noted that the campuses usually held separate faculty meetings and that faculty at the annex had little contact with their peers at the main campus. Some teachers were disgruntled by their location at the annex and their separation from longtime colleagues. One of the school's most veteran teachers requested a transfer to another school because he was assigned to the annex.

The creation of the annex also split the administrative team and affected relationships between administrators and teachers. One of the school's two assistant principals was assigned to the annex and the other to the main campus. The principal maintained offices at both campuses and split his time between them. Many faculty reported that he was less accessible after the opening of the annex. In May, 1992, one teacher said, "It's physically impossible for any given individual to lead two campuses like this. . . . This is the first time I've seen him in 2 weeks. It's not his fault."
Teachers at the annex said that they worked in isolation. Approximately 30 teachers taught in portable buildings that were lined up seven rows deep on the school's rectangular campus. One teacher observed,

> It's hard to be a part of a portable school. If you work in a school in a building, where there are classrooms, and if you work in a school where there are portables, you can get a different feeling between the two of them, a very different one. Sometimes when you go to the faculty meetings, you can see people that you haven't seen for weeks. But if you were in a building, sometimes you would pass them during the day or you would see them more often. Although we do have meetings and I do see them then, it's just a different feeling.

The physical conditions in which Silver Hill's teachers worked had implications for SDM's implementation and for teacher role change. The makeup of Silver Hill's faculty, students, and parents also was influential.

**Silver Hill's Teachers, Students, and Parents**

In my initial visit to Silver Hill in February, 1990, respondents agreed that faculty and staff were the strength of the school. A number of them spoke of the talent and dedication of teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. They also praised the work of custodians, cafeteria workers, and clerical personnel. In all of my visits to the school, respondents described school personnel as cooperative and collegial. One respondent described the faculty and staff as "a really good blend." Others stated,

> When you come to Silver Hill, you see a family, a family of people who are working together.
Unity is our main strength. . . . If one has a problem, we've all got a problem.

Everybody that I know at this school works very hard.

I think that our teachers are an unusually caring bunch. We work together cooperatively, and we have an administration who listens.

Yet, teachers also described Silver Hill as a difficult place to teach. Their students came to school with many problems, the facilities were inadequate, parent participation was poor, and cultural differences between teachers and students made communication difficult. In February, 1990, a respected veteran teacher observed,

People just don't understand these kids. . . . For some teachers from a different culture, it's just a culture shock. Let's face it. They just can't deal with these kids, and the kids can't deal with them. . . . We have some problems.

As a result of these difficulties, teacher turnover was high. Nonetheless, a core of teachers remained for many years. These veterans were strongly committed to the school, its students, and its community.

The Silver Hill Elementary Five-Year Plan for 1991-1996 noted that the student turnover rate was 47%. That is, in the average classroom, about one-half of the students who began the school year were still enrolled at the end of the year. Although many students left the school each year, many more arrived. Between 1986 and 1992 the student population grew from 560 students to more than 1,200. Over the same period the racial and ethnic composition of the
student population also changed. Many of the new students were recent immigrants and spoke only limited English. In 1986 the school had only a few children who did not speak English. In 1992, 16 of the 48 teachers in kindergarten through fifth grade taught bilingual classes.

Teachers and administrators often spoke of the difficulties students experienced in their lives. In addition to poverty and other problems that America's inner-city children typically face, Silver Hill's non-English-speaking students had to surmount language barriers and cultural obstacles. Teachers believed that these students' parents expected the school to assume full responsibility for educating their children. Thus, there sometimes was a clash of cultural expectations when teachers asked parents for help. Even if parents were willing and able to assist, most had more than one job and little or no free time to help children with school tasks. Financial difficulties forced families to move frequently. Teachers noted that it was hard to contact parents by telephone because they were rarely at home and did not provide the school with new addresses and telephone numbers when they moved. The challenges of working with Silver Hill's students and parents strongly influenced the faculty's decision to endorse SDM.
Silver Hill's Readiness for SDM

In 1989, 92% of Silver Hill's teachers voted to bring SDM to their school. Faculty and staff were confident that SDM would tap stakeholders' talents and solve Silver Hill's most difficult problems. As a teacher stated in February, 1990,

The more people you have voicing an opinion on something, you're going to get better ideas. Because now it's not just the administration, it's the total body, and you know that when you've got more minds working, you can come up with some good things.

Teachers interviewed in February, 1990, also stated that the principal sought faculty opinions and shared decisions. They described him as "open," "warm," "caring," and "trustworthy." They said he was always willing to listen, and his relationships with teachers and staff members were very positive. Teachers made the following statements in February, 1990:

We . . . have had some democratic processes in the works here, evolving.

Our administration . . . believes in letting the teachers take part. . . . He's always said we must get the input of teachers.

We have an administrator who listens.

We have a very democratic principal.

We've been working with shared decisions. . . . So it's really nothing new, but I think it could be on a bigger scale.

The principal described himself as a strong advocate of SDM. When I asked him in February, 1990, if there were
decisions in which teachers should not participate, he laughed and said, "I hadn't thought about that. . . . There is no area that they should not have a part of." Later, during the same interview, he said,

My reaction all along has been one of welcoming the whole opportunity, and I think it's exciting. It's something that we should be doing. I may find that I have not been doing it as much as I thought I was, but I have felt all along that my administrative style is one of involving teachers anyway.

The principal continued to support and believe in SDM throughout this study, and the faculty's trust in him also remained strong. However, as I indicate in the fourth section of this chapter, teacher-administration trust was a complex issue that became problematic during SDM's implementation at Silver Hill.

In summary, as Silver Hill began SDM implementation in February, 1990, there was evidence that the school was "ready" for SDM. Interview respondents described the faculty and staff as a talented, committed, and collegial group, and they believed SDM gave them a mechanism for tapping the group's collective abilities and energies. In addition, they perceived that the principal supported SDM. These were positive indications of the school's readiness for SDM. However, participants' initial conceptions of SDM were vague and uncertain and suggested a lack of SDM readiness.
Evolving Definitions of SDM at Silver Hill

On the morning of my first visit to Silver Hill, I met with the faculty to discuss my role as their SDM evaluator. I told them I was not an SDM expert and that I wanted to learn from them. Immediately I perceived a sense of disquiet among the assembled teachers. Through formal and informal interviews with respondents later that day, I learned that the majority of the faculty had hoped I would share insights about SDM when I talked to them. Their understandings about SDM at that time were varied and unclear. In spite of their lack of agreement and clarity, the faculty and staff began to implement SDM in the spring of 1990. This section is a discussion of their initial and evolving definitions and the consequences of those definitions.

The Beginnings of SDM: What Does SDM Mean?

During my first site visit to Silver Hill in February, 1990, I interviewed seven teachers and the principal. The eight respondents defined SDM similarly, but they did not have a shared vision of what SDM might accomplish in their school. Further, they were not sure who would implement decisions, who would be involved in decision making, and what decisions would be shared. In the first weeks of SDM, teachers' conceptions were still vague, and they were not sure what SDM would enable them to do. Nonetheless,
district guidelines required them to submit a governance plan and a school improvement plan by May, 1990.

**SDM's meaning and purpose.** During initial interviews I asked teachers what SDM meant to them. The one point on which they overwhelmingly agreed was that SDM would give them more input into school decisions:

It means to me that I'm going to be able to have some input into what is being done at school.

I see it as an opportunity for teachers to finally get out of the role of second class citizens and to really have some meaningful input into the ways the schools themselves are run.

I'm just expecting the entire staff to have more input into some of the major decisions that are made at the school.

In February, 1990, there was agreement among the teachers I interviewed that they should have a voice in school decisions, but there was little clarity or agreement about how SDM would enable them to improve their school. For many respondents, having a say in decisions seemed to be both the meaning of SDM and the purpose of SDM. A veteran teacher summarized the faculty's sentiments when she said, "I'm just grateful to be able to have some input here, and I hope that's what shared decision making is all about." One implication of defining teacher input as the purpose of SDM was that SDM was not viewed as a strategy for restructuring the school. Instead, teachers saw SDM as a way to modify current school operations by rendering better decisions collectively than the administration alone could make. Most
faculty either did not perceive that SDM gave them the collective authority to transform their school or had not reflected on the need to restructure their school. The one problem that all faculty and staff hoped SDM would enable them to improve was student misbehavior. Having had little time to discuss and reflect upon the meaning and aims of SDM, dealing with the real and immediate concern of disruptive students took precedence over consideration of more fundamental school change.

**Implementation of decisions.** Because faculty initially defined SDM as a way for teachers to have a voice in decision making, respondents did not talk about teachers taking responsibility for implementing decisions. Nor did they suggest that decisions would be implemented more effectively because faculty and staff would have a greater investment in shared decisions. During SDM's first 2 years at Silver Hill, administrators, Council members, and teachers not on the Council often complained that SDM decisions were not being implemented. Council members said that all faculty needed to participate in implementing decisions, and teachers not on the Council said the Council was not accomplishing anything. Administrators believed teachers and staff were waiting for the administration to carry out decisions.

**Decision domains.** In February, 1990, there was little agreement among respondents about what decisions
stakeholders should share. A few stated that "everything should be shared" but did not indicate how teachers, administrators, and others would be able to convene to decide everything collectively. The majority of the teachers interviewed said they should make decisions about budget. Others mentioned personnel decisions, and a few discussed curriculum decisions. Two teachers said that administration might have to retain some decision-making authority in order to make decisions that required immediate action.

SDM participants. There was also disagreement about who should participate in SDM. Three of the seven teachers stated that everyone should--including parents, students, and clerical, custodial, and cafeteria staff. However, one of those three questioned whether it was prudent to involve noninstructional staff in decisions that did not relate directly to their traditional responsibilities. The majority of the respondents believed that involving parents would not be possible initially because of Silver Hill's poor parent participation.

Reasons for teachers' lack of clarity. Teachers' lack of clarity about SDM was understandable given the short time that they had to discuss and reflect upon its meaning. It is important to examine their initial conceptions, however, because the school was required by May, 1990, to produce a governance plan and a school improvement plan for the
following year. Faculty and staff had little time to clarify and expand their initial understandings before they had to translate them into a working plan.

Lack of guidance from district policymakers also contributed to the faculty's collective uncertainty about SDM. The district left it to pilot schools to determine the goals of SDM and how it would function. District policymakers believed that giving schools flexibility would encourage creative problem-solving strategies. With little guidance, however, SDM participants had difficulty completing the necessary planning before the district's deadlines. In May, 1992, an SDM faculty leader recalled, "This... was brand new to Palmetto County... There's no 'Teachers' Guide' for [SDM]. No manual has been written... We didn't know what we were doing." This teacher then simulated a mock dialogue between district administration and teachers at the beginning of SDM to make his point:

[Teachers] Well, what's expected of us?
[District] Well, whatever you come up with.
[Teachers] Well, how do we get there?
[District] Well, however you want.

The district's expectation that schools establish SDM goals, governance structures, and school improvement plans within the first 3 months was incompatible with their decision to provide so little guidance. The result was that
the Silver Hill faculty did not have a shared vision of SDM when they began functioning as an SDM school.

Although teachers were unsure about their decision domains, the involvement of parents and noninstructional staff, and who would implement shared decisions, they decided that SDM should be enacted as a representative form of governance. The following section is a discussion of the evolution of representative governance in the school.

SDM as Representative Governance

In March, 1990, the Silver Hill faculty and staff selected its first SDM Council. The elected members included two paraprofessionals and four teachers who represented different grade levels and subject areas. The principal and the school's two union stewards were nonelected members.

The Council's 6 faculty members represented 67 teachers, and the 2 paraprofessionals represented the 25 paraprofessionals on staff. Thus, there was one Council member for every 11 or 12 faculty and staff. Teachers noted that a unique feature of their governance plan was that all faculty and staff voted for Council members from each of the different areas. The advantage they saw in that system was that everyone was "represented" by each of the Council members. As I explain in the discussion that follows, faculty and staff began to define SDM as a Council activity--that is, as an activity in which only Council
representatives were actively involved. Faculty and staff selected the Council, and the Council enacted SDM. When SDM participants developed the governance plan, they hoped all teachers and staff would be actively involved in SDM by contributing input to the Council and remaining informed about Council decisions. However, it became increasingly difficult for people not on the Council to participate in SDM.

In March, 1990, Silver Hill was still a single campus with 67 teachers and 25 paraprofessionals. In meetings that spring the entire faculty and staff gathered to discuss SDM goals. Teachers later recalled that obtaining consensus from all participants was difficult and frustrating. As these teachers noted,

It's hard to get everybody together. Once you get everybody in a room and ask one question, you are there for three hours, because everybody has input. So when you get the whole school [together], it is very difficult.

When you get the faculty together, it takes forever for them to agree. And sometimes they don't agree, which means you have to have another meeting. It's just running around in circles. You're not getting anywhere.

You're never going to get everyone to agree on some things. The more people that you bring into a vote, the more disagreement you are going to have. Not only does it take longer, but sometimes you can't reach a decision. So then things have to go back to committee and start all over again.

As I indicated earlier, faculty interviewed in February, 1990, had not developed a vision of SDM and lacked agreement and clarity about who should participate, what
decisions they should make, and how decisions should be implemented. The difficulty of building consensus among all teachers and paraprofessionals, especially when so much clarification and agreement was needed, convinced most faculty that SDM could be enacted more efficiently by a representative Council.

As the district's May, 1990, deadline approached for submitting the next year's SDM School Improvement Plan, the Council conducted a needs assessment to identify school goals. Council members had teachers meet in grade-level groups to list and rank their concerns. Many teachers later stated that the process boosted morale because it provided an opportunity for faculty to express individual views. One teacher said,

I felt good about it. . . . Because of the dynamics there, everybody felt comfortable about sharing how they felt, and I think that it was a real positive thing. . . . People went away from it feeling that they had expressed some things that had been on their minds, and I think it was kind of a--I don't want to say a purging experience--but it was good for morale to talk about some of those things and to think . . . that there are some solutions.

After each group presented its list to the Council, the Council met and ranked the faculty's collective concerns and established eight goals for the 1990-1991 SDM School Improvement Plan. Five of the goals were related directly to student behavior. The goals represented concerns important to faculty; however, one faculty member observed,
The interesting thing is that . . . curriculum itself was never once brought up as an immediate need by any teacher. . . . And at the same time, . . . it's in the back of everybody's minds. But I think . . . everybody was looking at . . . the immediate needs and the immediate problems that we're facing. And we will take care of those things first, and hopefully when we get those things to iron themselves out, we'll have a lot more time to worry about curriculum.

Curriculum--and perhaps other broader concerns--may have been "in the back of everybody's minds," but the proposed School Improvement Plan addressed more immediate needs and problems.¹ As I noted earlier, faculty and staff had little time in early 1990 to develop a shared vision to guide long-range improvement efforts at Silver Hill. In the absence of a vision, it is not surprising that the needs assessment elicited proposals to address immediate needs. In a retrospective analysis of SDM's first 2 years, a Council member observed in May, 1992, that faculty and staff had focused on "symptoms" and had not reflected upon the "root causes" of problems such as student behavior.

However, the needs assessment gave teachers a chance to discuss frustrating problems and a sense that those problems would be addressed. The nine people I interviewed in May, 1990, approved unanimously of the process. Their overwhelming support for this process is important to note. The experience may have influenced how teachers defined--and

¹When the Council presented the School Improvement Plan to the faculty and staff, an assistant principal objected because the plan did not address curriculum. A goal to revise the school's curriculum was added to the final plan.
thus implemented--SDM for the next 2 years. SDM meant that faculty and staff presented grievances and concerns to Council representatives who ranked them and sought solutions to the highest priorities. Council members were expected to report SDM business to other faculty and staff. Shared decision making at Silver Hill became almost exclusively a Council activity. Teachers and staff who were not on the Council were not actively involved and often stated that they did not understand the process, did not know what was happening, and did not believe that SDM was accomplishing anything. They complained that the Council was not solving the school's problems, whereas Council members said the faculty was waiting for the Council to find and implement solutions. Council members sometimes stated that they were overwhelmed by the number of problems others wanted them to address. One Council member referred to herself as an ombudsman.

In spite of these problems, faculty agreed that representative governance was effective as long as Council members kept others informed. However, teachers complained during the 2 years of this study that the Council did not communicate very effectively. The following quotes were typical of teachers' comments about SDM communication:

We don't feel that we are participating. A lot of us feel that we are in the dark about what is going on.
We have no idea [what is happening in SDM]. I'm not involved on the committee, so I don't know what is going on.

They [the SDM Council] meet a lot, but I never seem to hear about why they're meeting. So I don't know whether they are actually getting anything done or whether they are just meeting and having the same problems.

I haven't really heard anything about what SDM has been doing this year.

I think most of the teachers are in the dark about what they [the SDM Council] are doing.

They [the SDM Council] have been meeting a lot lately. I'm not exactly sure what they're meeting about.

I don't know what they [the SDM Council] have been voting on. . . . A lot of decisions are made in the school. I'm not [sure] which ones have been SDM decisions and which haven't.

Poor communication between the Council and other faculty meant that SDM became a Council activity that did not involve most teachers. Most of the comments above were in response to the question with which I opened most interviews: What is happening in shared decision making? The frequency with which teachers used the pronoun "they" to answer that question is revealing. Shared decision making was not a process that involved most teachers but rather an activity in which "they," the Council representatives, were involved.

In summary, the faculty's initial experiences with SDM led them to define it as a Council activity and as a way to address immediate concerns. It is important to understand these conceptions of SDM. They influenced the manner in
which SDM was enacted during its first 2 years and, thus, meant that teachers at Silver Hill had widely varying experiences of SDM.

The faculty, administration, and staff perceived a number of barriers to SDM during the first 2 years of implementation. The following section is a discussion of those barriers.

**Barriers that Impeded Progress**

In the discussion above I mentioned a number of barriers to SDM progress. First, there were physical barriers, including the split campus and the isolation of teachers who worked in portables, especially at the annex. These obstacles made it difficult for teachers and administrators to work collaboratively and to build the kind of school culture that supports SDM. Second, parent participation in school affairs had in recent years been so poor that teachers believed it would be difficult to involve parents in SDM. Third, respondents stated that the challenges of working with Silver Hill's students resulted in a high teacher turnover rate. Many of the teachers who worked at the school in May, 1992, were not there when SDM began, and some did not understand SDM or the reasons for its implementation. There were numerous beginning teachers who had more immediate concerns than SDM participation. Nonetheless, a number of veteran teachers noted that SDM would not succeed at Silver Hill unless it could tap the
energy and idealism of these newcomers. Fourth, the school did not develop a vision of what SDM might accomplish, and there was a lack of clarity and agreement about key implementation issues. A fifth barrier to SDM success was poor communication between the Council and other school personnel. Sixth, SDM involved only a small number of faculty and staff and thus did not tap the energies and abilities of all stakeholders.

In addition to these barriers, an obstacle mentioned by the majority of interview respondents was time. In February, 1990, two of the eight people I interviewed stated that SDM would require a tremendous commitment of time and that substantive changes would not occur quickly. One teacher said he hoped the school board and district administration would not expect schools to "work overnight miracles." In May, 1992, almost everyone I interviewed agreed that SDM would not immediately solve the school's most difficult problems. In my site visits in February and May of 1992, most respondents said they had learned that SDM is a time-consuming process.

From the beginning, finding time for SDM was difficult. The first Council sought district approval to hire substitutes for 2 half days to provide time for Council members to formulate the 1990-1991 School Improvement Plan. Initially, a district administrator denied the request. However, the district-level SDM support team intervened and
the request was approved. Only then did the Council have enough time together to produce the School Improvement Plan.

The district administration's resistance to the Council's request for substitutes was the first indication of another barrier: lack of consistent district support for SDM. An incident that further eroded teachers' confidence in district support was the rejection of the Council's first waiver request. Palmetto County's SDM project permitted pilot schools to request waivers from district or union policies that stood in the way of school improvement efforts. Schools presented waiver requests to a screening committee at the district level. Silver Hill's first waiver request was for an alternate report card for bilingual students, an idea initiated by a teacher who was not on the Council. This teacher wanted to modify the report card so that teachers could report bilingual students' progress using information other than letter grades. The district screening committee rejected the proposal. An administrator later told me the proposal was rejected because the Council had not presented the idea to parents of bilingual students and received their approval. However, teachers' perceptions were very different. The teacher who initiated the proposal stated,

[The committee] felt that it was a racial thing for some reason. . . . And I still don't know why, but they did. They didn't want us to classify students according to their language classifications. I don't understand. The
principal really liked the idea and [so did] the teachers. It's just better for everyone.

Another teacher who was present when the waiver was rejected had a similar perception:

We were called bigots. We were told that we were discriminating against kids, and it wasn't, "Gee, perhaps you could refine this a little bit." . . . We were shot down.

If the screening committee rejected the waiver request because teachers did not obtain the approval of bilingual parents, that reason was not clearly communicated to teachers at Silver Hill. The impact the report card decision had on teachers' perceptions of district support for SDM is difficult to assess. However, the effort to change the bilingual report card was the first initiative by a Silver Hill teacher to improve children's experiences of schooling. When I asked teachers in interviews to identify obstacles to SDM, they often questioned whether the district administration would exempt schools from district policies, even if those exemptions could be shown to be in the interests of students and SDM success. Several teachers mentioned the report card decision when they made these comments. Most teachers who questioned district support did not refer to the report card decision, but it was clear they believed SDM was limited in what it could do. They were not sure that the district would allow stakeholders to restructure their school. Ironically, some district
administrators expressed disappointment that SDM schools did not do enough to change the status quo.

In summary, teachers expressed concern about these barriers to SDM progress: (a) physical barriers to collaboration and collegiality, (b) poor parent participation, (c) the school's high rate of teacher turnover, (d) lack of agreement and clarity about SDM, (e) poor SDM communication, (f) lack of involvement of most faculty and staff, (g) too little time for SDM, and (h) perceptions of a lack of administrative support. In addition, another barrier, a concern about teacher-administrator trust, emerged in November, 1991. The faculty's resolution of this problem led to an important breakthrough.

