HORTON, Joann, 1948-
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES
OF TRUSTEES IN PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES.

The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1977
Education, higher

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1977
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES
OF TRUSTEES IN PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School
of The Ohio State University

By
Joann Horton, B.S., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1977

Reading Committee:
William Moore, Jr., Chairman
Luvern L. Cunningham
Randall Ripley

Approved by
Adviser

Faculty of Educational Administration
A
Laura P. Horton,
Ma Mère,
Sans qui ce jour
Ne serait pas possible;
Sans qui ce degré
N'aurait pas de sens.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many persons contributed to the actualization of this finished product. However, I should like to personally mention a few of them because of their unique and sustained support of the author. First among these are members of my committee: Drs. Luvern Cunningham, William Moore, Jr., and Randall Ripley. Their expert guidance and commitment to quality led finally to this product. It is my hope that within these pages, a measure of their dedication is adequately reflected.

Along the way, there were several colleagues who gave moral support as well as assistance with manual chores such as mailing and tabulation of results. These included Collie Coleman, Ida Halasz, and Warren Moore. The organization and presentation of this document is a direct reflection of Sharon Kelley's commitment to quality.
VITA

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1970 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . B.S., French, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina

1971 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . M.A., French/Junior College Education and Administrative, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina

1971 - 1973 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Instructor of French, Kittrell Junior College, Kittrell, North Carolina, Director of Language Laboratory

1973 - 1975 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Assistant Director, Placement Career Development, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina

1975 - 1976 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Graduate Research Associate, Educational Personnel Placement, College of Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

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PUBLICATIONS


Monitoring Criminal Justice Projects. Columbus, Ohio: Regional Planning Unit, 1977.
VITA (continued)

Major Field: Higher Education Administration

Minor Fields: Public Administration
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION. ............................................. 1

| Problem Statement                  | 19   |
| Significance of the Study         | 22   |
| Purposes of the Study             | 25   |
| Research Interests                | 25   |
| Hypotheses                        | 25   |
| Limitations on the Study          | 30   |
| Organization of the Study         | 31   |
| Summary                           | 34   |

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE. ....................... 35

| Introduction.                      | 35   |
| Development of the Trusteeship     | 36   |
| in Public Two-Year Colleges       | 36   |
| Boardsmanship in the Public       | 39   |
| Two-Year College.                 | 39   |
| A Context for Decision-Making      | 49   |
| The Decision-Making Process:      | 53   |
| A Theoretical Perspective         | 53   |
| Dimensions of the Decision Process.| 67   |
| Summary                           | 80   |
TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sample</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Research Instrument</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Procedures</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the Data</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Response Rates</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Profile of Respondents</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results from the Research Questions</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrelationships Between Independent and Dependent Variables</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Conclusions</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions Specific to the Hypotheses</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Findings</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary Findings</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings and Implications</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. APPENDICES</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Summary by States of All Community, Junior and Technical Colleges</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Summary by States of Public Colleges</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Distribution of Size of Enrollment in Colleges</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Comparison of Demographic Variables in Percentages</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Trustees by Sex.</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Trustees in Single Campus Institutions</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Trustees in Multi-Campus Institutions</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 8</td>
<td>Percentages of Trustees Using Various Kinds of Information</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 9</td>
<td>Percentages of Trustees Finding Various Factors Relevant to Decision-Making</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 10</td>
<td>Percentages of Trustees Who Employ Various Analytical Elements During Board Decision-Making</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 11</td>
<td>Chi Square Test of the Association Between Length of Time on the Board and the Exercise of Influence by Individual Board members</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 12</td>
<td>Chi Square Test of Association Between Frequencies for Problem Definition by Trustees and the Size of the Institutions that they Serve</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 13</td>
<td>Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Consideration of Policy Consequences by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES (continued)

Table 14: Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Consideration of Policy Consequences by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size. .......... 127

Table 15: Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Discussion of Obstacles to Policy Implementation by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size. ................. 128

Table 16: Chi Square Test of Association the Frequencies of the Use of Institutional Goals as Guidelines for Decision-Making by Individual Trustees and Type of Campus. .............. 130

Table 17: Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Problem Definition by Individual Trustees and Types of Campus. ................. 132

Table 18: Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequency of Use of Trend Data by Individual Trustees and Type of Campus. ................. 134

Table 19: Chi Square Test of Association Between Frequencies of Consideration of Policy Consequences by Individual Trustees and Types of Campus. .............. 135

Table 20: Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Discussion of Obstacles to Policy Implementation by Trustees and Type of Campus. .............. 137
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1:</td>
<td>Hierarchical Structure of the Public Two-Year College</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2:</td>
<td>Functional Levels of Administration in Two-Year Colleges</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3:</td>
<td>The Social Interaction Process</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4:</td>
<td>Illustration of a Contingency Table for the Computation of the Chi Square Statistic</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5:</td>
<td>Trustees by Race</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6:</td>
<td>Trustees by Age</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7:</td>
<td>Trustees by Length of Time on Board</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The public two-year college is a phenomenon in higher education. Whether it is viewed in terms of its growth, philosophical underpinnings, ties to the local community, flexibility in curricula, staff or heterogeneous student population, this college is totally unique. Of the 1233 two-year colleges in the United States, 1030 are public. They are located in all fifty states, American Samoa, the Canal Zone and Puerto Rico (see Tables 1 and 2). There is no set pattern for the establishment of twoyear colleges. Some states have only one or two colleges, such as Rhode Island and Vermont, while other states have as many as one hundred and five, such as California (see Table 2). Public colleges are not only located in all fifty states, but in all types of communities—rural, urban and suburban. Not only does the number of institutions vary by state and community, but the size of public two-year colleges ranges from under 500 students to more than 30,000 students (see Table 3).

The public two-year college is not new in higher education. The first two-year college was established in 1901.\textsuperscript{1} This new type of college did not spread immediately. It was not until the 1960's that

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### Table 2

**Summary by States of Public Colleges**

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<thead>
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<th>State</th>
<th>Number of State Colleges</th>
<th>Full-time Enrollment as of October 1972</th>
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TABLE 3
Distribution of Size of Enrollment in Colleges

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NOT AVAILABLE: 89 111 6 6 95 117
the two-year college became a viable alternative to the traditional four-year college. There were several reasons for the delayed expansion of the public two-year college. During the sixties and the early seventies more students began seeking admission to colleges than could be accommodated by the admission requirements that were being applied. Many of these students sought admission to community colleges. Most of these applicants were Veterans, minorities, and individuals who had been born during the World War II era. Second, technology in industry and other public sectors had developed to the point that new employees were being required to have entry level skills. As this change occurred, the junior college organized to capitalize on this requirement by offering training programs that could produce the skilled workers for industrial jobs. Most of these programs were funded through grants under the Vocational Education Act of 1963. The third reason for the expansion of two-year colleges is a result of strict admission requirements of many four-year colleges. A fourth reason was the relatively low cost of attendance at public two-year colleges.²

In 1965, several states began to consolidate their higher education programs in order to make the best use of their resources and to control the growth of their educational institutions. As a result, several states developed master plans and established higher education coordination councils. California was the first state to develop a master plan and set up a formal coordinating council to oversee its

total higher education effort. While state governments were debating the question of coordination, the federal government was concentrating upon improving the quality of education provided by public two-year schools. Colleges were encouraged to improve on the quality of their deliverance rather than the quantity of course offerings.

The federal government stipulated that public two-year colleges must operate under an "open door" philosophy. This required that colleges admit all who will pursue an education on minimal criteria. These criteria were high school certificate, majority age of twenty-one, and an interest in self improvement through both degree or non-degree programs. Further, it required that disadvantaged and minority groups be given equal access to both the programs and the supportive services of the college. In addition, each college was designated a specific geographic region to serve in order to enhance its community orientation. This designation allowed the college to define its constituencies and to respond to local needs. Federal allocations were earmarked for use in the improvement of exiting buildings, vocational technical education, and faculty development. This process of upgrading the institutions was seen as a necessary prerequisite to institutions achieving their ultimate potential in meeting the educational needs of the populace.