Faculty-Administration Trust

By examining teachers' changing perceptions of faculty-administration trust from February, 1990, to May, 1992, we can learn much about the implementation of SDM at Silver Hill and the context in which teachers enacted their roles. This discussion includes two sections: an account of the emergence of teachers' concerns about trust and a discussion of the faculty's response to those concerns.

The Emergence of Concerns about Trust

In November, 1991, concerns about trust between teachers and administrators emerged at Silver Hill. These concerns seemed to have been influenced by two factors.
First, some annual contract teachers perceived that active involvement in SDM during an uncertain budget year imperiled their continued employment. Second, these teachers worked in portables at the annex and had little interaction with colleagues or administrators.

As noted earlier, faculty at Silver Hill expressed a high level of trust in their principal in February, 1990. In May and November of 1991, I asked respondents if SDM had affected faculty-administration relations. Approximately one-third said relations between teachers and administrators had improved because of SDM. However, more than half of the respondents shared the sentiments expressed by one veteran teacher: "I think the faculty-administration relations have always been terrific. I don't think SDM has changed that."

Nonetheless, approximately one-third of the teachers I interviewed in November, 1991, made comments that revealed a lack of trust between faculty and administration. Curiously, none of these statements were in response to my question about faculty-administration relations. Most of these teachers' concerns emerged when I asked them how they would initiate a change at Silver Hill. One teacher replied,

What would I do? Umm, I would get all the teachers [pause] See, I don't know what would be the best way to approach it because we have some people that are intimidated by the principal, I mean the administration. . . . A lot of us are intimidated because we are not on contract and we want to work next year.
When this teacher said, "We are not on contract," she meant that she and others were annual contract teachers. In contrast to continuing contract teachers, who had tenure, annual contract teachers were assured of employment for only one year at a time.

Another faculty member on annual contract noted that teachers in a neighboring county were losing their jobs. She added, "They need to cut back, and the last person [hired] is usually the first person to go. . . . It makes me feel better not to make waves." Of the eight annual contract teachers I interviewed in November, 1991, four said they were reluctant to participate actively in SDM because they feared "reprisals" if they expressed opinions administrators did not share. One noted that she might become more active in SDM when she achieved continuing contract status, but until then she was not on "very sturdy ground."

In addition, a few teachers on continuing contract speculated that some of their peers were not involved in SDM because of concerns about job security. However, none of these respondents said they themselves had these fears. Only the teachers on annual contract stated explicitly that they limited their SDM involvement because of concerns about losing their jobs.

The fears these annual contract teachers expressed in November, 1991, were not unfounded. During the previous
summer, the state legislature had cut school funding, resulting in layoffs, freezes on hiring, and cutbacks in school services. The school year began in Palmetto County with a contract dispute between the school board and the teachers' union. The teachers' union encouraged teachers to "work to the rule." Most teachers at Silver Hill ignored the union's request, believing that their compliance would compromise the quality of instruction they provided. During the 1991-1992 school year I asked teachers if budget problems and the dispute between the school board and teachers' union had an impact on SDM. Most faculty said these problems had not affected SDM in particular but had affected morale in general. However, the following assessment by an active SDM participant at Silver Hill suggests a profound effect on SDM:

It's very sad these days to be a school teacher. . . . You look in the paper, . . . teachers are going to be laid off. To get . . . [a] pay raise they want us to pay more of the benefits. [We teach] more students. . . . So I think that turns off people. It's tough to come in smiling every day when you look at these headlines. . . . How can you get real creative when you may not be here next year? . . . We really don't feel like professionals anymore. . . . It's tough to come in here and bring something up with SDM when you just feel down, feel blue.

In 1991-1992 the majority of the teachers I interviewed said they worried about layoffs. In May, 1992, the school district announced the layoffs that many faculty had anticipated.
Teachers' perceptions that budget problems might threaten their continued employment may explain their reluctance to participate fully in SDM and their lack of trust in administration. Annual contract teachers were not certain that voicing their opinions in SDM would result in reprisals, but they perceived their situations to be so tenuous that they could not afford to take chances.

In addition, the four annual contract teachers who hesitated to "make waves" taught in portables at the annex. They had little contact with administration and were not sure that administrators merited their trust. In contrast, veteran faculty and teachers who were active in SDM—and thus had more contact with administration—generally perceived administration to be trustworthy.

In summary, concerns about the impact of budget problems on teachers' employment and physical barriers that limited teacher-administrator interaction led some annual contract teachers to limit SDM involvement and to believe that administrators were not trustworthy. Nonetheless, the trust dilemma might not have surfaced had Sandy Shores not been involved in SDM and the formative evaluation I was conducting. Shared decision making revealed subtle dimensions of faculty-administration trust that often remain submerged in less democratic organizations, and the evaluation gave teachers a chance to voice anonymously concerns they might otherwise have kept to themselves.
The Council's Response

After each visit to Silver Hill I sent a status report to the school. In the report I sent in December, 1991, I wrote,

Some teachers at Silver Hill state they are not involved in SDM because they do not want to risk their job security. They say they fear "reprisals" if they express opinions administrators do not share. Some annual contract teachers say they can't afford to "make waves." A few teachers state that if they were on the Council they would worry about making statements that may be unpopular with administrators. Perceptions, even incorrect perceptions, have consequences. It is important, therefore, to improve the level of trust at Silver Hill. Without trust, individuals will limit their involvement in and commitment to SDM.

Status reports were duplicated and distributed to all faculty and staff. The December, 1991, status report arrived at the school just before an SDM Council meeting. The principal later told me that he did not have time to provide copies to Council members prior to the meeting, but he considered the issues raised too important not to be addressed immediately. Therefore, he decided to read the report aloud to the Council. Copies of the status report were made available to all staff later.

Many people present at that meeting recalled that they were "surprised," even "shocked," by the report. Council members decided they had to focus their efforts on fewer concerns and in particular on building trust among the staff. According to one Council member,
From the last evaluation that you did, we learned that there were a lot of concerns going on in the staff and the faculty. And we had a lot of new members, including myself. And what we've done is . . . a lot of working together as a team . . . finding out what we really want to go after, our goals, which ones we set that we really think are possible right now, prioritizing what we really want to do.

Faculty noted that the Council became more active after the report. Teachers made these statements during interviews in February, 1992:

I think since the memo came back from you saying what everybody's opinions were and what some of the people were saying during the interviews, there have been some good changes . . . It's been the most positive thing so far . . . I talked to one Council member who said that they did discuss everything that was said in the interviews . . . . They discussed some of the problems and how they were going to address those, and started working on them.

We had a faculty meeting and Jerry brought up . . . what needed to be done and talked about . . . [based on] the feedback we got from you. . . . [There have] been a few things happening since that time . . . for the better.

In January, 1992, two members of the SDM Council applied for and received a $5,000 grant from the district's Teacher Directed Improvement Fund. The purpose of the grant was to provide training for the Council and the faculty and staff. The emphasis of the training was on team and trust building. The Council decided to focus its initial training

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2To maintain the anonymity of participants in this study, all names are pseudonyms. Jerry is the pseudonym for the principal.
efforts on improving working relationships on the Council.

As one member noted,

Because we are two campuses, we realize that one problem that the SDM Council had was that we didn't even know one another... There were people sitting on the same Council with other people who didn't know one another's first names. So Jeannie Drummond, \(^3\) did some role playing with us, for us to get to know one another. [Now] we are finally in touch with ourselves as a group. We feel that the staff really needs to be able to get together and know one another... We are a divided campus and we have a continuous turnover of teachers, staff, aides, etc. It's imperative that... we get together as a whole school... We feel like... two separate schools.

To improve trust and build camaraderie, the Council planned a day of team-building activities for all faculty, administration, and staff. They chose a teacher planning day, March 27, 1992, and used money from the recently acquired grant to cover expenses. The Council wanted "to build up mystique and mystery" about the activities, so they decided not to tell the staff what they were planning. Instead, as a Council member recalled, they put out written announcements stating, "Be prepared for March 27. The big day is coming." When I visited the campus in mid-February, a number of teachers mentioned the upcoming training. When I called the school office March 20 to ask the secretary to mail me some data, she asked if I was aware of the plans for

\(^3\)Jeannie Drummond (a pseudonym) was part of a two-person district administration team created at the beginning of the SDM project to provide training and technical assistance to SDM schools.
March 27. She also noted that she had been involved in a facilitators' workshop in preparation for the training and that enthusiasm was building. She ended our conversation by volunteering, "We're going to make this thing work, one way or the other."

In May interviews, respondents agreed that the March 27 activities had been successful. I opened each of the 12 interviews during that 2-day visit by asking, "What's going on in SDM?" Six people immediately spoke of the team-building activities. Four others mentioned it later when I asked about SDM's accomplishments or its effect on staff morale or faculty-administration relations. The following statements are representative of their assessments:

Hopefully we can do that again. It was a fantastic activity. We were very pleased also because we had representation there from the custodial staff [and] the cafeteria staff, and everybody just had a ball.

People . . . were shuffled around and put into different groups, and you had to work with people that you may or may not have known other than to say hello . . . . It really forced us to cooperate, collaborate. . . . I see more smiles now between and among people than I have noticed before.

We got to meet a lot of people and spend more time as a group. . . . We heard about it for weeks afterward. . . . The administration was not separate from the group. They were all working with the group members. A lot of people said, "Oh, I didn't know Mr. Odom [the principal] was like that. I didn't know Mrs. Simpson [an assistant principal] was like that."

I noticed teachers are really, . . . since that happened, feeling more comfortable in coming to
administration. . . . [Now] everybody wants to get involved. Everybody wants to participate.

The principal was especially pleased that Council members had identified a problem, decided how to address it, and implemented their solution. In past interviews he had stated that he wanted teachers and staff to increase their involvement in SDM and to carry out their proposals. Of the team-building activities, he noted,

They planned a day on the 27th of March, . . . and wrote that grant, . . . and encouraged and invited everybody on the staff to participate. They made all the arrangements for the activities, for the location, which was at a park away from school. They organized the whole thing, picked other members of the staff to be trained as facilitators for the various activities, made all the arrangements for them to be released from school for a day so that they could go out and be trained and included noninstructional in that group. And the day was fabulous.

The 10 respondents who discussed the team-building activities agreed that "the day was fabulous." They believed the training improved morale, collegiality, and trust, if only temporarily. The majority of the people I interviewed agreed with the teacher who stated, "One day in the park is not going to solve the problems that we face here. But it's a start." Several teachers affirmed the importance of continued team building and trust building. They suggested that the staff engage in those activities at the beginning of each school year and periodically throughout the year to maintain harmony and morale. Four respondents said they were pleased that noninstructional
staff had participated. Teachers discussed the importance of including custodial, clerical, and cafeteria staff in SDM and of bringing them into the process. Two people suggested I include these staff members in the formative evaluation of SDM. They said that noninstructional staff are important to SDM and should have a forum for expressing their views.

Administration, faculty, and staff believed that the training activities had been one of SDM's most important accomplishments; however, there was one problem. Because the Council wanted to build enthusiasm by surrounding the day with mystery, they did not present their plans to the faculty and staff for approval. Three of the 12 people I interviewed, one of them a Council member, noted that some teachers were resentful that the Council conducted the team-building activities on a teacher planning day without consulting the faculty. These respondents said the Council had erred by not involving everyone in the planning process. However, they noted that the Council learned through their mistake the importance of seeking stakeholders' views. In addition, faculty and staff said they benefitted from the experience in other ways. Everyone seemed to learn from the training and from the planning and implementation process. Respondents said they learned that training improves SDM efficiency and their understanding of the process.

As I noted earlier, most interview respondents indicated during SDM's first year and one-half that it had
not improved faculty-administration trust. However, when
the Research and Development Center administered a
questionnaire about SDM in May, 1992 (2 years and 3 months
after SDM began), 49% of the respondents indicated that SDM
had improved faculty-administration trust. This response
seemed to support comments made by teachers I interviewed in
May, 1992, stating that the Council's team-building
activities improved trust among faculty and administration.

In summary, the emergence of trust as a problem, the
Council's response to it, and the results of that response
reveal much about the SDM implementation process at Silver
Hill. When SDM began in the spring of 1990, there was no
indication of problems in trust between teachers and
administrators. As SDM evolved and the faculty, staff, and
administration began to work together to improve their
school, concerns about trust emerged among a substantial
minority of Silver Hill's teachers. The concerns seemed to
be influenced by the physically fragmented campus, teachers'
perceptions of their status, and their perceptions of the
impact of local budget problems. My report relating these
teachers' concerns surprised many staff members and
initiated Council action. Some faculty and administration
viewed the Council's response as its most important
achievement to date, and a few people observed that the

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Thirty-two percent did not believe that SDM had
improved trust. Seventeen percent were neutral on this
question, and 2% did not express an opinion.
Council was beginning to take greater initiative. Faculty and staff also reported that they increased their understandings of SDM.

This collective achievement and the understandings teachers attained through the SDM process occurred 2 years after SDM began at Silver Hill. The following section is a discussion of SDM accomplishments, with emphasis on stakeholders' understandings of SDM.

**SDM Accomplishments: Learning about SDM and School Change**

The people I interviewed in May, 1992, said that SDM had few tangible achievements. Nonetheless, they all agreed that the project had been worthwhile and should continue. They remained optimistic about SDM because they believed they had increased staff collegiality and collaboration and had learned about SDM.

One SDM accomplishment that almost all teachers praised was the involvement of faculty in hiring new staff. When a position opened, the principal and a group of teachers from the grade level or specialization area to be filled interviewed and evaluated the applicants. The majority of the teachers I interviewed said this process made them feel more professional and they learned from it. They also stated that their involvement made it more likely that the school would hire teachers who were well suited to teach Silver Hill's unique student population. Interview respondents who were hired in this way felt they had a
strong endorsement from their peers. One teacher stated, "It does make [you] feel good that you were recommended and were accepted by more than one person."

Teacher involvement in hiring appeared to strengthen faculty collegiality. In addition, almost all of the May, 1992, interview respondents believed that the Council's team-building activities increased collegiality, trust, and morale. Although they recognized that the effects of the team-building activities were not permanent, their comments indicated that they believed that building a school culture to support change is a first step toward school improvement. One teacher noted in May, 1992, that teachers "are more cooperative . . . more aware of each other and their feelings. . . . They're more of a team now."

Teachers seemed to be optimistic about SDM in spite of its lack of tangible accomplishments because they believed the faculty and staff had become a more collegial and collaborative group. When I first interviewed teachers at Silver Hill in February, 1990, they described themselves as a collegial group. However, their comments indicated that they defined collegiality as being friendly and helpful. In May, 1992, statements teachers made about their relationships suggested their view of collegiality had changed. A veteran teacher said SDM activities had helped her make a transition from being an "old-fashioned teacher" to being a "team member." A Council member said that "more
coordination" among faculty was helping them to address problems with student discipline. A veteran staff member told me that she opposed SDM in the beginning but had become an advocate. She also said,

SDM has made teachers a little bit more aware of what's going on in the school. Elementary teachers are inclined to wear blinders. They feel that their little classroom is the whole world. . . . They really don't like interference from outsiders. But they're starting to realize that shared decision making does work, if they'll give it a chance. . . . They're becoming more involved in the school, as a whole, than they were. . . . They're becoming more involved in curriculum and the politics of the school.

The principal observed, "People . . . are . . . beginning to change their mode of thinking, . . . are becoming more receptive to looking at different ways to do things." Council members said they learned that they will have conflicting viewpoints about most issues and that differences of opinion are healthy and need not prevent them from developing consensus. One teacher who was completing her first year on the Council noted that she had learned to accept others' criticisms of her ideas. She added,

It's funny to see new members [join the Council] . . . because they sit back and want to see how things go at first. Then they . . . start sticking their necks out a little bit. I see that I was that way too at the beginning.

This teacher and others suggested that the nature of collegiality had changed at Silver Hill. The majority of the Council members I interviewed during this 2-year study said they learned to accept the existence of conflict and
criticism during discussions of school problems. As some of the quotes above indicate, teachers began to take a greater interest in school matters. Moreover, almost all of the people I interviewed in May, 1992, believed that the faculty and staff were working more cooperatively because of SDM. They believed that SDM involvement had infused a collaborative spirit that would enable them to accomplish more in the future.

In addition, the majority of the people I interviewed in May, 1992, said that the understandings they gained about the SDM process provided a foundation for future success in restructuring their school. These respondents noted that they knew little about SDM when it began and said the Council had to proceed initially on a trial-and-error basis. An assistant principal summarized many respondents' sentiments when she said, "As we continue to move forward, we have experiences to rely on, and we'll get there one day. . . . It will get better and stronger." Council members regarded their response to the problem of faculty-administration trust as a turning point for SDM. They stated that the Council was redefining its role so that it could focus its efforts more effectively. The Council consolidated a number of committees that were functioning apart from SDM and created from them four committees that would have some decision-making authority and would advise the Council. As respondents discussed the reshaping of
SDM's role, they suggested that the Council was beginning to develop a vision of what SDM might do for the school. Several of the teachers interviewed in May, 1992, stated that it was time to work to improve students' experience of schooling.

Two Council members at Silver Hill stated in May, 1992, that the faculty should begin to take collective responsibility for implementing initiatives. One said,

In the past SDM has [meant] . . . discussing the issues, coming up with . . . solutions, and then looking to administration to implement [the plan]. . . . If you are . . . going to work to develop the school, you have to be able to put into effect your decisions.

Teachers and staff members also learned during SDM's first 2 years that greater staff inclusiveness enhances collaborative problem solving. Whereas most interview respondents doubted in 1990 whether parents and noninstructional staff should be involved in SDM, more than half of those I interviewed in May, 1992, were adamant that those groups should be a part of SDM. One Council member said,

I think [noninstructional staff] have felt, because their hours are different from ours, and they're not at the staff meetings, . . . that they're just a separate group. I think everybody enjoyed having them on . . . the 27th, and I think it was kind of a start. They are realizing that they are a part of this. [Still] the only person who is coming [to Council meetings] from custodial is Mr. Edwards. . . . We haven't had any of the other representatives come, [but] we're still pushing.
In summary, teachers at Silver Hill could point to few tangible achievements after two years of SDM. Many regarded the involvement of teachers in hiring as a positive change. When they discussed that policy, however, they talked mostly about its effect on teacher collegiality. Because of changes in the nature of collegiality and collaboration, respondents regarded the faculty and staff as more of a team. They said teachers were becoming more interested in school problems and more open to new ideas. Council members also believed that they had learned to accept conflict and criticism as a part of the change process.

In addition, faculty and staff believed at the end of 2 years that they had learned much about implementing SDM. Council members believed they had a clearer understanding of their purpose. A few of them said that they needed to take responsibility for implementing change, rather than just providing input. Faculty and staff believed that everyone in the school needed to be involved in school improvement.

These understandings indicate that administrators, teachers, and staff at Sandy Shores were redefining their relationships with each other and their responsibilities within the organization. Not every staff member at Silver Hill acquired these understandings, and many of them learned these lessons at the end of the 1991-1992 school year, almost 2-1/2 years after SDM began.
Summary

Silver Hill began SDM in early 1990 with the expectation that shared decision making would enable stakeholders to solve the school's most severe problems. Teachers worked in inadequate facilities that left many of them isolated and without a collective purpose. They taught a difficult student population and received little support from parents.

Several factors seemed to favor the success of SDM at Silver Hill. Teachers and staff believed that the strength of the school was its personnel, and people described the staff as friendly and cooperative. Faculty agreed that the principal was trustworthy and supportive of SDM.

However, participants' initial conceptions about SDM were diverse and unclear. Deadlines requiring the school to submit a governance plan and a school improvement plan meant that the school had to begin SDM before the faculty and staff could achieve agreement and clarity about SDM. A representative form of governance evolved in which Council members were actively involved in SDM and other teachers were largely uninvolved. Faculty and staff related concerns and ideas to Council members, who then ranked and addressed them. Poor communication between the Council and others in the school increased the distance between non-Council personnel and SDM.
There were numerous barriers to SDM progress. These included physical barriers that limited collaboration and collegiality, poor parent participation, high teacher turnover, lack of agreement and clarity about SDM, poor communication, and lack of SDM involvement from all stakeholders. Teachers and staff learned that SDM was a time-consuming process and did not produce results as quickly as many had hoped. They also believed that district administration did not support SDM and restructuring.

In addition, some teachers perceived that active SDM involvement would put their jobs at risk. The emergence of this concern during the second year of SDM implementation revealed a complex dilemma. Although faculty-administration trust had appeared to be strong since 1990, budget problems in 1991-1992 and the democratization of the school's governance revealed tensions between administration and some teachers. The teachers who were most reluctant to engage in SDM were annual contract teachers who taught in portables at the annex. The district's budget problems, these teachers' perceptions of their status, and their lack of interaction with administrators seemed to contribute to their fears. The school's response to the problem of faculty-administration trust provided insights into its growth as an SDM school. When the faculty, staff, and administration confronted and resolved concerns about trust, participants learned much about SDM and school change.
At the end of 2 years SDM participants at Silver Hill stated that it had few tangible achievements. However, teachers indicated that they learned much about SDM and school change. They believed they had become more collegial, had redefined SDM's purpose, had learned how to enact SDM more effectively, and had learned the importance of involving all stakeholders.

In the context described in this chapter some teachers at Silver Hill began to change their roles. In the following chapter I discuss those changes.
CHAPTER 5  
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ROLE CHANGE AT SILVER HILL

In this dissertation, I define role in terms of three dimensions. First, a role is a "cluster of duties, rights, and obligations associated with a particular social position" (Hewitt, 1988, p. 79). Second, individuals' self-concepts are often tied to their dominant roles (Zurcher, 1983). Third, people's interactions with others help to define their roles (Bredemeier, 1979; Hewitt, 1988). This chapter includes discussions of these three dimensions of teachers' roles in SDM.

In one section of this chapter I explore changes in teachers' rights and responsibilities during SDM. Traditionally teachers have not had the right to engage in school decisions or the responsibility for such decisions (Goodlad, 1984; Lortie, 1975). In recent years teachers' control over their work has diminished further as mandated reforms have imposed constraints on teachers' instructional decision making (Apple & Teitelbaum, 1986; Wise, 1979). Scholars have predicted that SDM will increase teachers' rights and responsibilities (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Elmore, 1990; Johnson, 1990a; Raywid, 1990). The Carnegie Report, for example, called on schools
"to provide a professional environment for teaching" (p. 3) in which teachers would have greater control over decisions affecting their work and would be held accountable for their decisions.

In another section of this chapter I examine personal changes perceived by teachers during SDM. Traditionally teaching has been an individualistic pursuit in which teachers have been isolated from their colleagues. This isolation has had profound effects on teachers' development (Lortie, 1975). It has limited teachers' understandings of their craft and of school matters and has contributed to teachers' uncertainty about the quality of their work. Teachers' uncertainty has discouraged their engagement in cooperative situations and the potential conflict and criticism brought on by collaboration (Lortie, 1975). Shared decision-making advocates believe it will end teacher isolation and provide opportunities for teachers to increase their understandings of teaching and school problems (Lieberman, 1988; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Maeroff, 1988). Involvement in decision making may also enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy and open teachers up to the conflict and criticism of collaborative situations (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Another section of this chapter is a discussion of teachers' perceptions of their relationships with other role partners. As noted above, advocates believe SDM will reduce
the traditional isolation of teaching and will increase teacher collegiality (Lieberman & Miller, 1984). In addition, it will change relationships between principals and teachers by making them colleagues in decision making and the implementation of decisions (Johnson, 1990a). Shared decision making may also improve communication between teachers and their communities (White, 1989). Another implication of SDM is that teachers' relationships with parents and nonprofessional staff involved in decision making will change. The Carnegie Forum's (1986) suggestion that teachers be given greater control over instructional decisions implies as well a change in teachers' relationships to students.

By focusing on these three broad dimensions of role I document teachers' perceptions of their role changes during SDM's implementation at Silver Hill. Before examining those changes, however, I discuss SDM communication problems and the consequences of those problems to provide a framework for understanding the role changes that did or did not occur during SDM implementation. Communication proved to be an important influence on teacher role change at Silver Hill. Communication affected teachers' perceptions of changes in their rights and responsibilities, their understandings, and their relationships with other role partners.

In the second section I discuss changes in teachers' perceptions of their rights and responsibilities, and in the
third section I examine changes in teachers' perceptions of their understandings and themselves. The fourth section is a discussion of teachers' perceptions of changes in their relationships, and the fifth section is a summary of the chapter.

As noted in Chapter 1, I identified 14 key respondents in this study as either performers, audience, or outsiders (Goffman, 1973). I defined performers as teachers who were actively involved in SDM. I defined audience members as uninvolved but willing and able to follow SDM closely and communicate with performers. I defined outsiders as teachers who did not follow SDM and were only minimally involved in SDM activities. Sorting Silver Hill teachers as performers, audience, and outsiders helped me study their varying experiences of SDM and the factors that fostered or inhibited role change. Although I drew upon 100 interviews with 54 different respondents in the analysis of teachers' perceptions of role change at Silver Hill, the interviews with key respondents were especially useful in clarifying differences in teachers' experiences of SDM. I have used pseudonyms only for those 14 respondents and the principal. I call the performers Pat, Paul, Pauline, Peggy, Pete, and Phyllis; the audience members Alice, Ann, Arlene, and

1There are six performers, four members of the audience, and four outsiders. Two performers, Pauline and Phyllis, retired between the first and second interviews on teacher role, leaving four teachers from each group on whom I have complete data sets.
Audrey; and the outsiders Olivia, Olga, Opal, and Oralee. The principal's pseudonym is Jerry Odom.

In the following section I discuss communication problems that emerged at Silver Hill during SDM's implementation. In general, teachers' perceptions of these problems and their consequences varied according to teachers' levels of SDM involvement.

**Communication Problems and Their Influence on Teacher Role Change**

When Silver Hill began SDM, most teachers were involved either formally or informally in a conversation about the meaning and goals of SDM. There were several faculty meetings that focused on SDM, and the needs assessment process involved all teachers. Within a short time, however, SDM became a Council activity. From that point on, SDM became increasingly distant for many teachers. For most, communication was either nonexistent or very formal. When they received communication, it was in the form of published minutes or memoranda and brief announcements at meetings. Teachers made the following comments about communication:

We have no idea [about SDM progress]. I'm not involved in the committee, and so I don't know what is going on.

People that are part of the Council have to understand that they are elected representatives that are willing to give their time, that what goes on in the meeting should not be private; it shouldn't be just a select group that comes back and tells you what they want to do.
A lot of people . . . don't have a clue to what's going on.

As far as what they have decided, I have no idea. It's not discussed at faculty meetings. I think most of the teachers are in the dark about what they are doing.

Nobody is asking me, "What do you think about this?" . . . Nobody is asking me anything.

The majority of the audience and outsiders I interviewed reported that they were "in the dark" about SDM. Numerous reasons were offered for communication problems. Opal said, "I'm not trying to blame the Council. It's just that there is so much work and so little time. Everyone is so busy with everything else." Beginning teachers especially were overwhelmed by other responsibilities and concerns. Teachers and administrators also noted that high faculty turnover placed additional demands on communication because new teachers did not understand SDM or its history at Silver Hill. Some staff complained that the split campus and the size of the faculty exacerbated communication problems. Administrators commented that Silver Hill was becoming a "corporation," and the principal noted several times in 1991-1992 that he felt more like a CEO than a principal. In February, 1991, one administrator stated,

We are starting to become a corporation, and . . . there is going to have to be some sort of networking down. . . . The Council needs to . . . put it in writing, . . . whatever the discussion was, . . . put that document out to every person on the staff monthly.
Indeed, SDM at Silver Hill needed "some sort of networking." However, distributing a monthly "document" to all staff would not have solved SDM's communication problems. Ann once noted that teachers at Silver Hill "get memos on top of memos on top of memos." Some interview respondents commented disdainfully about the Council's written communication. One teacher noted,

We get our little memos. . . . Obviously they discuss things for a long period of time, but then all of a sudden it comes out to us, . . . "As of this day you're changing."

Minutes, newsletters, and memoranda informed teachers about what the Council had done, but they did not involve faculty in discussions about school issues, and they did not provide a mechanism for faculty to express their views. To accomplish those ends, communication had to be face-to-face. Further, there were indications that the most effective communication occurred in informal contexts. When I asked Ann in November, 1991, how she would proceed if she wanted to initiate a change at Silver Hill, she answered,

Well, I would go to Tammy, who was in the library last year. She's no longer with us. . . . This year I would say that I'm not really aware of a lot of things as I was before because Tammy was across the hall from me. . . . We're not really attuned to what's going on or what they're doing. . . . As far as that goes, I see a decline in that. . . . Because Tammy was next to me so there was more input. She would come to me and she would talk to me about it.

Having identified Ann in May, 1991, as a part of the audience, I was surprised to learn in November that she had become an outsider simply because her SDM informant had left
the school. As I reflected about Ann's change in SDM status, I realized that she was confirming a suspicion that I had about effective SDM communication. That is, some teachers were members of the audience by virtue of their informal contacts with Council members. One teacher said, "I think it's better when you have [a Council member] to talk to every day. . . . We have somebody from our team who is on SDM now, and I talk to her all the time." When I ate lunch in the teachers' lounge at the annex in November, 1991, I learned that some of the teachers who were best informed about SDM regularly ate lunch with Council representatives.

I also learned over time that teachers at certain grade levels were better informed than most of their peers. In interviews these teachers reported that their Council representatives communicated with them personally or in team meetings about SDM business.

The split campus affected communication, especially for certain teachers. Those whose representatives were on the other campus were less likely to be informed about SDM. According to one teacher,

If she were here, we probably would tell her what our grade-level concerns were. Whereas, . . . I know that there are people here that I can go speak to. I don't know if being on a different grade means that they don't relate to what I'm saying or if they'll say, "Well, that's kind of . . . Let's put that on the back burner because there are more important issues." You always tend to feel more comfortable with someone who's going through what you're going through.
In summary, two fundamental communication problems emerged during SDM's implementation. First, the Council did not effectively communicate SDM business to faculty and staff. Shared decision making was a new system of governance, and teachers knew little about it. Most teachers were interested in learning about SDM and the Council's decisions. Shared decision making placed greater demands on communication systems than traditional school governance required. In hierarchical school organizations, teachers typically learn about decisions after they have been made—and then only when decisions involve them directly. In contrast, SDM requires that stakeholders be informed during the decision-making process. Shared decision-making advocates have asserted that teachers will broaden their perspectives and understandings of school problems and will accept responsibility for the success of the entire school program when they participate in school decisions. For those changes to occur, however, teachers must sense that they are participating—even if indirectly—in decision making. To increase their understandings of school problems, they must be informed about the issues that arise during decision making. They need to be aware of the tradeoffs that occur and the reasons for those compromises as the decision-making group progresses from divisiveness to consensus on difficult issues.
A second communication problem—in some ways related to the first—was that many teachers did not perceive their views were welcomed. They either feared that candid expression would result in negative consequences or that the Council was not interested in their ideas. Again, communication systems that were adequate for traditional school governance were not for SDM. Top-down systems do not require that staff have means to communicate with people above them in the hierarchy. Shared decision making requires that all stakeholders have a mechanism for expressing their views to those who ultimately make the decisions.

Communication was adequate for two groups of teachers. One group consisted of those who had informal contacts with Council representatives. Informal communication provided a means for them to learn about SDM and to express their views to decision makers. A second group included teachers whose Council representatives communicated directly with their constituents. Only a few Council members recognized and actively performed that responsibility. By relating SDM activities to their peers in team meetings, they informed their colleagues and provided a small-group forum in which teachers felt comfortable sharing their views.

Council members' ineffective communication may have been related to the faculty's collective definition of SDM. Faculty stated in February, 1990, that they were "in the trenches" and, therefore, knew what needed to be done to
improve their school. By having teachers in positions of decision-making authority, the faculty could be assured that the views of those "on the front lines" were represented. Further, their initial experiences with SDM in the spring of 1990 convinced them of the need to implement it through a representative form of governance. Shared decision making was not viewed as a way to increase the faculty's collective understandings or their commitment to decisions. Rather, it was a way for a group of teachers to make better decisions than administrators alone could make. Council members may have assumed that active and ongoing communication with the rest of the staff was unnecessary. They understood the concerns of their colleagues and would render decisions in teachers' best interests. When they had made decisions, then they would share them with the rest of the faculty.

The Council's perception of its role may have constrained the involvement of the majority of Silver Hill's staff in SDM. If Council members believed that they alone were responsible for implementing SDM, they limited other teachers' opportunities to accept new responsibilities and to contribute opinions and ideas. In the following section I discuss teachers' new rights and responsibilities in SDM.

**Changes in Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities**

The experience of SDM differed greatly among performers, audience, and outsiders at Silver Hill. Teachers' levels of
involvement influenced the degree to which SDM brought them new responsibilities.

New Responsibilities

One goal of Silver Hill's School Improvement Plan for 1990-1991 was to revise the school's curriculum to make it more appropriate for its unique student population. Every teacher was a member of at least one curriculum revision committee. Each committee worked to produce new curricula in a particular subject area. During 1990-1991, some teachers stated that they worked for days on curriculum revision. By the end of the year, most of the committees had accumulated vast amounts of material related to their subject areas but had not yet produced usable curriculum guides. Faculty and staff did not revive the curriculum effort in the following year, and the work remained unfinished in May, 1992. Although the committees did not produce new curriculum guides, teachers believed they had assumed responsibilities in a new decision domain. Phyllis noted that faculty were able to "look at [their] curriculum and . . . say, 'This is what we want in our curriculum to really cope with our children and their learning styles.'" Audrey talked about her contribution to committee efforts to integrate music, art, and physical education with other curricula.

The faculty and staff's inability to complete the curriculum revision may be attributed in part to their
attempt to accomplish too much too soon. In February, 1991, a Council member commented,

While we didn't think our plan was overly ambitious, except maybe in the area of the curriculum, . . . we didn't think we were biting off all that much, but apparently we did. We bit off big chunks. Because a lot of the stuff we wanted to do has not gotten done.

As noted in Chapter 4, one change that resulted from SDM was the participation of faculty in interviewing and hiring new teachers. When a teaching position was being filled, faculty who taught in that grade or subject area could volunteer to participate in the selection process. All of the teachers who talked with me about this new faculty role praised the change. Many stated that it enabled them to select teachers who would be compatible with the Silver Hill staff. Ann noted that there was a shift of responsibility from administrators to teachers:

I think it's . . . made me more aware of the types of problems administrators have, in trying to hire the best person for the position. . . . If this person doesn't work out, it's the group's fault. It's not the principal's or the assistant principal's. You worked on it, this is your problem, and . . . that's it. . . . You really do kind of respect the administrators. . . . what they go through in that type of thing. And that part of their responsibility is [now shared with teachers].

Teacher participation in hiring was one of the few SDM activities that was not exclusively in the Council's domain. Performers, audience, and outsiders could participate in the process, although not as many outsiders mentioned their involvement.
Other SDM responsibilities were not shared equally among performers, audience, and outsiders. In November, 1991, I asked the key respondents to describe the multiple tasks that teachers perform (see Appendix B). A short time later, I asked them to define their roles as teachers. Only two teachers—both performers—discussed responsibilities outside of their classroom teaching. Pauline, who had become a Council representative a few months earlier, stated,

I think that I should be concerned about the whole school, instead of just my own affairs. My class is my main responsibility. I don't think my responsibility should stop right there. I should be concerned with every aspect of the whole program and . . . be responsible, . . . [for] what is going on in the school.

I asked Pauline if her involvement in SDM had made her more conscious of schoolwide matters. She responded,

I think it has, because . . . last year when I came, I guess I kind of stayed within my class. . . . I think that shared decision making has made me more aware of what is going on in the school, because I'm aware of problems of teachers in the upper grades, because they have problems relating to reading. . . . Right now it doesn't necessarily affect me, but I do listen to their problems. This year I'm listening more to their problems, . . . [in addition to] the problems that concern just my level.

Pauline, an early childhood teacher, attributed her increased concern for reading problems in the upper grades to her involvement in discussions about the school's 5-year goals. Although she had taught at several grade levels during her 30-year career, she spoke throughout our November,
1991, interview of becoming more concerned about schoolwide issues since her recent election to the Council.

Paul, who was an active and outspoken member of the Council, was the other respondent who discussed SDM as a part of his teaching role. He stated,

School involvement . . . is important. I don't think any teacher really gets a full understanding of what a school is about and what it's there for unless they somehow get involved in things other than their own classroom situation.

The paucity of remarks about SDM by key respondents, especially by the other four performers, puzzled me as I conducted interviews in November, 1991. After all, I was the evaluator for SDM at Silver Hill, and these teachers had been called away from their work to discuss SDM with me. Although I always worked to make our interviews informal and conversational, I had asked the respondents to describe the multiple tasks of teaching immediately after turning on the tape recorder to begin our interviews. I was certain that their consciousness of my role as an SDM evaluator would elicit responses about SDM and schoolwide activities. When they talked exclusively about classroom activities, I asked each of them if they had responsibilities outside the classroom. Even then, none referred to SDM. Phyllis, a performer who was viewed by most faculty as a key SDM leader, stated,

I've had many responsibilities outside of the classroom. I've done productions, like plays. I've been on the parent advisory committee. I've
done things in the community. . . . And all of it comes back in one package, all of my school work.

Curiously, Phyllis did not mention SDM as a part of her teaching role even after my probing. When I asked her about SDM activities, however, she talked at length about her involvement and provided me with many insights into its progress at Silver Hill.

When I conducted these interviews in November, 1991, I expected that outsiders--and even audience members--would say little about SDM activities as they discussed their teaching roles. During 1990-1991, SDM had become more exclusively a Council activity. Almost all audience and outsiders I interviewed that year complained about ineffective SDM communication. By November, 1991, some audience members had become outsiders, and almost everyone outside the Council knew less about SDM activities than they had in the spring of 1990.

However, I was puzzled that four of the six performers did not mention SDM. After analysis and reflection, I concluded that these teachers thought of SDM and teaching as separate activities. Phyllis' interviews illustrate this point. Shared decision making was an important part of her professional life, and in our four interviews she often mentioned how much time she committed to that work. Other faculty also discussed Phyllis' involvement in SDM. However, my probes about her teaching responsibilities outside the classroom did not prompt her to discuss SDM activities as a
part of her teaching role. Like Phyllis, three other performers talked at length about their work with children when I asked about their teaching responsibilities. They, too, were proud of their work in SDM, but when they were asked to talk about their teaching roles, they thought only of what they did with children. The response of these performers may explain in part why researchers have concluded that SDM does not change teachers' roles.

When I specifically asked performers about SDM, they all discussed new responsibilities. Paul and Peggy talked about planning and conducting SDM meetings. Paul and Pat led the effort to acquire a grant for staff development and to implement the Council's efforts to improve trust. Phyllis had been instrumental at the beginning of SDM by playing a key role in writing the governance plan and the first two school improvement plans. She was the most active of all Council members in communicating SDM business to her team members and in eliciting their input. Members of her team were among the few teachers outside the Council who were well informed about SDM. Pete often discussed his initiative to modify the report card for bilingual students. Other faculty also acknowledged his effort, noting that Pete was the only non-Council faculty member at Silver Hill to have spearheaded a major SDM initiative. He asked to be on the Council agenda and presented his proposal. He surveyed teachers of bilingual classes and arranged meetings with them to devise a
new reporting system. In addition, he appeared before the
district screening committee to request a waiver permitting
the use of an alternate report card.

An important responsibility which fell exclusively to
Council members (Pete is the only performer who was not a
Council representative) was formulating the school's long-
range goals and its annual school improvement plans. In May,
1990, Pat said of her Council role, "You have to be
responsible to the community and to the decision-making
council and to the teachers." In May, 1991, an administrator
at Silver Hill also noted,

[Council members] are becoming a power entity and a
leadership entity. I think that they were mulling
away last spring, getting bogged down with
housekeeping chores and day-to-day events at Silver
Hill. I see them now . . . perceiving their role
more as giving goals and leadership to the whole
faculty, the whole staff.

Although the Council had been slow in developing a
vision that would guide SDM at Silver Hill, they were
responsible for providing goals for the faculty and staff.
That leadership role was rarely acknowledged by teachers,
particularly outsiders, as an important accomplishment of
SDM. In part, teachers may have underestimated the
importance of that function because the formulation of long-
range educational goals does not result in immediate,
tangible, and obvious change. Nonetheless, the development
of school goals was perhaps the most important responsibility
assumed by the Council. As noted earlier, Pauline's
involvement in that activity broadened her perspective of school affairs and increased her concern for the school's total academic program.

Teachers in the audience assumed fewer responsibilities than performers. Consistent with the faculty's collective definition of SDM as a representative form of governance, they believed that their role was to provide input to Council members and to be knowledgeable about SDM. However, poor communication limited their participation in both of those ways. When I asked Audrey why she was not more involved in SDM, she replied,

They don't give us an opportunity to be. We hear no information. We hear when the meetings are and we just don't hear anything from it. We haven't seen anything come out of it. . . . So I guess people feel, . . . "Why put effort in if nothing is being done."

Audrey then noted that her interest and involvement had decreased during the 1991-1992 year because the Council had become less effective in communicating with faculty. When I interviewed her in May, 1991, she was not an active SDM participant but was very interested in the process and enthusiastic about its future. I identified her then as a part of the audience because of her intense interest. By November, 1991, it was clear that she was becoming an outsider. Alice, Arlene, and Ann also complained that they knew less about SDM in 1991-1992. Ann believed that she was becoming an outsider because the Council member who had kept her informed during the previous year had changed schools.
As communication became less effective, the distinction between audience and outsiders became blurred. Increasingly, the audience diminished and the faculty consisted almost entirely of Council members and outsiders. The trust-building and team-building activities in March, 1992, may have reversed that trend somewhat, but in May, 1992, it was not clear how lasting that change would be. The one responsibility assumed by audience members that distinguished them from outsiders was the provision of input to the Council, but failed communication made it difficult for them to carry out that responsibility.

Outsiders assumed less responsibility than the audience. They were less informed about SDM and did not provide their views to the Council. A few outsiders (in addition to the four key respondents) said to me during interviews that they did not know why they were being interviewed because they knew nothing about SDM. Most stated that SDM was floundering. They reported that it had few, if any, achievements, and that it had not affected them or changed their teaching roles.

In summary, SDM at Silver Hill offered varying opportunities for teachers to assume new responsibilities. Teachers at all levels of SDM involvement participated in curriculum revision and staff hiring. Shared decision making conferred many responsibilities upon performers that were not open to audience and outsiders. Some performers planned and
conducted meetings and other activities, presented proposals, and provided long-range goals for the staff. A few worked to communicate SDM business to their peers, but most Council representatives did not assume that responsibility. Communication problems made it difficult for audience and outsiders to be knowledgeable about SDM and to offer their views. Failed communication also had an effect on teachers' rights as SDM participants.

New Rights

Having a voice in school decisions was for teachers at Silver Hill both a responsibility and a right. When the school began SDM, everyone I interviewed agreed that it would give teachers more say in decisions. Two years later, the majority of the teachers I interviewed believed SDM gave faculty the right to voice their concerns and opinions more openly. However, as noted in Chapter 4, one group of teachers did not perceive that they could exercise that right with impunity. Another group believed SDM had failed to provide a mechanism for them to communicate their concerns to the Council.