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4Thornton, The Community Junior College.
During the latter part of the sixties and early seventies, a series of things happened that altered the character of the public two-year college. The Civil Rights movement and the campus unrest which began at many four-year institutions had repercussions on two-year college campuses. Demands for equality of opportunity by minority and disadvantaged groups were heard. As a result, many admissions programs changed allowing those who had previously been denied the opportunity to enroll in higher education programs. As admissions changed, so did many of the services available to the students in the two-year college. The financial aid and counseling programs were extended. Instructional staff were provided inservice training in handling the needs of these new students.  

The public community college is considered by some to be the most distinct and dynamic institution in higher education. Its philosophy, purposes, objectives, and environment are unique. Its distinctiveness is most notable with regard to the manner in which it approaches education. Beginning with an assessment of community needs, it moves toward a curriculum and appropriate activities which satisfy those needs. Community feedback enables this institution to be responsive to change

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and to shifting aspirations of its service clientele. A cursory re-
view of the average community college catalog will reveal both an
orthodox and an unorthodox manner of presenting alternative ways of
achieving an education. The orthodox methods of achieving education
relate to the transfer curricula and the vocational-technical programs
of the college. The unorthodox programs and activities are specif-
ically focused toward those individuals who have been traditionally
excluded from curricula designs in education—special interest groups,
senior citizens, the academically, socially and economically disadvan-
taged. This brief sketch demonstrates some of the similarities be-
tween the two-year and the four-year colleges with regard to curricular
offerings. There are also differences and similarities in the two
organizational structures. The following comments highlight some of
the similarities and differences in the organizational structure of
higher education institutions in general and the public two-year institu-
tion in particular.

The public two-year college may be conceived in terms of the
bureaucratic model advanced by Weber. The main aspects of this organiza-
organizational model are embodied in the following definition adduced
by Stroup in his examination of higher education institutions:

A bureaucracy is a large scale organization with
a complex but definite social function. It consists
of a specialized personnel and is guided by a system
of rules and procedures. A carefully contrived

Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization,
trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford Univer-
hierarchy of authority exists by which the social function of the bureaucracy is carried out impersonally.8

The social function of the public two-year college is to provide an education commensurate with the desires and needs of the general populace in order that they may more effectively participate in the benefits of the American Society.9 In order to carry out this function, an hierarchical ladder is constructed and specific functions are assigned to personnel in accordance with predetermined concepts of how bureaucracies operate. Authority levels are defined and communicated to all who reside within the college structure through faculty/student handbooks, organizational depictions, college catalogs and other relevant publications. These communications invariably include institutional policies, procedures and rules which have been established to aid in the smooth operation of the college.

Like other institutions of higher education, the community college has an hierarchical structure (see Figure 1). Power and authority reside at five levels: Board, Administration, Faculty, Student Body and the Community.10 The Board is at the apex of this conical arrangement of layers.11 The administration, faculty, student body and community follow in descending order. Legal authority and responsibility for

9 Blocker, et al., pp. 35-36.
10 Ibid., pp. 168-200.
policy enunciation reside within the board of trustees. They are charged with establishing institutional policies and programs that will meet the needs of the several constituencies of the college. The administration has the major responsibility for implementation of institutional policy, although it may seek the wisdom of the faculty and other staff. Often these groups provide invaluable assistance in smoothing
the implementation process. The faculty, with the student body as its focal point, has the major responsibility for carrying out the purposes and the objectives of the institution through curricular activities. They, too, may consult other experts--such as advisory groups and administrative officers--in discharging their duty. The student body, the fourth layer in the hierarchy, is a diverse group. They do not fit traditional definitions of college students. They tend to be older, often experienced in the world of work, and less academically prepared. Cross suggests that they are a "new" phenomenon in higher education. As such, they are a challenge to the college.

The community exercises a certain powerful presence in the functioning of the community college. Usually this takes two forms: (1) community needs determine many institutional programs, and (2) taxpayers elect board members and appointing officials.13

The discussion which follows focuses upon the board of trustees, its development and some laws that impact upon the governance of public two-year colleges.