Some teachers believed that they could not afford to "make waves" by expressing views that administrators did not hold. Most of these teachers were annual-contract teachers who in an uncertain budget year feared that speaking out would endanger their continued employment. When I reported
that sentiment to the faculty, performers were surprised.

Among them were those who shared Pete's perceptions of SDM:

I feel I have an equal say in anything that goes on at Silver Hill. Any suggestion I have gets heard, any changes I want to make get heard, and I feel like I'm part of the leadership in the school.

Pete often talked about his efforts to change the bilingual report card through SDM. Even though his proposal had not made it past the SDM Steering Committee, he believed that shared governance gave him a way to express his concerns. When I asked him how he would have proposed a change in the absence of SDM, he stated,

I probably wouldn't have done a thing, to be perfectly honest. I would have just accepted it and that would have been it. I wouldn't have tried. With shared decision making, I felt like I could be heard.

The majority of outsiders, however, shared the perception of the beginning teacher who stated in February, 1991,

I don't know about the other teachers, what's happened with them, but as far as I can remember I haven't been asked my opinion by anyone on the Council, or I haven't been made aware of anything they are voting on before they vote. . . . Some teachers don't care and so they don't want to be involved. But teachers who do care should have an easy way of having access to the Council.

In contrast to Pete, this teacher did not perceive that she had access to the Council. She and others, including members of the audience, believed that SDM provided a way for Council members to be heard, but not other faculty. Unlike Pete, who acted on his concern about the bilingual report
card and requested a place on the Council's agenda, these teachers suggested that Council members should seek out their opinions. The reasons for the differences in teachers' perceptions of their right of access to SDM are not clear—and are probably varied. However, one possible explanation is that the Council's infrequent and ineffective communication with staff suggested to some teachers that they were not free to offer unsolicited views. Further, failed communication restricted the participation of most nonperformers by limiting their knowledge of SDM activities and their understanding of the process.

As noted in the previous section on responsibilities, performers, audience, and outsiders were able to participate in faculty hiring and curriculum revision. Teachers spoke enthusiastically about their role in faculty hiring and regarded it as a right. Although they did not talk about their work on curriculum committees as a right, the opportunity to construct curriculum is a right not available to teachers in many schools. Participation in these activities was—like voicing opinions about school decisions—both a responsibility and a right. Because teachers at varying levels of SDM involvement were able to exercise these two rights, distinctions among performers, audience, and outsiders were not evident in the data I collected.
In summary, teachers' perceptions of their new rights varied. Performers believed that SDM enabled them to state their opinions openly and to participate actively in changing their school. However, not all teachers shared these perceptions. One group of teachers perceived that it was not prudent for to express their views openly. The majority of audience members believed initially that SDM gave them the right to participate in the change process by communicating their views to Council members. As SDM evolved and communication problems emerged, some former members of the audience became outsiders, and their involvement in SDM became minimal. Two activities that were open to all faculty were involvement in hiring and curriculum revision. The data I collected indicate that all teachers were able to exercise these rights.

Performers and nonperformers held different views of SDM's influence on their personal understandings and their self-concepts. The following section is a discussion of teachers' perceptions of these dimensions of role change during SDM.

Personal Understandings and Changes in Self-Perceptions

During the implementation of SDM at Silver Hill, teachers reported personal changes because of their involvement in the process. They believed they gained understandings through their involvement in SDM and changed the way they perceived themselves. Personal learnings are
important because they may enhance teachers' ability to lead and to carry out school change.

**Personal Understandings**

During the second year of SDM, the majority of the teachers I interviewed reported that they had learned about the difficulty and slowness of school improvement. They stated,

> It's gradual, and it's going to take time, and you just have to keep going with it. (Paul)

> Change takes time and you can't expect miracles. I think that is what we were expecting. Too many things happening at once. We were expecting that miracle. (Ann)

> I have learned that it's very, very difficult to change things. It takes a long time. (Opal)

As these quotes indicate, teachers at all levels of SDM involvement learned that change is slow and complex. In addition, performers, audience, and outsiders stated in the spring of 1992 that school improvement requires the support of all school personnel. Many shared that sentiment in May, 1992, following the staff's trust-building and team-building activities. For the first time since SDM's implementation, interview respondents emphasized that all staff, including cafeteria and custodial workers, office staff, and paraprofessionals, should be involved in SDM and in carrying out school change.

Teachers at each level of SDM involvement said they gained these two understandings, but audience and outsiders said they had learned little else from the process. In
contrast, some performers believed they had improved their leadership skills. Paul noted, "A lot of skills are developed while you are on the Council: leadership ability, public speaking and communication, ability to get along with others, . . . implementation procedures, [and] organization." Peggy stated that she learned how to plan, organize, and conduct meetings.

Performers also gained understandings about school affairs that most other faculty did not report. Several performers stated that they learned about budgeting. Paul noted that he learned much about the school's policies, and Pete believed that he learned about the district's policies. Peggy stated that she increased her awareness of school matters. She believed SDM encouraged her to be informed about school issues so that she could discuss them with colleagues. Pat observed that to win acceptance for her ideas she had learned to support them "with viable reasons." She went on to explain, "You can have, . . . a good idea, but you have to . . . make it broad enough and appealing enough" for it to be approved.

Several performers believed that they broadened their perspectives about school problems. Performers said,

It's not as easy as it looks on the outside. . . . You have to try to get everybody's needs, but at the same time keep a straight path ahead of you. You can't wander off and do just what [one] person wants. (Peggy)

You have to watch out for everybody. You can't just watch out for kindergarten. (Pat)
I see things from [the administration's] viewpoint. . . . I don't necessarily agree with it, but I hear it now, and that's one step more than people [who are] just on the staff. (Paul)

A teacher who served on the Council during 1990-1991 also indicated that Council members altered their perspectives of school dilemmas. As she described a Council meeting in which the principal explained the school office's organization, she recalled,

He explained the way it was done, the way it was, and everybody sat there and said, "Oh, I never saw it that way." Because he was seeing it from the perspective of the principal in charge of the school, and [Council members] were seeing it from the classroom. And when he explained it . . ., they said, "You need to go to everybody else and explain it to them. . . . That makes a lot of sense."

I do not know if the principal explained his rationale for office organization to the remainder of the staff and in doing so received their commitment to a decision that he believed best served the interests of the collective body. If so, no one ever mentioned it to me. Although audience and outsiders often stated that the principal shared his views with them, they did not suggest that they altered their perspectives of school problems as performers did.

Performers asserted in 1992 that it was important for them to take responsibility for implementing their decisions. The Council's efforts to improve trust in March, 1992, provide the only tangible evidence of their having acted on that belief. Nonetheless, Council members agreed in February
and May of 1992 that SDM meant more than teachers and staff making decisions; it also meant they had to carry out those decisions. Pat noted,

You still have to . . . follow through on whatever decisions you've made. And we're just realizing how important it is, because we'll come up with something . . . and we don't do a timeline, we don't know who's going to be responsible for it, and we come back three meetings later and we go, "Oh yeah. We said we were going to do that." We just kind of expect the SDM genie to fix it for us, I guess.

Other performers made similar assertions. A Council member stated in May, 1992,

In the past SDM has been taking the approach of discussing the issues, coming up with what [Council members] think are solutions, and then looking to administration to implement. I think they recognize . . . you have to be able to put into effect your decisions.

Although the Council had not demonstrated clearly by May, 1992, that they were prepared to implement SDM decisions, most Council members I interviewed talked about the importance of their involvement in implementation. In contrast, no teacher made that assertion prior to the spring of 1992. The Council's recognition of the need to improve trust and their perceived success in that effort a few months earlier may explain performers' changed perspectives at the end of 1992. That change, however, involved only performers and occurred more than two years after SDM began. The faculty's initial definition of SDM helps explain their difficulty in achieving that understanding. Almost everyone agreed in February, 1990, that SDM would give teachers a
greater voice in decisions, but no teacher stated that faculty would have the opportunity to carry out change. One of the union stewards, a teacher whom others credited with persuading the faculty to accept SDM, said in February, 1990, "We know how to sit down and make suggestions. Now, the next step we're ready for is to have our suggestions put into effect." During its first 2 years at Silver Hill, SDM seemed to be stymied as teachers waited for decisions to be "put into effect" and administrators complained that teachers were not assuming responsibility for implementing decisions. In May, 1992, performers were redefining SDM and suggesting that their role in implementation would be more active.

In summary, almost all faculty I interviewed said they learned that school improvement is slow and difficult and requires everyone's participation. Performers attained other understandings. Some stated that they honed certain leadership skills. Others believed they increased their knowledge of school affairs. Performers were able to broaden their perspectives beyond the individualistic viewpoints that characterize the traditional teaching culture. Last, performers began to redefine SDM and their roles within it so that they were implementers of change and not just planners of change.

The contrast between performers' personal understandings and those of audience and outsiders was substantial. It is conceivable that the teachers who gravitated to SDM
leadership positions at Silver Hill were more disposed than their peers to attaining new knowledge and understandings. However, it is also possible that teachers' involvement in SDM led to their personal learning. The changes in self-perception that performers described to me were clearly related to their active SDM involvement.

**Changes in Performers' Perceptions of Themselves**

At the end of SDM's second year, several performers stated that SDM had altered their self-perceptions. Some Council members said that they gained confidence, became more secure about sharing their views, and felt more important because of their role in SDM. One stated,

> I haven't always been an outspoken person, but to be on the Council, ... then what I think, feel, say is just as important as any other person. So I am more apt now to speak up than maybe times past.

A paraprofessional who served on the first Council noted in May, 1990, that she was concerned at first that others would not respect her views. She added, "If they chose me, ... what I have to say is just as important as anyone else. And everyone makes you feel so important ... I don't feel that I'm just a paraprofessional."

A teacher who was elected to the Council in 1991 reflected the feelings of most performers when she said, "The thing that surprised me is that when I speak at the meeting, other people listen. That was kind of new to me, helps me be a little more confident." Paul expressed a similar sentiment: "I always feel like when I'm talking [in Council
meetings] people are listening. And that makes me feel that I am an important . . . element to the SDM Council." Peggy also said she gained confidence on the Council and was no longer afraid to express her views.

Other staff confirmed these performers' self-assessments of personal change. When I asked an assistant principal in May, 1992, if new leaders were emerging in SDM, she stated,

One I had in mind was not [a leader before SDM], has grown a great deal. The other one was sort of a leader before, very, very quiet, laid back, subdued. [She] is speaking up more. I think that has helped her . . . . Each one has gained self-confidence, and they do have the respect of other faculty members. It has been interesting watching. [They are] very dedicated and doing a fantastic job.

These assertions indicate that SDM was influential in increasing performers' confidence and their ability to become more vocal leaders. The only nonperformer who perceived that kind of change in herself was Olivia. She noted that her work on curriculum revision committees helped her to overcome her shyness because she was able to "intermingle more with the teachers and . . . have more input."

A second change that performers attributed to SDM was an enhanced sense of efficacy associated with their belief that SDM enabled them to enact fundamental school reform. Arlene first gave me a sense of performers' increased efficacy when she observed in May, 1991, "It just seems . . . when you see the group coming for the meeting. . . . they seem really gung-ho. . . . You see them walking in and out of meetings saying,
'Well, let's do this and this.' Arlene was an enthusiastic observer of SDM performers. When she shared the observation above, she seemed to share performers' hopefulness about the potential of SDM, and the "gung-ho" attitude of the Council clearly buoyed her morale. However, she was one of the few nonperformers who were enthusiastic about SDM in May, 1991. By November, 1991, even her enthusiasm had begun to wane as SDM communication floundered and faculty saw little tangible evidence of the Council's efforts. By that time, few audience or outsiders believed strongly in SDM's effectiveness. In contrast, performers made these statements:

Eventually we'll be hiring the principal or deciding what specials areas we need or don't need.

... There [are] a lot of things [that] could be technically done by shared decision making in the really pretty near future. (Pat)

I think a lot of us don't realize the power that we have. It's not laid out or etched out for us in stone, but I'm personally starting to get the feeling that there is a lot more that we can do that we don't do. (Paul)

I feel there's no limit on what you can do. (Pete)

Performers frequently stated that their sense of SDM's possibilities became clearer because of their involvement. Paul said, "A lot of people don't have a full grasp and understanding of what SDM could do." A paraprofessional who served on the first Council suggested the relationship between communication and the staff's understanding of SDM's potential in February, 1991:
We're trying . . . to set up our minutes at each meeting and . . . put it up in the lounge for teachers to read and look at. Because other than that, they really don't know exactly what we're doing. And some of them, I don't think, are aware of what can be accomplished with shared decision making.

According to this Council member, effective communication increases faculty understanding of SDM, and understanding leads to an enhanced sense of SDM's potential. However, without effective communication, understandings about SDM and its potential were limited to performers. New Council members said they were surprised to learn that SDM provided a vehicle for change. In May, 1992, a teacher who had joined the Council that year stated, "If I had to think of a surprise, it would be that things can be changed." She then alluded to another SDM school's decision to use portfolio assessment, adding that she didn't know that SDM enabled teachers to explore that option. When she described the Council's discussions about waiver requests, she noted, "Before I was on the Shared Decision Making [Council], I didn't know that we could do all sorts of things." Later in the same interview, as she talked about school improvement, this teacher of 25 years observed, "Now I'm empowered to do something about it, whereas before I don't think I ever felt that way."

In summary, performers experienced personal changes that other faculty did not. Some became more confident and outspoken leaders. Almost all of them believed that SDM
empowered them to restructure their school. Moreover, performers perceived their roles changed through SDM. Audience and outsiders were too distant from SDM to experience these changes.

Teachers' relationships with other role partners at Silver Hill helped define their roles in SDM and the school. The following section is a discussion of each of those sets of relationships.

**Teachers' Relationships**

This examination of teachers' relationships during SDM includes four parts. Each part is a discussion of teachers' relationships with a particular set of role partners. I include separate discussions of (a) colleagues, (b) school administrators, and (c) district administrators. In the fourth part I discuss teachers' relationships with students, parents, and non-professional staff.

**Collegial Relationships**

Shared decision-making performers were more likely than audience or outsiders to perceive changes in their relationships with other teachers. However, changes in performers' relationships with nonperformers imply that the latter group's relationships also changed, even if those changes were more subtle and less substantial than they were for performers.

Audience and outsiders experienced a few changes in their relationships with peers. Staff hiring and curriculum
revision were SDM activities in which all teachers could participate, and the changes that audience and outsiders perceived were related to these activities. Faculty participation in hiring teachers is in itself a substantive change in teachers' collegial relationships. Administrators have traditionally selected and hired faculty, and the involvement of teachers in the process is a change in teachers' organizational relationships.

As noted earlier, teachers at Silver Hill believed that their participation in hiring enabled them to select teachers who "fit in." Pete expressed a view held by many when he said, "You are going to [have to] work with this person. . . . I think it is important that we be involved [in their selection]." A teacher who described faculty involvement in hiring as SDM's "number one" achievement noted,

[New teachers hired by Silver Hill faculty] are very responsive to [Silver Hill veterans] and . . . seem pretty relaxed. When they join the staff, they've already seen those faces, and they're able to approach those people a little bit better. . . . So I think it works out to be a big plus, that they feel they've been really welcomed at our school.

This respondent suggested that teachers' participation in hiring strengthened the bonds between new faculty and those who selected them. Others agreed:

[New faculty and the teachers who selected them] have become friendly. We have a good rapport with each other. (Opal)

[New faculty] are real energetic, and they are really going to do things. . . . It was really nice
to get to know these people through the interview. . . . One in particular was so nervous [during the interview] we wanted to go to her and say, "It's all right. You're doing fine. Don't worry about it." . . . When we rated the [candidates], our decision was unanimous for the three of them. We really jelled. (Ann)

Ann's comments indicate that teachers participating in interviewing and selection of colleagues were enthusiastic about, and empathetic toward, their new peers. Her statement that teachers on the selection committee "really jelled" also suggested that collegial bonds among committee members were strengthened.

A teacher who worked as a substitute at Silver Hill before being hired by a committee of teachers stated,

I appreciated that immensely because I had already come and known several of the teachers, and I felt like they had a pretty good handle on what my style was and . . . my love for the children. . . . The principal may only see you once or twice. He actually had come in and observed me once for 5 minutes. But he doesn't see me every day, and these teachers see me in the hall, they see me with the kids, and they hear the kids talk about me.

This teacher agreed with the assessment of most teachers who participated as interviewers in the hiring process. Faculty believed that they could identify exemplary teachers for Silver Hill. Given the isolation of teaching and the lack of time for collaboration (Lortie, 1975), it is questionable that the settings (e.g., the hall) in which other faculty were able to observe the teacher quoted above provided a thorough assessment of her teaching ability. Nonetheless, her approval of the process may indicate that
teachers are more receptive to their colleagues' assessments than they are to administrators'.

Teacher collaboration on curriculum revision committees may also have altered collegial relationships. In February, 1991, Olivia said,

I think it's [SDM] brought the teachers a little bit closer together. . . . I certainly have myself become more familiar with certain other teachers. . . . There are quite a few groups . . . now working together, like language arts, reading committees and different things like that. . . . I really get to intermingle more with the teachers.

In November, 1991, Olivia again spoke of teacher collaboration on curriculum committees. She spoke proudly of her expertise in reading and noted that she and other committee members had shared ideas and materials with one another. She added that since SDM she and her colleagues talked more frequently about strategies for teaching reading.

Olivia was the only teacher who discussed changes in her collegial relationships as a result of her work on curriculum committees. It is possible that others experienced those changes even though they did not mention them in interviews. As I noted earlier, most teachers immediately referred to the work of the Council when I asked them about SDM. The effort to revise curricula was initiated through SDM, but few respondents seemed to regard it as an SDM activity. Olivia provided the response above when I asked what SDM had accomplished. Performers usually responded to that question by talking about the work of the Council. Most others
usually stated that SDM was not accomplishing anything. They may not have regarded the curriculum work as an achievement because those efforts never resulted in completed curriculum guides. Although only Olivia mentioned changed collegial relationships through collaborative work on curriculum committees, these changes were important to her. Such changes may have occurred to other teachers, even though they did not mention them in our interviews.

Performers were especially emphatic about changes in their relationships with other performers. One teacher noted that the Council had developed "a real camaraderie." Council members stated that they built collegial bonds through SDM and learned much about fellow representatives. According to a Council member, "You get a chance to sit with some people and get to know them on a more personal level, because when we teach . . . all day, . . . we don't get to know our peers as people."

When I observed a Council meeting in May, 1991, I was especially impressed by the manner in which representatives defused and worked through potentially conflictive situations, often by using humor. Council members stated that they had learned through SDM that conflict was healthy and did not prevent consensus:

One of the most important things is to really be able to listen to both sides of things . . . to think, "Okay. This is the way I see this issue." But then when somebody else makes a few points, . . . "Okay. I can see that argument. . . . I can live with that." (Pat)
You have to learn to give and take... We all have to learn to just give respect to one another and that no idea is ever too stupid or too far-fetched. (Paul)

A paraprofessional on the Council also noted, "There are times when we do clash, but we get back on task and even if... one or two... disagree, we eventually come together." Moreover, teachers on the Council learned that criticism of their ideas was not personal criticism. As early as May, 1990, a Council member remarked, "Nobody's afraid to say things to each other... that might ruffle a few feathers. Heck, let's ruffle them out, and then we'll smooth them out." Council members had learned to build consensus among a group that held widely divergent views. In fact, the Council's motto—which was printed on t-shirts given to the staff for the 1992 team-building activities—was, "Can you live with it?"

In contrast, no outsiders and only one audience member talked about these understandings. Only Ann stated of her collegial relationships, "I learned that you can express your feelings, and they take it in a nice way and not a critical way."

Another change in performers' collegial relationships was that some teachers began to seek them out to ask questions, voice concerns, and share ideas about SDM. As I have noted in this chapter, communication between the Council and other faculty was generally poor. However, a few Council
members worked to inform their grade-level peers about SDM. Phyllis, for example, regularly discussed SDM with her colleagues at team meetings. She remarked in November, 1991, that teachers sought information from her more often after she became a Council member. Other teachers learned about SDM through informal contacts with Council representatives. Peggy, who sometimes discussed SDM at lunchtime in the teachers' lounge, noted that teachers often asked her questions about school affairs and shared their problems and concerns with her. Oralee, who was a beginning teacher in 1990-1991, stated that she learned about SDM through conversations at lunch and in the lounge. She added that she had established informal relationships with several teachers through these conversations.

Some performers worried that other teachers resented their role. Pat stated in February, 1991, "There is a bit of jealousy. I think teachers that aren't on it are frustrated when you have time off, or you are going here or you are going there." If teachers did resent SDM performers, their belief that SDM was not accomplishing much may have exacerbated that resentment. Alice observed that the Council sometimes had all-day meetings and then added, "You'll walk by and you'll see them still sitting in their meeting, and they don't seem to be doing much of anything." The majority of the Silver Hill staff did not express resentment of Council members. Nonetheless, as one administrator noted,
Council members could not be "thinskinned" and endure the occasional criticism of other teachers.

In summary, audience and outsiders perceived that their collegial relationships changed when they were active in SDM activities such as staff hiring and curriculum revision. Performers believed that their relationships with other performers changed substantially. They reported developing strong friendships and a professional camaraderie. More important, they said they learned to open themselves up to conflict in Council discussions and to build consensus when their views differed. Performers also believed that their relationships with nonperformers changed. Some audience and outsiders reported seeking information from performers and expressing their concerns and ideas. Last, performers believed that some teachers resented their roles. These perceived role changes are indications that SDM performers at Silver Hill began to break traditional teaching norms of isolation and noninterference.