Boards of Control from colonial times to the present have played a significant role in the governance of public education.14 In the past, they had responsibilities for fundraising, determining student

13 Blocker, p. 57.
competence and providing guidance for the school master. Today, however, the primary function of boards of trustees is to make decisions that will guide the total operation of the institution. The general thrust of these decisions is to facilitate the attainment of organizational goals. These decisions are expected of the highest administrative levels and are commonly known as policy. Policy, according to Lasswell and Kaplan, is a "projected program(s) of goal values and practices" which are "based on philosophy or belief," and in practical terms--compromise. The distinguishing characteristic of policy decisions is that they commit the organization as a whole and stand in direct connection to the primary functions of the institution. Such decisions focus upon such matters as "the determination of the nature and quality standards of 'product,'" questions concerning changes in the scale of operations, problems of the organization in its approach to the recipients of the product or service, and organization-wide problems of mode of internal operation.


19 Parsons, p. 42.
Policy decisions determine the direction of the organization. However, two other types of decisions are required in order to implement policy. Parsons refers to these decisions as ones of allocation and integration.\textsuperscript{20} These decisions come under the purview of the chief executive and his administrative staff. Allocative decisions concern resources available to the organization. Most particularly, they deal with allocation of responsibilities among personnel and the allocation of fluid resources, such as manpower, as well as monetary and physical facilities in accordance with personnel responsibilities. The third set of decisions is concerned with maintaining the integration of the organization through facilitation of cooperation and dealing with the motivational problems that arise.

Using the public two-year college as a context, Blocker applies the concepts of authority and responsibility in formal organizations to the functions outlined by Parsons.\textsuperscript{21} The board is responsible for policy-making. While administrators may not have legal responsibility for policy-making, as a practical matter they assist in the formulation of institutional policy. They provide counsel and much of the data upon which decisions are based. Although the chief executive is responsible for administrative implementation of policies, he delegates much of his responsibility to the deans or directors of the academic,\textsuperscript{20}\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20}Parsons, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{21}Blocker et al., \textit{The Two Year College: A Social Synthesis}, p. 180.
student personnel and business divisions. Department chairpersons are obligated to implement policies that relate to curricular programs and service to faculty. These functional levels of administration are diagrammed in Figure 2.

In public institutions, the board of control is legally responsible for the affairs of the college.\(^{22}\) This accountability goes beyond the provision of appropriate management staff and resources. The board must assume the primary responsibility of translating the "needs of society into policies which will meet these needs and to insure the integrity of the college in the face of external demands."\(^{23}\)

The relationship of the board to its community is multidimensional. The public college that the board serves is one of many service institutions that embody the values of our society and perform in order that society itself may function.\(^{24}\) The board translates the needs of the community into operational policy statements. The community includes taxpayers\(^{25}\) who, in essence, create and pay for the college. As a result, many individuals in the community often feel that "those who pay the piper should call the tune."\(^{26}\) Their perceptions provide the supporting platform for the argument that policy,

\(^{22}\) Blocker, et al., p. 181.

\(^{23}\) Ibid.

\(^{24}\) Drucker, p. 132.


\(^{26}\) Ibid.
boards and regulations should rest in the hands of those that insti-
tutions serve. Since the final authority over institutional direction
cannot rest in the hands of all members of the community, power must
be concentrated in the hands of a few elected or appointed representa-
tives, namely, the board of control.

Since the board cannot respond directly to the needs of the community, the college staff becomes the implementing arm of the board. Collins describes the relationship between the board and college staff as follows:

*(The) board hires the president, hires the administrative staff, and indirectly, hires every instructor on the faculty. It determines which students will be admitted and which will not. To a greater or lesser degree, then all these people are indebted to the board. The students are the beneficiaries of their largesse. . .the staff serve at the board's pleasure.*

Although the board is elected or appointed from members of the college community, and although it is the ultimate employer of the college staff, the board does not symbolize either constituency. Two-year colleges are reputed to select their policy makers from a cross-section of the community irrespective of race, sex, and socio-economic status. In reality, few of those who serve as public two-year college board members are poor, women or minorities. Research shows that trustees are not peers of the people that they represent. They are typically more affluent members of the community whose backgrounds, interests, and orientations differ significantly from the service population of the institution. In like manner, their educational

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*28Collins, p. 100.


30Ibid.
philosophies are contrary to the concept of the open door and they tend to feel that education is a privilege rather than a right of all citizens. This mishmash of the ideal and real composition and representation of the board has produced an operational and a philosophical dilemma. Collins comments upon this dilemma in the following way:

Boards are not obliged to represent their inarticulate consumers (students), or their employees (staff), or their management (administration) or even their small stockholders (taxpaying parents). 31

In this view, boards represent large stockholders (business and corporation taxpayers) rather than the several college constituencies. Just as public two-year college boards do not represent their communities in terms of composition, they fail to represent them in board action by providing representative input prior to board action. In like manner, boards have not included the input of professional staff, students, and classified staff. While their deliberations and legislation may be conducted according to democratic procedures, their exclusion of input from the several constituencies that the college serves contradicts that same process. Few parent, student or ethnic representatives serve as members of college boards. Their legislation, e.g., policies, rules, budgets, does not include inputs from the several constituencies that the college serves. No formal mechanisms have been established to ensure that the concerns of both community and college constituencies are recognized.

31 Collins, p. 102.
This realization has caused a great deal of political pressure for involvement in the decision-making process by both these internal and external groups. Faculty members, students and persons in the broader community, such as minority and special interest groups, have exerted pressures on the governing boards of the colleges. Their thrust has been to institute change in the methods of determining who should participate in the decision-making process.

As a result of their efforts, two kinds of change appear to be taking place: (1) faculty and students are playing a greater role in the governance of the college and (2) individuals in the broader community are being included in helping to determine the direction of the institution. Some faculties have organized and are actively engaged in collective bargaining with boards of trustees to assure that their input will be considered. This is especially true as it relates to policies affecting their economic security. In like manner, students are permitted, in some cases, to take an active role in the governance process through participation on various major institutional committees.

The broader communities are getting their input into the decision-making process as evidenced by the following: (1) More minorities and

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34 Gleazer, p. 148.
women serve on governing boards; (2) Citizen participation is increasing on program advisory committees and ad hoc advisory groups; and (3) Individuals and special interest groups are working through their state and local representatives--calling for increased program performance and accountability commensurate with the financial support that the colleges receive.

Problem Statement

The decision-making process is becoming increasingly more complex as a result of the large number of individuals and groups demanding participation in the governance of the college. The complexity of the process is further complicated by other internal and external phenomena. Enrollment is increasing at the same time as financial resources are decreasing. New laws and executive orders impact directly on the operation of the institution. These laws include, for example, Executive Order 11246, The Family Rights and Privacy Act, Education Amendments of 1972 (especially Title IX), and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Executive Order 11246 prohibited discrimination against all persons and required that federal contractors take an affirmative approach in the recruitment, employment and promotion of members of groups that were formerly excluded. (This applied most particularly to minorities and women.) This order and

35Grafe, The Trustee Profile of 1976.
36Sumner, p. 5; Gleazer, p. 132.
subsequent guidelines placed an additional burden on the board in terms of reviewing the recruitment and employment procedures of the college. In many cases, they required that new administrative offices be established, new programs be developed and specialized personnel be employed. They also required additional expenditures of funds.

The Family Rights and Privacy Act mandated that educational institutions receiving federal funds could not prevent or deny parents the right to inspect or review all records and files related to their offspring. This act required a drastic change in the operational procedures of many colleges that kept confidential, and sometimes damaging, information about students. Since the board is directly responsible for protecting the rights of students and simultaneously expected to carry out federal and state laws, it is ultimately responsible for setting up procedures for guaranteeing appropriate persons access to such records while guarding against the dissemination of confidential information to the public.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 specified that institutions receiving federal financial assistance must not discriminate against women in educational programs, admissions, financial assistance and other activities available to male students. This change further required that boards be involved in some complex legal considerations

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38 The U.S. Code Congressional and Administrative News, 93rd Congress 2 Session, 1974, p. 647.