Relationships with the Principal and Assistant Principals

In this section I discuss an unexpected dilemma that SDM presented to the principal and assistant principals at Silver Hill, and I report an incident that demonstrated the complexity of the dilemma. I also briefly examine assistant principals' roles and the principal's role in SDM. In addition, I report teachers' perceptions of changes in their relationships with administrators.
Silver Hill's administrators faced a complex dilemma in implementing SDM. Like teachers, they were assuming new roles. In addition, administrators had to be extremely sensitive to teachers' perceptions of their behavior. Their actions and statements communicated powerful messages to faculty about their support for teachers' initiatives in the new and uncertain environment of SDM. When I asked a teacher in May, 1991, to share her impressions of SDM, she stated,

At first I was, like everybody that I know, gung-ho for it. . . . This is our chance to get in there and say something, and it will make a difference. But as it went on, it was like, . . . [administrators were saying] "Well, you needed a waiver and chances are the School Board wouldn't give you that waiver if you wanted to make this change." And we got into a lot of arguing about it.

This teacher then noted that she and many of her colleagues had become less enthusiastic about SDM. They believed that their restructuring ideas were not feasible because school administrators would not pursue policy waivers. She added, "It got into a negative thing that . . . was administration against staff. So people started not [discussing decisions] as much, . . . except [for Council members]."

It was not unusual for interview respondents to provide different interpretations of the same incident or comment. The divergence of perceptions, however, seemed to be greatest in instances when an administrator's actions or words implied to some respondents a lack of support for teachers'
participation in decision making. As might be expected, administrators' perceptions of these situations differed greatly from those of teachers.

The principal and assistant principals at Silver Hill wanted to push faculty to take on greater challenges in SDM but had to be careful not to appear to preempt teachers' leadership roles. Teachers--and administrators, for that matter--were uncertain about their authority in SDM. If administrators appeared to be taking charge, they ran the risk of defining SDM as "business as usual": that is, as administrators continuing to be in charge. Further, administrators held information to which teachers traditionally had not had access. Principals and assistant principals were more familiar with school, district, and state policies. If they withheld that information, teachers might flounder in their efforts to carry out change. However, if administrators pointed out policy barriers, they might appear to oppose teachers' initiatives or consider them implausible. The quote above is indicative of that kind of misunderstanding. Last, as the principal noted in February, 1990, ultimately the district held him responsible for whatever happened at Silver Hill. He wondered how he would respond if the Council produced a plan that he could not approve. He stated, "Then I may have to overrule them, and then I can understand how they would feel. 'Hey, what's this
shared decision making stuff . . . if you're still going to do this?"

Supporting teacher role change was for administrators a problematic and ongoing process. At the least, administrators had to be sensitive to teachers' perceptions. They had to reflect upon and assess continuously the way they presented themselves to teachers in SDM contexts. Traditional school governance has not made these demands of administrators, and neither SDM planners in Palmetto County nor the scholarly literature on SDM could have fully prepared Silver Hill's administrators for their complex new roles. Assistant principals in particular struggled with their SDM roles.

An event that occurred early in SDM's implementation demonstrates the complexity of administrators' roles in supporting teacher role change. In May, 1990, the Council presented its first SDM School Improvement Plan to the faculty for approval. The plan focused almost entirely on improving student behavior and did not address curriculum issues. According to numerous teachers, when the plan was presented, one of the assistant principals vehemently protested the omission of curriculum goals. Pat recalled, "Right when it was presented, we had an administrator stand up and say, 'This is worth nothing.'" Pat went on to explain that the Council had considered curriculum issues but decided
not to include them because curriculum had not been mentioned by teachers in the needs assessment process. She stated,

People were talking about discipline, . . . about administrative availability. . . . We decided, "Well, you know, we are really the voice of the faculty here. . . . Are we going to take charge and lead them or are we going to be their voice?" So we decided to be their voice.

Because the Council was acting as the voice of the faculty and its first plan received such a negative appraisal from an administrator, many teachers questioned how much authority the faculty would have in SDM. Pete later stated that the incident put "a bad taste in a lot of people's mouths" and "hurt the program." He then noted that teachers asked, "Is this shared decision making?" Two years after the incident, Pete still regarded it as a low point for SDM, and several teachers who discussed assistant principals' roles believed they were fearful of losing their authority through SDM.

The assistant principal who voiced disapproval of the School Improvement Plan had a very different interpretation of her actions. Speaking of her role in SDM, she stated in May, 1991,

The first year I believe we [assistant principals] were completely ostracized, and then any opinion that we gave, it was felt that we were fearful of losing power or fearful of losing authority. . . . Actually [the other assistant principal] and I were giving opinions and, I thought, constructive criticism.

At the end of the 1990-1991 year, the Council revised its governance plan to include an assistant principal as a
member. According to a Council member, the assistant principals had not supported SDM because they "had been left out of the process." The assistant principal quoted above may have reacted as she did because SDM left her feeling excluded from decision making. Or she may have believed sincerely that her criticism was constructive and useful. Whatever her reasons, it is doubtful that she fully anticipated and understood teachers' perceptions of her criticism. As SDM evolved during the following year, some faculty believed that assistant principals became more supportive of the process, but others continued to question their support.

The principal of Silver Hill was more cognizant of the complexity of his role than assistant principals but nonetheless found it difficult to enact. In February, 1991, he expressed frustration that the Council was not assuming a leadership role. He perceived then that he had given teachers too much autonomy and had not shown enough direction because he was concerned that teacher leaders would think he was taking over. In later conversations he reflected further upon that dilemma and questioned whether he was assuming an appropriate leadership role as an SDM principal. My assessment--based upon five interviews with him, other respondents' comments, and observations of him in SDM and other meetings--is that he was sensitive to teachers' perceptions and reflective about his behavior as an SDM
principal. Nonetheless, he struggled continually to define his role and questioned his performance in each of our interviews. In May, 1992, he stated,

I'm trying to figure out how to pull back [so they can] take on some leadership role and authority that I really wanted them to have. And I was trying to get them to take it. I'm trying to figure out now how to [take] some of that back, because I think I let them go too far when they weren't ready. And I'm trying to figure out how to bring them back in, without squashing their enthusiasm. . . . What I don't want to send out is the message, "Y'all haven't done it, so I'm going to take over again." . . . I think I behaved poorly as a new SDM principal. I went too far in turning it all over to them. And I think I probably should have kept on a whole lot and turned it over a little bit at a time.

Later in the same interview Jerry stated that SDM had been worthwhile and that the school had changed because of SDM. He added that he believed SDM would continue to grow and involve people. He reiterated his faith in the faculty's ability to make decisions but again questioned if he had capably facilitated teachers' assumption of leadership.

From the beginning of SDM, teachers acknowledged the principal's support for SDM and his willingness to listen to teachers. Pat was one of several Council members who stated in 1990 that Jerry was willing to share his authority. She recalled, "As Mr. Odom put it to us, 'You sort of know some of my responsibilities. Now what do you want to take part in?" As another teacher described initial Council meetings, he remarked, "I give him [Jerry] all the credit in the world. We did some pretty heavy talking there, and he
didn't flinch and didn't bat an eye. . . . He's a savvy guy. He recognizes that what we were saying is true." Several Council members told me in formal interviews and informal conversations that SDM would flounder if Silver Hill lost its principal. There were few issues on which the entire faculty and staff of Silver Hill agreed. One of those was that the principal completely supported their participation in decision making.

How did teachers and other staff come to share the perception that the principal welcomed their participation in decision making? Jerry articulated his own role most clearly in our first interview in February, 1990:

My initial role . . . is to be a facilitator. In being a facilitator, I see that what I need to do is to enable, to give permission . . . for people to enter into places and arenas that traditionally have not been theirs.

It is difficult to know if Jerry was correct in saying that he gave teachers too much authority too soon. When SDM began at Silver Hill, the faculty's endorsement was overwhelming, and some teachers talked about enacting far-reaching changes. However, it is clear that by giving faculty and staff "permission" to enter into new domains, Jerry provided a requisite condition for SDM success and teacher role change at Silver Hill. There would not have been a consensus that he supported faculty's SDM efforts had he not worked to communicate that teachers could share his authority.
Performers perceived the principal's efforts to share decisions with faculty more clearly than the audience or outsiders. Although all teachers believed he sought their views, only performers described his role as that of a "partner" (Phyllis) or said, as Peggy did, "He's not any higher or lower; he's the same as we are." A number of audience and outsiders commented that Council members changed their relationships with the principal more than other teachers. One teacher told me that she was reluctant to express her views in front of administrators but that Council members told her, "Don't feel that way. . . . Administration is pretty much real open at the SDM meetings." If nothing else, SDM performers had more contact with the principal than nonperformers.

Nonetheless, there were changes in the principal's relationships with audience and outsiders. One way in which Jerry gave all teachers "permission" was by including them in hiring. He, rather than the Council, initiated that process and encouraged teachers to participate. The change in hiring procedures was one indication that he worked harder to share his authority after SDM began. Although he often stated that he had always listened to teachers and shared decisions, many faculty believed that he did more to democratize the school's governance after SDM began. Teachers stated that SDM encouraged him to be more open, more accessible, and more diligent about seeking their input.
In summary, administrators' roles in SDM at Silver Hill were complex and difficult because their actions defined for teachers the boundaries of teachers' SDM roles. Assistant principals were not as cognizant of the impact of their behavior as the principal. Consequently, SDM increased tensions between some faculty and assistant principals. The principal was more sensitive to teachers' perceptions of his behavior and was able to invite them to participate in SDM. Performers' relationships with the principal changed more than audience and outsiders, but almost all teachers believed that the principal became more open, accessible, and democratic after SDM began.

Teachers' perceptions of their relationships with school administration influenced teacher role change during SDM's implementation. The principal at Silver Hill helped to define teachers' roles by inviting them to share his authority and responsibilities. Those teachers who participated actively in SDM and believed that they understood its potential perceived that their power extended into all areas of school governance that traditionally belonged to the principal. Similarly, their perceptions of their authority in decision domains that district administrators had traditionally controlled were influenced by the definition of SDM that those administrators projected.
The Faculty and Staff's Relationship to District Administration

When Palmetto County implemented SDM in 1989, it publicized the effort as a strategy for professionalizing teaching and improving student achievement. Beyond a statement of those broad goals, the district provided little clarification of teachers' decision domains or authority and little guidance about how to enact SDM. Faculty at Silver Hill were initially uncertain of SDM's meaning but agreed that it gave them a voice in decisions. Some teachers did not perceive that SDM would increase their decision-making authority significantly. Others suggested that their authority could be broad and far-reaching. The district's ambiguity about SDM left teachers to construct their own definitions of SDM, and those varied greatly.

As noted in Chapter 4, most teachers at Silver Hill did not perceive that district administration fully supported SDM. In my initial SDM interviews, several teachers wondered if the district would waver in its support for SDM. One respondent stated,

I just hope whoever evaluates the thing, I mean, in the political arena--school boards, administrators, what have you--that they understand that this is a new process, and the teachers are not going to be expected to . . . work overnight miracles. That's my main concern . . . . Will politics kill the thing?

The teachers who questioned district support included the few whose aspirations for SDM were greatest. Like the
teacher quoted above, they seemed in that early stage of SDM to be waiting for the district to signal its commitment.

Teachers received the first indication of the level of district commitment within a few weeks. As I reported in Chapter 4, a district administrator blocked the school's first request to hire substitutes so that the Council could meet during school hours. The principal and Council members—who believed that the superintendent and school board backed SDM strongly—were shocked by the refusal. In the initial excitement of implementing a change strategy that had been publicized widely and that put Palmetto County in the forefront of school reform nationally, the administrative refusal of the school's first real SDM effort was not what teachers expected. Although the district's SDM support team intervened to gain approval of the request, the damage had been done. Two years later, a teacher described the incident as an early indication of the district's lack of commitment to SDM.

Another event that signalled to teachers that their authority was limited was the denial of Silver Hill's waiver request to alter its report card for bilingual students. As noted in Chapter 4, the teachers who presented the waiver request believed that the district screening committee judged them to be racist. One of those teachers had been a key SDM leader during its first 2 years. In May, 1992, he explained
that the denial of the waiver request contributed to his
decision to curtail his SDM participation:

fter all those hours, all this time, all this work
we'd done in terms of building consensus . . . to
have someone say, "No. We're not going to do
this." I thought, this is an exercise in futility.
. . . I honestly felt we weren't getting anywhere
with major things that we were going to try to
accomplish, . . . beyond [insignificant management]
issues.

Few teachers stated their disillusionment so strongly,
but over the 2 years of this study, many said that the
district would not waive its regulations. Most of the
audience and outsiders I interviewed agreed with the teacher
who noted,

From what I've heard, a lot of [the things] people
. . . thought . . . were going to happen, did not
happen. . . . The time and the effort that people
go into these committees with, . . . they feel that
after spending a year or so working on this they
are stonewalled by such things as, "It's not
allowed by county rules and regulations," or
"There's no money for it." . . . There's always
something in the way.

Did this veteran teacher--and the others who shared her
viewpoint--question SDM's potential from the beginning? Or
did instances of district nonsupport erode her faith in SDM,
as they did for the teacher quoted before her? Whatever the
explanation, it is clear that district administration did not
project to teachers a definition of SDM that invited them to
restructure their school. By restricting teachers' decision
domains, the district also placed a limit on teachers' sense
of efficacy as change agents.
Palmetto County's superintendent and school board had publicly expressed their commitment to SDM and to the goal of teacher professionalism. How could district administration have sent such conflicting messages about their support? The reaction of a key district administrator to schools' initial SDM efforts provides some clues. Silver Hill's principal mentioned on several occasions that he received a memorandum from a district administrator in the summer of 1990, stating that "the plans they'd seen were just very basic and only ask[ed] for procedural changes. They were disappointed that they weren't seeing great restructuring kinds of things" (Jerry). Jerry noted that he immediately responded with his own memorandum. As he recalled, "I don't think it's reasonable to ask people who've been immersed in, been a product of, then a part of, a two-hundred-year-old education model ... and then say, 'Okay. Change it.'"

Apparently, some district administrators believed that SDM would be a catalyst for immediate school restructuring. In retrospect, that expectation was unrealistic. When I conducted my first interviews at Silver Hill in late February, 1990, teachers had just learned that they would be a part of the pilot program. Within a month they had elected their first Council, but only after they struggled with decisions about the makeup of the Council and election procedures. When I telephoned the union steward in mid April, he told me that the Council had convened for only one
brief meeting. In that session they compared schedules and tried to determine the best time for the group to have regular meetings. In the next 6 weeks, they tried to clarify the meaning of SDM, the goals of SDM at their school, and decision domains. They constructed a constitution and a school improvement plan and gained the faculty's approval of those documents. These accomplishments occurred in April and May, as teachers and administrators conducted state-mandated testing, assessed student progress, and contended with all that is required of educators bringing closure to a school year. The suggestion by district administrators that schools should have made fundamental changes within 6 weeks indicates that they had little understanding of SDM, restructuring, obstacles to school change, or the demands they were placing on SDM participants. District policymakers had engaged in negotiations and discussions leading to the implementation of SDM, but they apparently had not reflected on its meaning or complexities. They failed to see that teachers would not engage in restructuring unless the district administration supported the perception that teachers had that authority. Learning that middle-level bureaucracy blocked a request for six substitutes for one day could not have encouraged teachers to believe that the traditional hierarchical system of decision making had faded into the past.
The initial refusal of the school's request for substitutes revealed a second problem. Top-level administration had not gained the commitment of middle management for SDM. In February, 1991, a Council member stated,

There's [an] enormous middle level of bureaucracy in this county. It is huge . . . and we have not ever, ever heard a single word [about SDM from them]. We have never seen their faces at any of our meetings; we have never heard their voices, their opinions. We don't know that these people even have an idea of what SDM is. . . . We do know that, on a few occasions, some of the pilot schools have put in requests. . . . And somebody can sit there behind a desk somewhere and say, "Nope! [Bangs fist on the table] You can't do it!" And that's the end of it! Now tell me, where's the sharing of responsibility?

As this teacher noted, Palmetto County had a large district bureaucracy. Some district administrators supported SDM, but others did not. When I asked Jerry if there were any stumbling blocks to SDM, he responded,

When a real senior member of the district administration says publicly, "I know about shared decision making. Let me tell you my definition of shared decision making. And that is, I make the decision and share it with you," there's a stumbling block.

The superintendent and school board may have supported SDM, but participants at Silver Hill learned that other levels of administration between them and the superintendent could block their improvement efforts. Teachers who stated, "There's always something in the way," may have expressed a tacit understanding held by many that the educational hierarchy was an obstacle to SDM.
Another reason why teachers at Silver Hill may have questioned the commitment of district administration was their perception that their school did not receive an equitable share of county resources. Palmetto County's population is large and culturally diverse, and there are great extremes in income and lifestyle. The county has a strong tax base and impressive financial resources. Teachers often called attention to differences in their school's resources and those in wealthier parts of the district. Several stated that new schools had been built in other areas that did not have the overcrowding of Silver Hill. Before the annex was opened, a teacher remarked, "Whoever heard of an annex? Two Silver Hills, you know. They wouldn't do that anywhere else." As teachers completed their second year—and anticipated their third year—of teaching in a collection of portables bunched together on a former parking lot behind a renovated restaurant, they had to wonder if the district would approve and finance innovations at their school.

Their doubts probably increased in May, 1992, when Palmetto County announced its fiscal plans for the following year. The proposed budget eliminated the SDM support team at the district level and the position of primary specialist at all elementary schools. Although Palmetto County's brochures on SDM stated that school-based management in budgeting had been in effect for more than a decade, school personnel, even those in SDM schools, had no say in the decision to eliminate
the primary specialist position. If decision-making authority had truly moved from the district to the school site, Silver Hill's faculty and staff might have kept the primary specialist position by making concessions in other parts of their budget. But they did not have that option, and SDM schools had no say in the decision to eliminate the SDM support team. Respondents in May, 1992, noted that these budget decisions confirmed the district's lack of commitment to SDM.

In summary, district administration did not define the purposes and procedures of SDM when it began, thereby forcing site participants to construct meaning out of ambiguity. As SDM evolved, some district administrators behaved as if its implementation had no effect on district governance. That problem might be explained as a lack of understanding, or it may indicate the difficulty of gaining commitment from all levels of a large bureaucracy. The reluctance of district administration to change its relationship to teachers made it difficult for teachers to change their relationships to district administration. Because district governance did not change, most people interviewed at Silver Hill did not believe that restructuring was possible. Although performers alluded to the potential of SDM to empower teachers, it is noteworthy that the Council did not submit any waiver requests to the district in 1991-1992. Most teachers at Silver Hill perceived that the boundaries of
their decision-making authority did not extend beyond the schoolhouse steps. They believed that the decision domains that would have enabled them to make fundamental changes were still controlled by district and state administrators.

Studies of SDM and of teacher role change have not confirmed many of its advocates' predictions. The reluctance of district administration in Palmetto County to devolve decision-making authority to school sites, however, indicates that important decisions about schooling were not being shared with teachers there. The rejection of Silver Hill's request to change their report card for bilingual students is a good example of that problem. The denial of the waiver request is in itself troubling. The failure of the screening committee to convey to teachers that their proposal was worthwhile but incomplete is tragic, especially when we consider the consequences of teachers' perceptions of the unsuccessful waiver request. However, I have a more fundamental concern about the rejection of the report card waiver. That is, I wonder why stakeholders in an SDM school should have to receive district permission to alter a report card. Scholars and practitioners should question whether the apparent failure of SDM at some sites demonstrates that it is a flawed strategy. Instead, such failures may indicate that district administrators have not given meaningful decision-making authority to school stakeholders.
Teachers' relationships to students, parents, and nonprofessional staff also changed little during SDM. The following section is a discussion of those relationships.

Relationships with Students, Parents, and Nonprofessional Staff

When Palmetto County implemented the pilot SDM project, its stated goals were the professionalization of teaching and improved student achievement. Teachers believed SDM would professionalize teaching, and improved student outcomes would inevitably result when teachers had a stronger voice in decisions. Although most teachers were initially unsure of district support, their conception of SDM in February, 1990, implied that their relationships with both school and district administrators were open to change. Their belief that teachers would share school decisions also meant that their collegial relationships would change.

The faculty's definition of SDM did not imply significant changes in their relationships with students, parents, or nonprofessional staff. The Silver Hill faculty hoped that SDM would enable them to improve student behavior. However, their perception of improved student behavior did not mean that teachers' relationships with students would change. Many teachers believed that student behavior would improve if administrators dealt with misbehaving students more punitively. Faculty also hoped in February, 1990, that SDM would enable them to increase parent participation. Nonetheless, few advocated immediate parent involvement in
SDM, even though they wanted parents to support the school more actively. Respondents said in February, 1990, that parent participation was so abysmal that it was unrealistic to involve them in SDM at first. Similarly, although some faculty thought that nonprofessional staff should be involved in SDM, they questioned whether it was prudent to involve some staff, such as custodians, in decisions that did not affect them directly. Teachers did not believe that SDM would alter their relationships with students, parents, or nonprofessional staff. Nonetheless, there were a few changes in some teachers' relationships with these role partners.

**Teachers' relationships with students.** As with most other role changes, the level of teachers' SDM involvement may have influenced the extent of changes in their relationships with students. For example, Paul said,

I've even applied . . . shared decision making in my classroom. . . . My classroom now has their own little council, and we make our decisions together. . . . So I've been able to take it outside of the Council and give it a shot in my classroom.

No other teachers mentioned democratizing their classrooms. However, a few teachers noted that their participation on curriculum revision committees exposed them to new ideas and encouraged them to implement different strategies in their classrooms. One teacher stated, "We are looking at each grade and what we think should be taught, and we're given a lot more freedom in that way, being in shared decision making." A number of teachers also noted that there
was more staff development on topics that interested them as a result of SDM. Some teachers said they enjoyed these sessions and applied the understandings they attained. The majority of the comments they made about instructional changes involved innovations that engaged students more actively in the curriculum. Thus, the changes these teachers implemented in their classrooms may have altered their relationships with students. However, most teachers did not perceive SDM initially as a strategy for restructuring the school's curriculum or for making students more active participants in determining their own learning. Nonetheless, in May, 1992, a few respondents emphasized that SDM should begin focusing on children and instruction.

Teachers' relationships with parents. Parent participation was still a concern for most faculty in May, 1992, and only a few people I interviewed believed it had improved. Although teachers in February, 1990, wondered if parents could be involved in SDM, the governance plan approved in May, 1990, included two parent representatives as Council members. However, during my 2 years of conducting interviews at Silver Hill, no respondent ever mentioned a parent taking an active role in SDM. No parent representatives were present when I observed a Council meeting in May, 1991, and although one parent attended the meeting I observed in November, 1991, he did not speak out or participate actively. Parents did not play a major role in
SDM, and faculty and staff were still trying to improve parent participation in May, 1992. During SDM's implementation teachers did not indicate that their relationships with parents changed.

**Teachers' relationships with paraprofessionals and other staff.** In contrast, there were some changes in teachers' relationships with paraprofessionals, clerical staff, custodians, and cafeteria workers. Two paraprofessionals were elected to the first Council. As noted earlier in this chapter, one paraprofessional began her Council work reluctant to participate actively but soon found that her views were respected by other Council members. Clerical staff, custodians, and cafeteria workers did not have representation on the Council until 1991-1992. When I observed a Council meeting in November, 1991, the representative for clerical staff was an active and outspoken participant. I learned during our two interviews that she had worked in the office for many years and was well informed about school affairs. In contrast, custodians and cafeteria workers were--like parent representatives--reluctant or unable to play major roles on the Council. Some teachers believed these personnel had difficulty participating because of their schedules. Others noted that cafeteria and custodial workers were not sure why they were on the Council. In spite of the difficulties of involving these staff as equal partners in decision making, teachers believed in May,
1992, that the participation of noninstructional staff was important to SDM. Teachers and administrators were pleased that all staff participated in the team-building activities in March, 1992. When I asked respondents in May, 1992, how the formative evaluation of SDM might be improved, two suggested that I include noninstructional staff in the interview process.

In summary, there were some changes in teachers' relationships to students, but these changes involved only a few faculty. Although faculty and staff had worked to improve relationships with parents, their SDM involvement was minimal, and parents' participation in their children's education still needed much improvement. Many of the problems that limited parent participation, such as the need for some parents to work several jobs, were beyond the control of school personnel. Further, teachers and staff struggled through SDM's first 2 years to find a focus for SDM efforts and to learn how to carry out SDM. They also expended much time and effort trying to improve student behavior. It may be unrealistic to expect schools, especially those with difficult problems like Silver Hill's, to restructure their curricula and their relationships to students and parents within 2 years. In SDM's first 2 years of implementation at Silver Hill the majority of the teachers I interviewed did not believe their relationships with students or parents had changed.
There were some changes in teachers' relationships with nonprofessional staff. Paraprofessionals were more active in SDM than other nonprofessional staff. Custodial and cafeteria workers in particular were inactive during SDM's first 2 years. However, after 2 years, many faculty and staff believed that SDM had to become more inclusive, and they began working to increase the involvement of noninstructional staff. This changed disposition of teachers toward total staff involvement in decision making is an indication of the faculty's belief that traditional hierarchical barriers should be eliminated.

In this chapter I have presented findings about numerous dimensions of teacher role change as they were experienced by Silver Hill faculty with differing levels of SDM involvement. The following section is a summary of these findings.

Summary

Researchers (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990; Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988) have concluded that teachers' roles do not change during SDM's implementation. However, as I noted in Chapter 2, none of these scholars has investigated teacher role change through a longitudinal, in-depth analysis of teachers in a single school. The methodological limitations of their studies have precluded researchers from illuminating changes that are slow, difficult, and often subtle. They have not been able to account for the contextual influences that shape SDM's implementation at a
particular site (Linquist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988). The implementation of an innovation in a particular school is likely to be an idiosyncratic process (Fetterman, 1988), and researchers must attend to differences in schools' implementation of SDM. More important, they should ask if the innovations they observe are, in fact, examples of shared decision making.

Previous studies of SDM have not clearly defined teacher role change, delineated different dimensions of role change, or examined teachers' varying experiences of SDM. In this chapter, I have tried to overcome these shortcomings by analyzing changes in different dimensions of role as perceived by teachers who had varying experiences of SDM. In this way I have been able to document teachers' perceptions of role change at Silver Hill.

Some teachers at Silver Hill perceived that their roles changed during SDM's first 2 years of implementation. However, the roles enacted by performers differed from those enacted by nonperformers, and some teachers did not believe SDM altered their roles at all. In the following section I summarize changes in teachers' roles and account for the differences in teachers' role definitions.

**Changes in Teachers' Roles**

Teachers at Silver Hill assumed new responsibilities through SDM. All teachers participated in the curriculum revision process, and respondents said that many took part in
faculty hiring. One teacher who was not a Council member initiated a proposal for change. In contrast, Council members assumed a number of responsibilities associated with their roles as SDM representatives. However, only a few Council members took responsibility for communicating effectively with grade-level colleagues. The breakdown in communication between the Council and the rest of the faculty and staff meant that almost all SDM responsibilities fell to Council members only. The faculty's definition of SDM as a representative form of governance may have contributed to some Council members' failure to perceive the importance of effective two-way communication with the rest of the faculty.

All teachers had the opportunity to exercise two new rights through SDM. Faculty at all levels of SDM involvement were able to participate in faculty hiring and curriculum revision. In addition, SDM ostensibly conferred upon all faculty the right to express their views and concerns. Some teachers, however, did not perceive they had that right. Many—including teachers on continuing contract—believed that failed communication limited their opportunities to provide input. Some untenured faculty believed that being outspoken was risky. In a sense, that perception may also have been a result of ineffective communication. Shared decision-making performers, whether tenured or not, believed that SDM enabled them to express their views openly and candidly. They stated that they understood SDM and its
potential. Moreover, they perceived that SDM changed school governance and enabled faculty to participate actively without fear of reprisals. Had communication about SDM been more effective, the teachers who were afraid to express concerns openly and candidly might also have believed SDM gave them that right.

Almost all teachers at Silver Hill learned that school change is slow and difficult, and there was a consensus among respondents in May, 1992, that school improvement should involve all faculty and staff. Because SDM became increasingly distant for audience and outsiders, they did not gain other understandings. In contrast, performers believed they increased their understandings of school change, group processes, and school and district policies. Almost all performers broadened their perspectives of school problems and improved their leadership skills.

A number of performers believed they changed personally through SDM involvement. Several stated that they gained confidence because of their SDM participation. Performers believed that SDM empowered them to change and improve their school. Audience and outsiders did not report such a change in their sense of efficacy. Effective communication might have engaged these teachers more actively in SDM and suggested to them that they too could be change agents.

Performers also reported greater changes in their relationships with role partners. The participation of
audience and outsiders in hiring and curriculum revision influenced collegial relationships among those faculty. In particular, teachers' participation in hiring increased their perceptions of faculty collegiality. In addition, performers described changes in collegial relationships that broke traditional norms of isolation and noninterference. Council members said they developed strong bonds with one another and learned to deal with conflict. Faculty sometimes sought information from Council members and brought their concerns to them. Council members also encountered criticism and resentment from some faculty.

Teachers' relationships with administrators changed only when administrators communicated clearly that SDM altered traditional governance. Administrative behavior strongly influenced teachers' definitions of SDM and their perceptions of their decision-making authority. Consequently, administrators had to be reflective about the impact of their words and actions and sensitive to teachers' perceptions of their behavior. Assistant principals at Silver Hill did not discern the complexity of this role, and their actions convinced many teachers that they did not support SDM. The principal worked to communicate to teachers that he welcomed their involvement in school decisions. Consequently, teachers perceived that their relationships with him changed. In contrast, Palmetto County's massive district administration included some administrators who either
misunderstood SDM or simply disregarded it. In particular, middle management—the district administrators who dealt most directly with school participants—resisted SDM. In doing so, they communicated to teachers that SDM did not increase their authority in decision domains that the district had always controlled. Perceiving that they lacked that authority, teachers did not believe their relationships to the district changed and did not view SDM as a strategy for restructuring their school.

Teachers reported few changes in their relationships with students, parents, and nonprofessional staff. The faculty wanted to increase the involvement of parents in their children's education but faced difficult obstacles beyond their control. Teachers wanted to improve students' behavior and worked hard toward that end. However, most faculty at Silver Hill did not define SDM as a way to restructure their relationships with students. Although a few nonprofessional staff became active in SDM as Council representatives, the relationships of teachers to most paraprofessional, clerical, custodial, and cafeteria staff did not change substantially. However, after 2 years of SDM, teachers believed that all staff should be involved in school restructuring.

Teachers' perceptions of SDM greatly influenced their ability to redefine their roles. Their collective definition of SDM as a Council activity meant that there were different
experiences of SDM among the faculty. Shared decision-making performers assumed more rights and responsibilities and experienced greater personal change than nonperformers. They also altered their relationships with role partners more dramatically than their fellow teachers. The few changes reported by audience and outsiders were related to their involvement in hiring and curriculum revision. In effect, when they participated in those activities, they were performers, if only temporarily.

Teachers' perceptions also defined the parameters of their decision-making authority. When the district was ambiguous about teachers' decision domains and power, the faculty was divided and unsure about the meaning of SDM. The principal invited teachers to share his authority, and teachers who were active in SDM—and, thus, close to him and the process—perceived that they held that power. During SDM's implementation, some district administrators communicated their nonsupport to teachers. The support of the principal and the nonsupport of district administration ultimately meant that teachers perceived their authority extended as far as—but no farther than—the principal's office.

Last, teachers' perceptions of SDM's goals influenced the ways in which their roles changed. Perceiving SDM as a way to professionalize teaching by giving teachers more of a say in decisions meant that teachers' collegial relationships
would change as they collaborated in decision making. That definition also meant that the door was open for changes in teachers' relationships with administrators. Teachers said the principal kept the door open but district administrators slammed it shut. Teachers' collegial relationships and their relationships with the principal underwent a number of changes, but their relationship to the district office remained unchanged.

This study suggested that effective communication and district support are important in shaping teachers' perceptions of SDM and, thus, in enabling teachers to change their roles. The study also suggested the nature of effective SDM communication and administrative support. The following section is a discussion of those conditions and others that supported or constrained role change at Silver Hill.

**Conditions that Supported or Constrained Teacher Role Change**

Shared decision-making practitioners and scholars have asserted the importance of effective communication (Aronstein et al., 1990; Meadows, 1990) and administrative support (David, 1991; Johnson, 1990a) to SDM. However, they have not stated clearly how SDM participants should communicate more effectively, and they have not called attention to the most important dimension of administrative support.

This study revealed that SDM places greater demands on communication systems than traditional school governance.
Unlike hierarchical systems, SDM requires that stakeholders who are not directly involved in decision making be informed about the process and the rationale for decisions. Silver Hill's performers understood the SDM process and knew about SDM activities. Audience members were able to follow the performance if Council representatives spoke to them informally or reported SDM business in team meetings. However, few teachers received information in either of these ways, and most nonperformers were outsiders. The differences in the experiences of performers, audience, and outsiders at Silver Hill suggest that communication should take many forms. It should be formal and informal, and stakeholders should receive ongoing communication about SDM. This study's findings suggest that the most effective communication among SDM participants occurs face-to-face. Communication systems must provide a means for nonperformers to express their views to decision makers. Traditional systems of governance have not had that requirement, and communication at Silver Hill failed most in that regard. That failure meant that SDM was a process in which only a relative few participated.

This study also brought clarity to the notion of administrative support. Scholars have stated that administrators must provide to SDM participants time, money, and technical support (David, 1990; Johnson, 1990a). Some have said that administrators must support risk taking and
clarify participants' decision domains (Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989; Mutchler and Duttweiler, 1990). The findings presented here indicated that administrators' most important role is to communicate clearly to stakeholders that SDM invites them into the decision-making process. The contrast between the principal's and district administration's support for SDM in this study helped to clarify the role that administrators must enact. The principal at Silver Hill recognized the difficulty of teacher role change and worked to project a facilitative administrative role. He was sensitive to teachers' perceptions and reflective about the impact of his behavior and decisions. He understood that the role he enacted successfully in one context might not be facilitative in another. Moreover, there are no explicit and easy-to-follow guides for administrators trying to foster teacher role change. The experience of the Silver Hill faculty indicated that administrators must know their teachers, communicate actively with them, and work continuously to project a definition of SDM that invites teachers to participate.

This study also highlighted the importance of other conditions that influence teacher role change. Time was a critical factor at Silver Hill. Although the Council sometimes met during the school day, SDM activities often required that teachers commit time above and beyond their normal responsibilities. Beginning teachers found it
impossible to participate actively in SDM. In SDM's first few months, the Council held weekend and afterschool meetings that sometimes lasted 4 or 5 hours. When SDM languished at Silver Hill, particularly in 1990-1991, the Council was meeting less frequently and for shorter periods of time. Council members acknowledged later that they would have to commit more time to SDM.

At Silver Hill, teachers faced especially difficult challenges in their professional lives. Many stated that working with their student population was physically and emotionally draining. On several of my site visits, I was told that teachers had resigned unexpectedly during the middle of a school day, stating that they could not endure conditions at the school any longer.

The physical barriers to collaboration at Silver Hill exacerbated the difficulties teachers and administrators experienced there. The split campus was a unique problem that few other schools face, but readers should acknowledge its impact when they interpret these findings about SDM and teacher role change. In fact, the collective impact of the constraints identified here is important to consider in any assessment of SDM and role change. Teacher role change was experienced by a relative few at Silver Hill, and the changes documented in this chapter may not seem significant to some readers. However, it is important to remember that limitations placed on teacher decision making by the
district administration meant that teachers' authority did not match the definition of SDM suggested by advocates. Further, the school's size and limitations on participants' time made the adoption of a representative form of governance the school's most realistic response to implementing SDM. Although that model has the potential for improving school decision making, it presented barriers to participation for many teachers at Silver Hill. Last, teachers and administrators at the school were experimenting with a form of school governance for which there were no guides and in which they had no experience. If the extent of teacher role change at Silver Hill does not match the predictions of SDM advocates, readers should not conclude that SDM does not provide an environment that is supportive of role change. Performers at Silver perceived that their roles changed dramatically, and those changes occurred during the implementation of a limited model of SDM. Instead of dismissing SDM's potential for fostering role change, scholars and practitioners should examine the changes that did occur and, then, consider how Silver Hill's model of SDM could be improved.

In the following chapter, I relate these findings to the literature about SDM, school culture, and role theory. I also provide conclusions and discuss implications of this study.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

My purpose in this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of role change during the implementation of SDM. More specifically, I investigated these questions:

1. From the perspective of SDM participants, how has SDM evolved during its first 2 years, and what effect has it had on their school?

2. From the perspective of SDM participants, have teachers' roles changed? In what ways?

3. From the perspective of SDM participants, did the experience of role change vary from teacher to teacher? If so, what were the differences, and why did participants believe these differences occurred?

4. From the perspective of SDM participants, what contextual factors have fostered teacher role change in SDM, and what factors have constrained it?

5. How does role theory help to explain the experiences and perceptions of teachers at this school, and how does it contribute to our understandings of SDM?

To investigate teacher role change I conducted 100 interviews with teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals in an urban elementary school over a 2-year period. My primary goal in 74 of the interviews was to elicit participants' perceptions of the progress of SDM. These interviews provided understandings about SDM's
implementation, as well as insights about teachers' roles. I also conducted 26 interviews in which I asked questions more specific to teacher role change. These interviews were with 14 teachers whom I identified as either performers, audience, or outsiders (Goffman, 1973) during SDM's implementation. I observed two SDM Council meetings and two other school meetings and gathered additional field data as I observed teachers, students, and staff in their daily school routines. I also gathered more than 500 pages of documents related to SDM's implementation.

In contrast to previous research on SDM, teachers in this study reported that their roles had changed. The study added to our knowledge about the implementation of SDM. In the following paragraphs, I summarize my findings by stating the study's questions and responding to them.

1. From the perspective of SDM participants, how has SDM evolved during its first 2 years, and what effect has it had on their school? Teachers at Silver Hill agreed that SDM had few achievements at the end of 2 years. However, they also perceived that they had learned about SDM and school change and that these understandings would enable them to improve their school in the future.

When Silver Hill began SDM in February, 1990, the school received little guidance from the district. Participants struggled to meet district guidelines requiring them to develop governance structures and establish SDM goals by the
end of the school year. They had little time to develop a vision of SDM and how it would enable them to restructure their school. The faculty defined SDM as a way for teachers to have a say in school decisions. For the majority of the teachers I interviewed, having a say seemed to be both the meaning and the goal of SDM. They did not view SDM as a strategy for restructuring the school. Their conception of SDM—together with their belief that a representative form of governance would be most efficient—shaped SDM's evolution and teachers' SDM activity. The school's first Council had six faculty members to represent 67 teachers and 2 paraprofessionals to represent the 25 paraprofessionals on the staff. Council members were expected to lead by proposing changes or by relating colleagues' views and concerns to the Council. Initially neither Council members nor other faculty were active in carrying out proposals. Defining SDM simply as a way to give faculty a voice in school decisions meant that most teachers did not believe they had the right or the responsibility to implement school change.

The principal at Silver Hill invited teachers to share his authority. Although the district allowed SDM schools to receive waivers from district and state policies, the refusal of a district screening committee to accept a waiver request from the school convinced many teachers that the district would not approve significant changes. Teachers mentioned
other actions by district administrators—such as the denial of a request for substitutes so that Council members could meet for one day—that convinced them that district administrators did not fully support SDM.

At the end of data collection, SDM had few tangible achievements, and most teachers I interviewed were disappointed that they had not addressed the school's most difficult problems. Nonetheless, the 12 teachers, administrators, and staff members I interviewed in May, 1992, agreed that SDM had been worthwhile and should continue. They acknowledged they had learned much about SDM and school change. They also believed that the organizational understandings they had gained through SDM's first 2 years of implementation would enable them to enact changes more effectively in the future. The 12 people I interviewed in May, 1992, agreed that the Council's recent team-building activities had improved trust, morale, and collegiality among faculty, administration, and staff. The majority of these respondents also believed that the success of the team-building efforts demonstrated the efficacy of SDM. Council members and the principal said that Council representatives had begun to clarify their SDM roles.

2. From the perspective of SDM participants, have teachers' roles changed? In what ways? Although the majority of the teachers interviewed did not report substantive role change in the role dimensions examined in
this study, the six performers did. Traditionally, teachers have not had the right to engage in school decisions or the responsibility for such decisions (Goodlad, 1984; Lortie, 1975). They have not worked collegially and have had little interaction with administrators. Working in isolation, teachers have not been able to collaborate in developing their craft or their understandings about the complexity of school problems. Most have avoided cooperative situations and the potential conflict that often accompanies collaboration (Lortie, 1975).

Some teachers perceived role change during the first 2 years of SDM implementation. The six performers said they were able to express their views openly and to propose and implement school change. They also believed they accepted greater responsibility for school affairs during SDM's implementation. A few performers perceived they gained self-confidence, and others said they increased their understandings of school change, group processes, and school and district policies. Council representatives believed they altered their relationships with colleagues, especially with fellow Council members. Council members also believed they changed their relationships with the principal. Some audience members and outsiders said they experienced changes in some of these areas.

3. From the perspective of SDM participants, did the experience of role change vary from teacher to teacher? If
so, what were the differences, and why did participants believe these differences occurred?

Not all teachers' roles changed, and there were different levels and dimensions of role change at Silver Hill. Performers reported substantial role change, and other teachers reported very little or none at all. Although performers perceived significant role change, not all performers experienced role change in the same areas or to the same degree. A few performers reported changed self-perceptions, whereas others did not. Some said their relationships with role partners changed dramatically, whereas other performers perceived less change in that area. The six teachers identified as performers for this study believed they assumed greater responsibilities, but the nature of these responsibilities differed from person to person.

Performers attributed these role changes to their active involvement in SDM. All but one of the six performers were on the Council. In contrast to audience and outsiders, they described changes that occurred in their relationships with Council members and other faculty. In particular, they noted that Council members developed strong collegial bonds and were able to discuss contentious issues without fear of offending colleagues. Performers believed the principal was willing to share his authority with them and said he presented himself as "partner." Unlike other faculty,
Council members perceived that SDM enabled teachers to enact powerful and far-reaching changes, and they discussed at length the responsibilities they accepted as SDM representatives.

These observations by teachers at Silver Hill suggest that role change can be substantial for teachers who are actively involved in SDM. However, in representative forms of school governance, active involvement may be difficult for teachers not serving on governing councils. In these settings effective communication is especially important. Audience and outsiders at Silver Hill often stated that poor communication precluded their active involvement in SDM.

Role change was also influenced by teachers' perceptions of administrative support. Performers participated in decision making with the principal and perceived their authority included all decision domains that traditionally had been his alone. Teachers who were less involved in SDM and, thus, had less contact with the principal in this new decision-making environment were less likely to believe they had that authority.

Similarly, teachers' perceptions of district administrators' views of SDM seemed to define for teachers the extent of their authority in matters traditionally decided at the district level. A few performers said that SDM enabled them to alter district or state policies. However, it is noteworthy that the Council pursued few policy
waivers, and no interview respondent mentioned the Council pursuing any waiver requests after the district screening committee's rejection of the revised bilingual report card. In summary, differences in role change seemed to be influenced most by teachers' involvement in SDM and their perceptions of the extent of their authority.

4. From the perspective of SDM participants, what contextual factors have fostered teacher role change in SDM, and what factors have constrained it? Interview respondents did not discuss contextual factors that fostered role change. However, they perceived these constraints to role change: (a) physical barriers to collaboration, (b) high teacher turnover and the large number of beginning and annual contract teachers, (c) lack of time, (d) the difficulties of teaching at Silver Hill, and (e) district budget problems in 1991-1992.