that heretofore were not considered a part of their deliberative domain. More specifically, this act confronted the traditional practices of institutions establishing scholarships for male athletes, precluding women from admission to traditional male-oriented programs, such as engineering and veterinary medicine, and not providing equal athletic facilities. It is self evident that boards were forced to evaluate their colleges and correct the institutions where inequities existed. As a result, new policies had to be developed, reallocation of funds had to be approved, and guidelines and procedures had to be developed and implemented. Here, too, the board was required to take on new responsibility for developing new programs and to mediate new controversies that it previously was not required to handle.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 stipulated that public education institutions provide the handicapped with access to facilities, educational programs, instructional personnel, and educational media.40 Boards were required to develop new and different guidelines for the institution. These laws, in addition to others, have expanded the role of the governing board and increased the complexity of its task. Not only must the board be accountable for the implementation of legislative mandates, the expenditure of funds, admissions and employment practices, but it is liable for any infractions or applicable laws through the administrative or academic practice of college personnel, while these persons are performing their

institutional functions. Although directives may be issued to the college staff, infractions may still occur. Needless to say, these factors have impacted upon the board. As a result, Mills and Ingram suggest that trustees are often uncertain about their role and tend toward unpredictable behavior. 41

Considering their responsibilities, the demands placed upon them and the ambiguity which surrounds them, one wonders how boards of trustees make their decisions. In brief, what is the decision-making process utilized by trustees in public two-year colleges in establishing institutional policy? To answer this question, a study of how boards formulate policy and make decisions seems most appropriate. And that is the subject of this inquiry.

Significance of the Study

The problem addressed is important for at least two reasons: (1) the various inquiries that focus upon boards of trustees indicate that there is a lack of clarity about the role of the board in the governance process. 42 This lack of clarity is complicated by the fact that the board is composed of lay persons who have little knowledge of


how governance takes place in educational institutions. Because they are not always sure of their function(s), some boards and some board members go beyond their primary charge of policy formulation and become involved in the daily management of the institutions they hold in trust. They may dictate to the president how to allocate funds and which decisions should be given first priority. They may even dictate who should be employed and the nature of that position within the college. As a consequence, they may further demonstrate their lack of competency and compromise their efficiency in governing. There is considerable ambiguity about the process which characterizes trustee decision-making. While researchers have focused upon board decision patterns and have developed typologies of decisions that are made, they have not explained how policy decisions are made. Warren and Gleazer


45 Moore, p. 171; Tendler and Wilson, pp. 9-11.

suggest that such an explanation of the policy process would be valuable.47

To pursue the assessment of Warren and Gleazer, several explanations are discernable. First, public college boards are often composed of lay persons who are unfamiliar with the developmental process of educational policy, while simultaneously being responsible for its formulation and implementation. Second, boards are held accountable for the receipt, disbursement and audit of substantial sums of money. An orderly decision-making process may facilitate these functions. Third, the exploration of existing two-year policy processes may provide an empirical base that trustees may use to formulate their decisions. Fourth, the results may also provide a knowledge base that could be used as a point of departure in orienting new board members. Finally, this effort may provide some insight into the policy process for management of board decision-making activities. The formal examination of current practices may clarify its elements and separate them into procedural steps that would permit board members or administrators to establish a systematic approach to policy development and decision-making.

The results of this research, which focused upon the two aspects of the problem of decision-making in public two-year college boards, will serve to supplement current literature on boards and contribute to the resolution of some of the related problems.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes were: (1) to provide a descriptive taxonomy of decision-making by public two-year college board members; (2) to contribute an empirical data base which researchers can use to explore trustee decision processes further; and (3) to provide some explanation of the current practices used by trustees in the governance of public two-year colleges.

Research Interests

In order to fulfill the purposes of this inquiry, the following research questions were posed:

(1) What kinds of information do board members use in the process of decision making?

(2) What are some of the relevant factors that trustees feel affect their decision making?

(3) What are the analytical elements that trustees employ during the decision-making process?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses that follow were drawn from a review of two bodies of literature that related to the research interests noted above: (1) public two-year college trustees and (2) decision-making theory.48 These hypotheses were selected because they appeared to offer the greatest potential for examining (a) current practices used by trustees

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48 The hypotheses evolved after the survey instrument had been forwarded to the sample respondents.
in decision making and (b) how individual board members may influence the decision-making process. The literature suggests that the current methods used by trustees in their decision making efforts are random rather than systematic.

Similarly, the literature suggests that an individual board member may exert significant influence upon board decisions. If the random process currently used and the influence and direction of a single board member can be identified, the randomness of board decisions may be reduced or even eliminated and the individual influence may be minimized. This could provide a basis for a design to improve the performance and the competency of board members. These observations are even more significant as the number of board members increases.