In our interviews, teachers who perceived role change did not discuss contextual factors that fostered the changes. It is possible that participants in innovations such as SDM--and researchers of these innovations--give greater attention to obstacles than to supportive conditions. That is, they may overlook supportive conditions that were present before implementation and focus, instead, on alleviating constraints to achieving desired results. Further, Silver Hill's faculty faced unique and difficult teaching challenges. Teachers encountered many obstacles, and those constraints must have
seemed much larger and more pervasive than factors supporting SDM success and role change. Among the challenges were the school's split campus and other physical conditions that isolated teachers. Faculty believed these conditions hampered communication and made collegial efforts more difficult.

In addition, interview respondents commented on the high rate of teacher turnover and the school's large percentage of beginning and annual contract teachers. Respondents said these teachers were unlikely to understand SDM, and new teachers themselves often acknowledged they knew little or nothing about SDM. In particular, beginning teachers said they had too many other concerns and too little time for SDM engagement. Almost everyone at Silver Hill said that SDM was time-consuming and perceived teachers' lack of time as an obstacle to SDM success and teacher involvement.

The unique difficulties of teaching at Silver Hill may have hampered SDM success and role change in another way. Faculty said their students led difficult lives, and many students confronted language and cultural barriers. Many teachers at Silver Hill wanted SDM efforts to be focused on improving student behavior, but their solutions involved superficial changes in school operations, rather than fundamental changes in curriculum and its delivery. One of the lessons of Silver Hill is that teachers working under especially trying conditions are so preoccupied with
immediate concerns that they find it difficult to focus on restructuring efforts and long-range change. Teachers in such contexts are unlikely to involve themselves in SDM and experience role change unless they have a vision of SDM's potential for restructuring their schools.

The budget problems that surfaced during the 1991-1992 school year also influenced teacher role change. Some untenured teachers believed that SDM involvement, especially in an uncertain budget year, might be a risk to their continued employment.

5. How does role theory help to explain the experiences and perceptions of teachers at this school, and how does it contribute to our understandings of SDM? Role theory helps to explain the complexity of role change and the reasons why teachers do or do not change their roles.

The failure of previous research on SDM to document teacher role change may be attributed in part to researchers' lack of clarity about the concept of role. Researchers (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990; Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988) have concluded that teachers' roles do not change through SDM, but they have not defined role clearly, discussed teachers' traditional roles or stated how SDM might change teachers' roles. Readers are left to make assumptions about the meaning of role and role change. Role theorists have clarified role and, thus, have given me a way to understand teachers' roles and how they changed at Silver
Hill. Hewitt (1988) said, "A role is generally defined as a cluster of duties, rights, and obligations associated with a particular social position" (p. 79). Zurcher (1983) concluded that individuals' self-concepts are often tied to their dominant roles. Role theorists (Bredemeier, 1979; Hewitt, 1988) have also noted that people's interactions with role partners help to define their roles. By defining role in terms of these dimensions and investigating teachers' perceptions of changes within each of these domains, I have been able to document subtle changes that I might have otherwise overlooked.

Symbolic interactionism is an especially useful framework for understanding teacher role change during SDM. Symbolic interactionism helped me to understand why teachers did or did not perceive role changes and why they experienced some dimensions of role change but not others. According to symbolic interactionists (Hewitt, 1988), people act on their definitions of situations and their understandings of the roles that are appropriate to those situations. Teachers actively involved in SDM believed SDM gave them wide-ranging decision-making authority and, thus, significantly changed the nature of the workplace. This perception enabled them to assume new roles--roles they deemed appropriate for SDM involvement. When teachers were not involved in SDM and did not receive adequate communication, they did not believe that workplace situations changed for them or that they should
assume different roles. However, when SDM nonperformers engaged in an SDM activity such as faculty hiring, they perceived a change in that situation and, thus, changes in the rights, responsibilities, and professional relationships affected by that involvement. Performers perceived that SDM changed many workplace situations. Nonperformers whose only SDM engagement was in faculty hiring or curriculum revision believed that changes in workplace situations were limited to those areas. The role changes they reported were also limited to those areas.

Administrative support was essential to the role-change process, and symbolic interactionism helps us understand why. The social and organizational roles people enact fit their understandings of other people's roles and actions (Hewitt, 1988). In this study, teachers assumed decision-making authority only when administrative behavior encouraged teachers to believe that they had such authority. The principal at Silver Hill worked to communicate to teachers that SDM gave them decision-making authority in all decision domains that had formerly been his alone. Not all faculty believed they had new authority but those most involved in SDM did. Performers worked closely with the principal in implementing SDM and believed that he was willing to share his authority. That perception enabled them to enact new roles. District administration stated publicly that SDM moved decision-making authority to the schools, but some
district administrators behaved as if they retained their traditional decision-making authority. Faculty perceived that district administrators were unwilling to share their authority with teachers, and even performers believed that their roles in relationship to district administration would remain unchanged. The contradiction between the district administration's public pronouncements and teachers' perceptions of administrative support affirms the usefulness of symbolic interactionism in interpreting SDM and teacher role change. Although Palmetto County's SDM project ostensibly gave teachers the authority to enact sweeping school change, most teachers perceived that their power was limited, and they acted accordingly. Symbolic interactionism helps us understand teachers' reluctance to participate in SDM and to engage in restructuring because it calls our attention to teachers' perceptions of their roles. If teachers resist SDM involvement, we cannot necessarily conclude they are unwilling to assume decision-making authority. They may not perceive that such authority is real. Researchers who ignore teachers' perceptions are likely to conclude erroneously that teachers are unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for school decisions.

Symbolic interactionism also helps us to understand the importance of clarifying SDM for teachers and other participants. According to Hewitt (1988), "It is the problematic [his emphasis] event or situation that makes it
necessary for people . . . to try to interpret the meaning of one another's acts" (p. 69). When Palmetto County implemented SDM, school personnel entered into a new and problematic situation where organizational roles and behavior were undefined. To allow schools greater flexibility in implementing SDM, the district provided participants little direction. The resulting ambiguity meant that teachers and school administrators had to actively construct definitions of their new situation. It also meant that people's actions took on added significance because of the influence of those actions on others' definitions of a new and uncertain situation. For example, the decision by a district administrator to reject the SDM Council's initial request for substitutes at the beginning of SDM suggested to many teachers that their decision-making authority was limited. If that event had occurred at a later date when teachers had already formed definitions of SDM, its impact on teachers' perceptions of their roles might not have been as great.

However, even before that event, teachers at Silver Hill perceived their authority as limited, and they narrowly defined SDM as a way for them to be heard before the principal made a decision. In schools with traditional forms of governance, teachers have opportunities to provide input--if only informally--and teachers at Silver Hill stated that the principal had always sought their input. Thus, their adoption of such a limited definition of SDM seems
unexpected, especially in light of advocates' predictions of SDM's efficacy for galvanizing teachers into collective action. Again, symbolic interactionism provides a lens through which teachers' interpretations of SDM can be understood. In the absence of explicit guidelines outlining changes in organizational authority, teachers are more likely to retain their traditional roles than to change them. They may respond initially to new and problematic situations by seeking to restore order and stability to their work lives. Their conservative response indicates that traditional school cultures are difficult to change and that teachers in those cultures believe they lack status and power. Further, time constraints at Silver Hill contributed to the faculty's limited vision of SDM. Teachers were not freed from their traditional responsibilities and had little time for reflection. Under these conditions it was unrealistic to expect them to reconceptualize schooling and their roles.

In summary, role theory helped me clarify the concept of role and identify teachers' role changes. Further, symbolic interactionism helped me understand why teachers' roles did or did not change. Role theory helped me attend to people's perceptions of (a) the situations in which they find themselves, (b) the meanings of others' actions, and (c) the problematic nature of ambiguous situations.
**Relationship of Findings to Previous Studies**

The 12 empirical studies reviewed in Chapter 2 provided some insights into SDM and teacher role change. Nonetheless, although six of the studies produced findings related to teachers' roles in SDM (Etheridge & Hall, 1991; Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1991; Hamilton, 1981; Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Mutchler & Duttweiler, 1990), only two made teachers' roles in SDM a central focus of inquiry (Hamilton, 1981; Malen & Ogawa, 1988). Only five of the studies used data gathered in more than one sampling (Etheridge, 1991; Hamilton, 1981; Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Wasley, 1991), and only one explored a single case in depth (Hamilton, 1981). Hamilton's study met all of these criteria, but his data collection was limited to 1 year, and his study was in the unique context of an alternative school. These 12 studies have provided important understandings. However, either because of methodological limitations or because the researchers focused on other issues, none has answered the questions posed in this study. They did not explain why teachers' roles during SDM have not changed as advocates predicted. Further, they did not illuminate the process of role change, account for factors unique to individual school contexts, and reveal differences in teachers' experiences of role change. In this section I discuss the findings of these studies in relation to my findings about teachers' perceptions of role change at Silver
Hill. I include discussions of (a) obstacles to teachers' SDM involvement, (b) changes in teachers' sense of efficacy, (c) lack of clarity about SDM and teachers' roles, (d) administrative support for SDM, (e) changes in teachers' collegial relationships, (f) the failure of SDM to change classroom practices, and (g) the slowness of teacher role change.

Obstacles to Teacher Involvement in SDM

Schneider (1984) surveyed 276 teachers in 12 schools and found a positive relationship between their job satisfaction and their involvement in decision making. Schneider also concluded that these teachers wanted to be more involved in schoolwide decision making. Although teachers' job satisfaction merits thoughtful consideration from SDM policymakers and researchers, it is not clearly related to any of the dimensions of teacher role examined in this study. Further, Schneider's finding that teachers want to be more involved in decision making provided little insight into teachers' actual SDM participation or obstacles to their participation. The majority of Silver Hill's teachers were not actively engaged in decision making, but reasons other than lack of interest limited their involvement. Like the teachers in the study by Duke et al. (1980), faculty at Silver Hill believed that time limited their involvement. In addition, Silver Hill's teachers discussed other obstacles. For example, beginning teachers said they had too many other
concerns to engage in SDM. Some annual contract teachers believed negative consequences would result from their involvement. The evolution of SDM as a representative form of governance meant that teachers at Silver Hill had varying levels of involvement, and communication problems kept many from participating in the process. In summary, this study indicated that teachers may want to be involved in decision making but not act on that desire for any of a number of reasons.

Changes in Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Duke et al. (1980) reported that teachers in their study perceived one of the benefits of SDM to be increased feelings of self-efficacy. At Silver Hill a few performers reported a greater sense of self-efficacy. This finding suggests that increased feelings of self-efficacy are experienced only by teachers who are actively involved in decision making. Several factors limited the SDM involvement of teachers in this study. The representative form of governance through which SDM was enacted limited faculty involvement almost exclusively to Council members. The school's size, the split campus, and the physical isolation of many teachers limited faculty collaboration and participation in decision making. In summary, SDM may increase active participants' feelings of self-efficacy, but practitioners and researchers should acknowledge the difficulties of involvement that have been identified in this study.
Lack of Clarity about SDM and Teachers' Roles

Goldman et al. (1991) concluded that lack of definition or clarity about SDM did not prevent participants from restructuring if they shared a desire to change their schools. The experience of SDM participants at Silver Hill suggests otherwise. Ambiguity about SDM's meaning and teachers' authority may have constrained their participation and narrowed their view of SDM's potential. If so, this lack of clarity also limited teacher role change. It is significant that Goldman et al. conducted half of their interviews with principals and the other half with teachers who were often leaders in SDM. Like the respondents in the study by Goldman et al., Silver Hill's performers came to believe that SDM gave them the authority to enact fundamental change in spite of their initial ambiguity about SDM's goals, decision domains, and procedures. In contrast, outsiders believed SDM had little potential for restructuring. If the goals of SDM are to involve all teachers in conversations about schooling and to enlist their support for school change, researchers and practitioners cannot limit their attention to performers. Doing so is likely to lead to misunderstandings about teachers' perceptions of SDM and restructuring.

Hamilton's (1981) study indicated the importance of clarifying teachers' roles in restructuring efforts. Hamilton investigated SDM for 1 year in an alternative school
and concluded that the process succeeded because school personnel clarified their new roles and related them to the school's goals. The experiences of SDM participants at Silver Hill also suggest the importance of role clarity. In contrast to the success achieved by clarifying roles in Hamilton's alternative school, lack of role clarity at Silver Hill limited SDM success and teacher role change. This study of teachers' roles in SDM provided an important understanding about the difficulty of role change that Hamilton's study could not provide. That is, Hamilton studied teachers' roles in an alternative school. The designation of a site as an alternative school implies a specific purpose. Teachers in such a school may be more likely to hold shared beliefs about their school's mission than teachers in regular public schools. That difference is important. It is possible that SDM's greatest potential benefit is its ability to engage teachers and other school stakeholders in reflection and discussion about the mission and goals of their schools. The experience of SDM participants at Silver Hill indicated the difficulty of that essential task and revealed obstacles to its accomplishment. Lack of time, communication problems, and physical barriers to collaboration made it difficult for most teachers to engage in reflection and discussion about their school.

In two other revealing studies, Lindquist and Mauriel (1989) and Malen and Ogawa (1988) concluded that lack of
clarity about teachers' SDM roles limited role change. Lindquist and Mauriel observed that teachers' uncertainty about their roles may lead them to believe they serve an advisory function. Similarly, Malen and Ogawa concluded that role ambiguity in their study resulted in teachers, administrators, and parents assuming traditional roles. Ingrained norms of behavior did not change. In particular, teachers and parents adhered to the "norm of civility" (p. 264), suppressing dissenting views to avoid conflict and to promote cordial interactions. At Silver Hill, role ambiguity also constrained teacher role change. Teachers did not venture into domains where they perceived they lacked administrative support. Role change was substantial only for the teachers who were active in SDM and, thus, able to perceive SDM's possibilities and the potential for changing their roles.

However, in contrast to Malen and Ogawa (1988), this study's findings indicate that performers do not always adhere to the norm of civility. Council representatives said they were able to criticize other Council members' and administrators' views without damaging their relationships with those role partners. In fact, performers believed they strengthened their collegial bonds through SDM activities. In contrast, some annual contract teachers were reluctant to engage in SDM discussions for fear of administrative reprisals. These contrasts in perspectives are important.
They indicate that teachers hold vastly different perceptions of their status and authority in SDM. These findings also suggest that active involvement in SDM strengthens teachers' perceptions that they are empowered to restructure their roles.

In another study that suggested the importance of role clarity, Mutchler and Duttweiler (1990) surveyed 230 school personnel (including only five teachers) to identify training requirements and barriers to SDM. The researchers identified eight barriers to changing SDM participants' behavior, including "resistance to changing roles and responsibilities, . . . lack of definition and clarity, . . . lack of trust, [and] lack of hierarchical support" (p. 4). The obstacles Mutchler and Duttweiler identified also emerged at Silver Hill. However, in contrast to Mutchler and Duttweiler—who did not focus on teachers' perceptions—I was able to provide insights into teachers' understandings of these obstacles. I learned, for example, that trust between faculty and administration at Silver Hill was more problematic for annual contract teachers than for tenured teachers. Lack of teacher-administrator trust limited SDM involvement when budget difficulties suggested that teacher layoffs were imminent. Further, trust was stronger between SDM performers and administrators. This last finding indicates that active involvement helps teachers to clarify their SDM roles and, thus, increases understanding between teachers and
administrators. Performers at Silver Hill said they were empowered to offer their views and to propose changes, and they believed the principal welcomed teacher participation in SDM. Teachers who were uncertain about SDM's meaning and their roles in the process were less likely to believe they could participate actively in decision making and more likely to express a lack of trust in administration. Further, this study suggested that teachers' resistance to changing roles was influenced by their perception that SDM did not grant them meaningful decision-making authority. They questioned whether some administrators were willing to share decision making with teachers.

Administrative Support for SDM

In a survey study that was supplemented by interviews and observations of SDM meetings, Jenni and Mauriel (1990) investigated SDM in 16 different schools. They found that teachers' assessments of SDM were highly related to their perceptions of principals' support. At Silver Hill, teachers believed the principal supported SDM and that it would not succeed without his support. Many teachers, especially performers, believed he was willing to share his authority with teachers. They perceived that they could participate in any decisions that traditionally had been the principal's. However, their perception that district administration did not fully support SDM indicated to teachers that their decision-making authority did not extend any further.
In another study, Etheridge and Hall (1991) investigated the effectiveness of seven principals' leadership styles in SDM. They concluded that democratic principal leadership styles fostered more cooperative and effective council functioning than autocratic leadership styles. In a study of one school, like this study of Silver Hill, we cannot make comparisons of principals' leadership styles. However, this study did reveal contrasts in teachers' perceptions of the leadership styles of the principal and other administrators. Further, we learned from this study about one principal's struggle to maintain a balance between a leadership style that teachers perceived as democratic and that was also task-oriented. It is one thing to suggest, as Etheridge and Hall did, that SDM leaders should be democratic. To explain clearly how democratic leaders should act in the context of a new and unfamiliar form of school governance is more difficult. I learned in this study that administrators must reflect constantly upon teachers' perceptions of the meanings of administrative actions in situations in which participants' roles are unclear.

Etheridge and Hall (1991) also reported that one principal's autocratic approach mobilized members of the faculty to confront the principal by obtaining the support of district office staff and the local teachers' association. The authors concluded that the teachers were able to assert their legitimate authority because of their perception of
district office support and because their SDM project gave them the expectation that they held substantive decision-making authority. The experience of teachers at Silver Hill also affirmed the importance of district administration's support of SDM. In contrast to the teachers in Etheridge and Hall's study, however, teachers at Silver Hill did not perceive they had the support of the district office and did not understand the extent of their authority. If they had, they might have engaged in SDM in greater numbers and might have attempted to implement more fundamental change through shared governance. This study indicated that administrators' actions influenced teachers' perceptions of the extent of their decision-making authority and, thus, influenced teachers' perceptions of their rights and responsibilities.

Changes in Teachers' Collegial Relationships

Wasley (1991) conducted an in-depth study of three teacher leaders and included the perspectives of the three leaders and numerous role partners. Although none of Wasley's teacher leaders was involved in SDM, her findings may apply to this study of teacher roles in SDM. As was true of performers at Silver Hill, Wasley's teacher leaders experienced changes in their relationships with colleagues. All of them increased their understandings of schools and enhanced their leadership skills. Wasley noted, however, that none of them was familiar with the literature on educational change, leadership, and conflict resolution.
They had little understanding of group processes, school
culture, and other teachers' perceptions of their actions.
Like Wasley's teacher leaders, performers at Silver Hill
believed they gained knowledge about schools and improved
their leadership skills through SDM involvement. However, it
is not clear that SDM difficulties at Silver Hill were
related to the gaps in teacher knowledge identified by
Wasley. It is possible that the failure of SDM Council
members to communicate effectively indicated they did not
understand others' perceptions of their actions, but this
study did not provide clarity about teachers' understandings
in the areas Wasley noted. For example, I observed one SDM
meeting in which some Council members demonstrated a lack of
understanding of group processes and conflict resolution.
However, because I focused on teachers' perceptions and
relied primarily on interview data, I cannot assert that the
lack of understanding I observed in that meeting was an
ongoing problem. We need further study to investigate the
concerns Wasley raised and to assess their influence on SDM
success and role change.

The Failure of SDM to Change Classroom Practices

Jenni and Mauriel (1990) concluded that SDM had little
influence on classroom practices in the schools they studied.
Similarly, teachers at Silver Hill reported that SDM did not
change teaching and learning. This study, however, provided
some insight into the problem that Jenni and Mauriel's study
did not. The Silver Hill faculty and staff did not define SDM as a way to restructure curriculum and instruction. It seems likely that classroom practices did not change because teachers did not hold a shared definition of SDM as a means for changing teaching and learning. Further research will be needed to determine if SDM schools like Silver Hill will, in time, restructure teaching and learning, as well as relationships between teachers and children. It may be premature to suggest that SDM will not have an impact in these areas. In some schools it may be necessary to restructure relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators before restructuring of curriculum, teaching, and classroom relationships will occur. Changes in teachers' collegial relationships and in the nature of support teachers receive from administrators should enable teachers to work collaboratively to alter traditional teaching practices.

The Slowness of Teacher Role Change

David's (1990) research--based on data collected in brief one-time visits to schools and district office personnel in three districts--suggested the slowness of role and organizational change. Although she examined schools "that best exemplified new roles and arrangements" (pp. 212-213), she asserted that changes in school attitudes, roles, and relationships occur slowly. Perhaps we can best understand the slowness and difficulty of these changes by
considering the perceptions of teachers at varying levels of SDM involvement. For example, most outsiders and audience at Silver Hill assumed few, if any, new responsibilities through SDM. None reported personal changes, and their relationships with other role partners remained generally unchanged.

As David (1990) conceded, the scope of her study was limited to a quick appraisal of successful restructuring efforts so that she could provide lessons other districts could adopt. However, if our interest is in the restructuring of teachers' roles, the study of teachers at Silver Hill indicated that we must give attention to teachers' varying perspectives in different contexts. The perceptions of SDM outsiders in schools struggling to restructure may reveal more about the difficulty of teacher role change than the perceptions of performers in schools successfully restructuring. At Silver Hill many nonperformers said their professional lives were essentially unaffected by SDM. They were not close to the decision-making process, and they did not believe that SDM was producing tangible results. Thus, they perceived that SDM was floundering and their roles were unchanged. Additional studies that examine the perceptions of performers and nonperformers are needed to increase our knowledge of teacher role change and SDM's potential for influencing role change.

The goal of this study was to provide an understanding of SDM and teachers' roles. In the following sections I
discuss contributions of this study to practitioners, researchers, and teacher educators.

**Contributions of Findings to Practitioners**

This study has provided insights about SDM that should be useful to practitioners. However, readers should recognize that the findings of one case study may not apply to every school implementing SDM. Although qualitative researchers (Eisner, 1981; Spindler, 1982b; Stake, 1978; Wolcott, 1988a) believe that case studies have a strong claim to generalizability, their conception of generalizability differs from the traditional view. Instead of claiming that their findings are generalizable across the populations of interest, they ask to which contexts and populations their findings apply (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Thus, practitioners reviewing this study should be careful to consider the applicability of the findings to their unique situations.

In this section I discuss eight recommendations. I encourage practitioners to (a) consider the importance of wide teacher inclusiveness in SDM; (b) provide teachers with time away from their traditional responsibilities so they can conduct SDM activities; (c) provide guidance and support to SDM schools; (d) communicate effectively; (e) view SDM as a developmental process; (f) involve neutral observers in evaluating SDM progress; (g) provide assistance to administrators in restructuring their roles; and (h) maintain
the focus of restructuring efforts on improving schools for students.

My first recommendation is that practitioners work to include as many teachers as possible in SDM. If policymakers want to provide environments for teacher role change—-that is, for the professionalization of teaching—-they should consider models of SDM governance that engage large numbers of teachers in decision making. This study indicated that SDM performers are more likely than nonperformers to change their roles and to have a vision of SDM's possibilities. Teacher engagement does not have to mean that every teacher is involved in every decision, but at a minimum, it should mean that all teachers are informed and have a means to express their views. If the intent of policymakers is to professionalize teaching, it is important that as many teachers as possible become engaged in collegial discussions about the nature of schooling, the possibilities for fundamental change, and strategies for restructuring their own schools.

I suggest two strategies for making SDM a more inclusive process. First, in large schools like Silver Hill, practitioners may want to create more than one Council or governing body within the school. That is, a school might be divided into smaller governing units in which teachers have clearly delineated authority within their realms and are responsible for collaborative implementation of decisions.
This system of governance would have the potential for engaging larger numbers of teachers in decision making than representative forms of governance. Second, schools implementing SDM using representative forms of governance may want to delegate decisions within certain domains to subcommittees of teachers. Silver Hill's SDM Council restructured its governing procedures in this way toward the end of my data collection. This change has the potential for including more teachers in decision making. Further, teachers on these subcommittees may be better informed about the work of the Council and more likely to perceive that SDM is accomplishing something than they would otherwise. Delegating specific responsibilities to these subsidiary groups would permit teachers to bring their individual talents and expertise to school decision making. That is, some teachers may be more adept at certain managerial functions, while others contribute to curriculum development. Still others may want to provide support for beginning teachers or to assume other leadership roles.

Practitioners should also work to include beginning teachers in decision making. The exclusion of beginning teachers from SDM seems especially tragic for two reasons. First, beginning teachers often bring energy and fresh ideas to school problem solving. Second, if the intent of SDM is to restructure schools, it seems counterproductive to exclude beginning teachers from the process, thus initiating them
into the traditional teaching culture that SDM is supposed to transform, only to attempt later to socialize them into the collaborative decision-making culture from which they were earlier excluded.

A second recommendation is that teachers and other SDM participants receive relief from some of their traditional responsibilities so that they will have more time for their new responsibilities. In Palmetto County district policymakers expected SDM schools to restructure, but teachers were not relieved of any of their traditional responsibilities. Faculty were expected to carry out every function they had traditionally performed and then to restructure the school in their spare time. In spite of that unrealistic expectation, SDM participants at Silver Hill seemed to have laid the groundwork for restructuring after 2 years. Nonetheless, if policymakers expect quicker results from SDM, they should find ways to relieve teachers of some of their traditional responsibilities and give them more time for collaborative work.

Third, policymakers should consider giving more guidance to SDM schools than the Silver Hill faculty and staff received. The need for guidance seems to be inversely related to the need for time. If policymakers expect schools to construct their own SDM definitions, goals, and procedures with little external guidance, they must give school personnel time to develop those understandings. On the other
hand, if schools receive more explicit guidelines, they should be able to implement SDM in less time. After 2 years SDM participants at Silver Hill seemed to have developed some shared understandings about the process. However, they might have accomplished more through SDM if they had received more clarity and support from district administration. As noted earlier, support from district administration might also have convinced teachers that SDM empowered them to restructure their schools and their roles.

Fourth, SDM participants must communicate effectively. At Silver Hill ineffective communication seemed to limit the involvement of audience and outsiders. If teachers are to be involved in discussions about change, they must receive accurate and current information about the work of decision-making bodies. Perhaps more important is that they receive information about the processes through which decisions are made. They need to know more than the final resolution of school problems. School decisions are often complex and involve difficult tradeoffs for participants. If teachers are to endorse and implement decisions, they need to be aware of the diverse perspectives of others in the school community and of the manner in which decision makers resolved contentious issues.

Communication systems must also provide mechanisms that enable nonperformers to communicate their views to decision-making bodies. When teachers at Silver Hill complained that
SDM communication was ineffective, they usually meant that the Council was not keeping them informed. However, it also became clear that audience and outsiders needed open channels for communicating their ideas to the Council. Traditional forms of school communication have been top-down and have not included structures for bottom-up communication or communication among teachers. Thus, schools implementing SDM must work purposefully to create mechanisms that allow open and effective communication to flow among all SDM stakeholders.

Informal communication seemed to be important to SDM success and teacher role change. The most effective communication about SDM often occurred when Council members and other faculty discussed issues in informal contexts or when Council members made time to meet with the small groups they represented. Efforts to initiate informal communication may be especially important in large schools. Myers (1970) noted that people in small organizations naturally communicate in informal face-to-face encounters. In contrast, as organizations grow, communication tends to become increasingly formal. Perceiving the need to communicate with greater efficiency with larger numbers of personnel, people begin to rely more on written memoranda than face-to-face interactions. Others in the organization respond with memoranda of their own, and the volume of written communication increases exponentially. As personnel
become flooded with written communication, they become increasingly less capable of absorbing the information they receive and begin to give it less attention. Thus, the irony of increased formal communication is that it becomes self-defeating, resulting in communication breakdowns. Further, it often results in reduced personal interaction and spontaneity of expression (Myers, 1970, pp. 115-116). Although both formal and informal communication may be important to SDM success and teacher role change, overreliance on formal communication may be anathema to the very conditions that schools seek to promote in implementing SDM. Breaking large schools into smaller governing units, as suggested earlier, may be one way to encourage informal communication.

Fifth, practitioners must recognize that SDM is a developmental process. They should not conclude that SDM is not an effective change strategy because problems emerge that were not evident previously. Numerous Silver Hill faculty and staff said they were shocked when they learned that some teachers did not trust school administrators. Although SDM implementation and my involvement as a formative evaluator brought this problem to light, neither SDM nor the evaluation caused the trust problem. Further, although Palmetto County's budget problems in 1991-92 were clearly related to some teachers' perceptions of administrators' untrustworthiness, it is not clear that these teachers'
concerns would have been completely dispelled in a healthier budget year. Many schools may lack teacher-administrator trust. If that problem surfaces during SDM implementation, practitioners should not view its emergence as a disadvantage of SDM. Interview respondents at Silver Hill in May, 1992, believed that their reaction to the trust problem strengthened trust and collegiality and prepared them to deal more effectively with future problems. If SDM alters participants' roles and traditional school cultures, practitioners should view the emergence of new problems and their resolution as necessary to the building of more dynamic school cultures.

A sixth recommendation is that schools involve neutral observers in evaluating SDM. The Silver Hill faculty's resolution of the trust problem suggested the importance of collaboration between schools and evaluators in implementing complex innovations. Without the formative evaluation of SDM, that problem might not have been revealed. Neutral observers who periodically communicate their findings to practitioners during the implementation process may be able to provide perspectives that those immersed in the process do not readily perceive. Evaluators possess an outsider's perspective that may also enable them to recognize achievements that stakeholders do not. It may be especially hard for SDM participants to perceive subtle changes in the organizational culture that neutral observers are likely to
uncover. Further, evaluators' reports may encourage reflection by practitioners. On several occasions teachers and administrators at Silver Hill told me that my findings surprised them and generated reflection and discussion. A few respondents said that our interviews caused them to reflect on issues they had not considered.

Seventh, administrators need assistance in restructuring their roles. Administrators at all levels have to consider carefully SDM participants' perceptions of administrative behavior. School personnel work in a culture that has persisted in spite of societal changes and altered expectations for schools. Teachers are not likely to believe their situation has changed unless administrators, through their actions and words, project definitions of SDM that differ substantially from traditional school governance. If teachers do not believe that the rules of the game have changed, they will play by the old rules. Further, we learned from this study that administrators' SDM roles are complex. Shared decision making does not relieve administrators of their leadership roles as much as it changes the nature of the leadership they provide. The principal at Silver Hill believed that his role should be as a facilitator. When SDM produced few achievements in its first 2 years, he perceived that he had given too much authority to teachers too quickly. Nonetheless, he recognized that efforts he made to initiate restructuring
might be perceived by teachers as evidence that he retained control of decision making. This dilemma was especially problematic for him when he saw the need to provide information and insights to which only administrators have traditionally had access. When administrators inform teachers about obstacles to implementing change, teachers may perceive that administrators are discouraging their efforts. However, if administrators withhold such information, teachers may encounter difficulties that discourage them from attempting restructuring. Administrators must be aware of this dilemma and work diligently to facilitate teachers' involvement in change efforts.

A final recommendation is that SDM schools focus their change efforts on instructional improvement. If the goal of SDM is improving students' experience of schooling—as I believe it should be—policymakers should communicate that goal explicitly. Practitioners should relate all discussions about school change and all restructuring efforts to that goal. They cannot assume that changes in the locus of decision-making authority will automatically result in improved experiences for students.

**Contributions of Findings to SDM Research**

This study has also contributed to the SDM research community numerous understandings about SDM and teachers' roles. In this section I discuss some of those
contributions, including questions that should be investigated in future research.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism was useful in this investigation of SDM and teacher role change. The usefulness of that theoretical framework has several implications for future research. First, researchers of innovations such as SDM should recognize that its implementation is a social process. That is, SDM's impact at one site cannot necessarily be replicated at another. The process of implementation and each school's success will be influenced by participants' perceptions of the innovation and the unique social interactions that define the school's culture. Studies that do not account for the social nature of implementation will be, at best, limited in their contributions. At worst, they may be misleading. Failure to understand the dynamic, social nature of SDM may lead researchers to conclude prematurely that SDM has little potential for restructuring schools and teachers' roles.

A second implication of assuming a symbolic interactionist perspective is that researchers must recognize, as Hewitt (1988) asserted, that "people act on the basis of meanings, so that one's actions in a particular situation depend on the way that situation is perceived" (p. 18). Researchers who do not interpret SDM participants' behavior by attempting to understand their perceptions will
likely misunderstand the innovation and its impact. Symbolic interactionism should also suggest to researchers the slowness of role change. People in new and unfamiliar situations must first define those situations and then identify their roles within each situation. Last, they have to learn behavior appropriate for their new roles. In each process—defining the situation, identifying roles, and constructing understandings of appropriate behavior—role players attend to the behavior of others in the situation and act according to their perceptions of others' behaviors (Hewitt, 1988). Thus, role change can be a slow process, as role players socially negotiate their new positions within new and ambiguous contexts. Researchers who do not recognize the difficulty of that process and who believe that SDM will generate immediate changes in participants' roles, will likely conclude that SDM is ineffective. Such studies may result in SDM being abandoned as a change strategy before it has a chance to produce the changes its advocates have predicted.

This study has also contributed to research by demonstrating the importance of examining teachers' differing perspectives of SDM. Doing so allows us to reveal role change where it occurs and to make sense of the differences in teachers' experiences. Teachers at Silver Hill had widely disparate experiences with SDM and role change. Researchers who do not investigate these differences may conclude
erroneously that SDM's implementation has not provided a context for role change. Although only performers at Silver Hill experienced significant role change, that finding suggests two possibilities. First, models of SDM that actively involve larger numbers of teachers may foster more widespread role change. Second, role change may occur for audience and outsiders more slowly than for performers. Both of these possibilities merit further investigation. The latter possibility requires researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of significant duration.

Perhaps the most important contribution of this study to research is that it demonstrates the importance of examining closely the way in which SDM is enacted in each site studied. As suggested above, researchers should investigate different models of SDM governance. Further, this study indicated the importance of examining the effects of teachers' participation in different decision domains. For example, faculty participation in hiring influenced teachers' perceptions of their roles differently than their involvement in school decision making. These differences provide fertile ground for future research. Most important, however, researchers must determine if the innovation they are studying is, in fact, SDM. This requirement demands that researchers remain on site long enough to decide if teachers have been given significant decision-making authority. The Palmetto County School Board heralded its implementation of
SDM as an opportunity for teachers to restructure their schools by making any changes they deemed necessary. However, teachers learned in the first 2 years that changes as minor as report card revisions would need district approval—approval that, for whatever reasons, they did not receive. They also learned that district administration would decide which positions would be eliminated during 1992 budget reductions, even though schools in Palmetto County had supposedly exercised control over their budgets for more than a decade. Before researchers conclude that SDM is not producing results, they should ask if teachers and school administrators have truly had the opportunity to enact SDM. To answer that question, as well as questions about the effects of different SDM models and teachers' participation in different decision domains, researchers will need to conduct numerous in-depth case studies of schools implementing SDM.

A final contribution of this study to SDM research is its conceptualization of teachers' roles. Throughout the literature on SDM, scholars have asserted that it will change teachers' roles. However, none of the literature reviewed in this study clarified the concept of role. By illuminating teachers' rights and responsibilities, personal changes, and relationships with other role partners, this study has provided a heuristic for future study of teachers' roles.
Contributions of Findings to Teacher Education

The implications of this study for teacher education are perhaps less clear than they are for practitioners and researchers. Nonetheless, the study illuminated some issues that teacher educators should consider. It indicated, for example, that SDM performers' relationships with colleagues and the principal differed from teachers' traditional school relationships with those role partners. It also revealed that teachers in SDM schools may assume responsibilities that teachers have not traditionally had. These findings should stimulate reflection and discussion by teacher educators. Widespread SDM implementation may indeed change teachers' roles. If it does, teacher educators will have to consider how this reconceptualization of teaching alters their mission. The fundamental question of what it means to be a teacher should always guide teacher education. Although further research about SDM and teachers' roles is clearly needed, this study has suggested a redefinition of teachers' roles—and, thus, a reshaping of teacher preparation as well.

Summary

Scholars advocating SDM and practitioners implementing it have viewed the innovation as a means for restructuring schools by changing the roles of teachers. This study indicated that teachers' roles did change during SDM's implementation at one school site. However, the experience of role change differed greatly among teachers at the school.
Teachers who performed an active role in SDM believe they exercised new rights, assumed new responsibilities, changed personally, and altered their professional relationships. Thus, the study suggests that SDM may have the potential for fulfilling advocates' predictions. However, further research will be needed to determine the effects of varying models of SDM and teachers' participation in different decision domains. Most important, researchers must give careful attention to SDM enactment in individual schools to determine the extent to which teachers receive meaningful decision-making authority. These research demands will require that researchers conduct numerous case studies and that they attend carefully to the perceptions of SDM participants. Otherwise, the apparent failure of SDM to meet advocates' expectations will remain a troubling enigma, and an innovation worthy of all educators' consideration may be abandoned because of practitioners' misunderstandings and researchers' misinterpretations.
During the last 10 years [State] has emerged as a national leader in the movement to improve the quality of public education. One of the most interesting and hopeful innovations happening in [State] and elsewhere is shared decision making. The goals of shared decision making vary, but in Palmetto County the aims are clear: to professionalize teaching further and to affect student achievement positively.

Palmetto County's shared decision making program is unique because it includes a formative evaluation component. Formative evaluation means that the program can be modified, refined, and improved as you go along because the faculty will have information to help assess school needs and plan innovations. The aim of this formative evaluation is not simply to determine whether a particular program "works," or to compare schools and grade the work of individual institutions or people. The aim is to develop an implementation model that fits your school and helps other schools when they undertake shared decision making in the future.

I am a staff member from the R & D Center on School Improvement at the University of Florida, and I have been assigned to your school. I will be working with the three core group members and with another teacher who will be a liaison or research contact person for your school. In addition, I will talk with other teachers, students, parents, administrators, staff members, and shared decision making council members throughout this school year. Most interviews will be done by phone and will not take much of your time. I will be asking questions about shared decision making, how the program is proceeding, what you think of the program, what you hope might be accomplished, problems that must be surmounted, and more. I will collect and analyze the responses of many people and give short reports back to the school core group and to district trainers.

It is important for you to know that reports will never include the names of the people I interview. In fact, respondents will be given a form indicating that all
information is confidential and that names are never divulged, regardless of the information received. We understand that confidentiality is important to the success of the evaluation and the project.

We are also gathering demographic data on your school that we will organize and give back to the shared decision making core group in the form of a school profile. The questionnaire you filled out in January is an important part of that profile and the school will receive the results of those data in April.

At the end of the school year, we will write a report on the implementation process of shared decision making in Palmetto County schools. We will provide information about the development of the school plans, the problems encountered and their resolutions, the common steps or stages in the implementation process, the school characteristics that influence the successful launching of the program, and what shared decision making came to mean to teachers and administrators.

Since this program emphasizes teacher participation, the success of this evaluation process, like the success of the shared decision making program itself, depends on you. We look forward to working with you.
APPENDIX B
INITIAL TEACHER ROLE INTERVIEW

1. If someone you have just met asked you to describe the multiple tasks involved in being a teacher, what would you say?

2. Every principal defines his or her role a bit differently. How does your principal define his role?

3. Every teacher defines his or her role differently. How do you define your role?
   A. In order, what are the most important things that you have to do as a teacher?
   B. Are there things you do outside the classroom? What are they?
   C. Has your role changed as a result of SDM? Please explain.
   D. If you could change anything about your role, what would it be?

4. When you want something changed in this school, what do you do? Who do you go to? Have you always proceeded in that way or has SDM changed that?

5. Has SDM affected your life as a teacher? How?
   A. Do you have more control over decisions that affect your work as a teacher as a result of SDM? Please explain.
   B. Do you feel that you are treated more like a professional as a result of SDM? Please explain.

6. How would you describe your involvement in SDM?
   [If the respondent states that s/he is not involved, skip to the next page]
A. [Probe to see if they are involved in budget, curriculum, personnel, and professional development activities if needed]

B. Would you like to be more involved in making decisions at Hill? In what ways? What would it take to increase your involvement?

C. Is it important for all teachers to be involved in these areas? Why or why not?

[For those who state that they are not involved] Why aren't you involved?

A. Do you feel that your views are represented when decisions are made at Silver Hill? Could you give some examples?

B. [Probe to see if they have influence or feel represented in decisions about budget, curriculum, personnel, and professional development activities]

C. [If they perceive that they are not represented in these areas] Why not? What would have to happen to increase your influence over decisions?

D. Is it important to you to be involved in these areas? Why?

7. What qualities describe those teachers who are most involved in SDM? What qualities describe those teachers who are less involved?

8. Has SDM placed greater demands or responsibilities on you? On other teachers? Please explain.

9. Has your participation in the curriculum revision that took place last year affected your classroom teaching? Please explain.

10. Has your knowledge of teaching or of school affairs increased as a result of SDM? In what ways?

11. Have your relationships with administrators or colleagues changed as a result of SDM? In what ways?

12. Have your relationships with parents or students changed as a result of SDM? In what ways?
APPENDIX C
SECOND TEACHER ROLE INTERVIEW

I just want to start by asking what's been happening with SDM since we talked in November.

Define teacher leadership.

Does SDM give the faculty the authority to make any changes that teachers seek? Please explain.

What do Council members do?
  What should Council members do?
  What skills are needed to do the job well?

How do people here feel about what the SDM Council has done?
  Do people not on the Council look up to Council members?
  Is there resentment of Council members?

Do Council members understand and respond to the concerns of the whole faculty? Please explain.

Do faculty members support SDM? Explain.
  Do they attend SDM Council meetings?
  Do they support SDM, or participate in SDM, in other ways?
  If not, why not?

Does the school administration support SDM? Has their level of support changed in any way since SDM was started here?

Have your views on SDM changed since you first heard about it?

Have you learned from this experience with SDM? [If so] What?
  About working with peers and others?
  About school organization?
  About carrying out school change?
  Have you improved your leadership skills?
People at some schools have stated that because of SDM they are able to speak out on issues that concern them. Is that true at Silver Hill?

People at some schools have stated that a result of SDM is that their principal shares more decisions with them. Is that true at Silver Hill?

At some schools only a few people are involved in shared decision making. Is that true at Silver Hill?

At some schools the teachers who state that they are well-informed about SDM are those whose representatives make a special effort to relate SDM business to them either informally or in a team meeting. Is that true at Silver Hill?

People at some schools have stated that if the Council communicated more effectively with the faculty, then teachers would be more understanding and supportive when the Council confronted difficulties. Do you think that is true at Silver Hill?
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William E. Smith is a native of South Carolina. He received the B.A. degree in history from the University of South Carolina in 1972 and the M.A.T. degree in history from the University of South Carolina in 1974.

Mr. Smith was a social worker for 1 year and worked in a variety of positions in South Carolina's public schools over a period of 14 years. He taught high school English and middle school social studies and language arts. He also taught in a self-contained sixth-grade classroom for 4 years. He was a coach, district coordinator of programs for the handicapped, and elementary school assistant principal. From 1986 through 1989 he was the principal of a rural elementary school.

Mr. Smith is married and has one daughter. His wife is an elementary school teacher.
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dorene D. Ross, Chair
Professor of Instruction and Curriculum

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Elizabeth Bondy, Co-chair
Assistant Professor of Instruction and Curriculum

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Rodman B. Webb
Professor of Foundations of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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