The writings of Zoglin, Moore, Collins, and Guetzkow provided the basis for hypothesis 1. Zoglin and Moore insist that it takes considerable time in public service for a trustee to understand his/her role and to perform it effectively.\(^{49}\) Mills accentuates this time variable by noting that it takes at least five years for a board member to become accustomed to the role.\(^{50}\) The chairperson of the board may be considered a powerful individual. Collins and Guetzkow indicate that individuals who are formally designated as a leader or supervisor have power which is readily translatable into influence over the

\(^{49}\) Zoglin, pp. 164-165; Moore, p. 171.

\(^{50}\) Mills, "Community College Trustees."
direction of decisions. Because newly elected trustees tend to look to leadership positions for direction, it can be argued that an examination of the association between length of time on the board and the influence of the chairperson is appropriate.

H₁: Board members who have less than four years of board experience will report being influenced more by the chairperson of the board than board members who have more than four years of board experience.

The organization of the decision-making process of trustees was the focal point in the review of literature. The intellectual aspect of decision-making was selected as a means of sharpening the focus on decision processes because it most clearly indicates the input of each board member. This aspect, according to Lasswell, is characterized by problem definition, trend examination, consideration of obstacles to implementation and consideration of consequences of alternatives. In his research on organizations, Thompson found that the greater the degree of organizational complexity, the more structured the tasks within the organization. From this perspective, one may reasonably expect that the decision process in larger, more complex institutions would be systematically organized. Due to their access to resources


and to a higher level of technology, it would also seem logical to assume that their boards would be provided with all essential data to carry out their legal responsibilities.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 focused upon how trustees make decisions with respect to institutional type and size. The decision-making will probably be influenced by those variables. Trustees in multi-campus institutions will make decisions differently from those in smaller single campus institutions. Boards of smaller single campus institutions were expected to organize their decision-making with less formality and greater community participation than larger institutions that are dispersed over two or more campuses. Factors such as size and type, according to Thompson, are measures of organizational complexity.

In these hypotheses, four subhypotheses have been isolated for testing: (a) concern for defining the problem, (b) use of trends or indicators as information, (c) consideration of consequences of various alternatives, and (d) discussion of obstacles to policies before implementation. These subhypotheses represent, in the analysis of Lasswell, an inherent part of decision-making in a social setting. In consideration of the two-year college as an innovative phenomenon among educational institutions, it seemed appropriate to view its trustee performance in terms of these four subhypotheses.

$H_2$: The organization of the decision-making process of trustees in public two-year college will differ according to institutional size in the following ways:

a. The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report concern for defining the problem or attempt to define the problem during the decision-making process.

b. The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report the use of trends or indicators as information for decision-making.

c. The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report the consideration of consequences of various alternatives during the decision process.

d. The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report discussion of obstacles to policies before implementation.

$H_3$: The board decision-making process in multicampus institutions will tend to be more organized than that in single campus institutions in the following ways:

a. Board members in multicampus institutions will more frequently report use of institutional goals as guidelines when making policy decisions than board members in single campus institutions.

b. Board members in multicampus institutions will more frequently report concern for defining the problem or attempt to define the problem during the decision-making process than board members in single campus institutions.

c. Board members in multicampus institutions will more frequently report the use of trends or indicators as information for decision-making than board members in single campus institutions.
d. Board members in multicampus institutions will more frequently report the consideration of the consequences of various alternatives during decision-making than board members in single campus institutions.

e. Board members in multicampus institutions will more frequently report the discussion of obstacles to policies before implementation than board members in single campus institutions.

Limitations on the Study

The most significant limitation was the inaccessibility of members of boards of trustees in public two-year colleges. It was nearly impossible to find out the names and addresses of members. No publications exist, other than college catalogs, which provide a complete listing of board members. In many cases, however, the available college catalogs were as much as two years old.

The second limitation was the lack of empirical data on the decision processes of trustees in public two-year colleges.

A third, and perhaps most constraining limitation, was the lack of time and resources for the research. The author had to perform within the limits of eight weeks and a three hundred dollar budget. It was necessary to consider those approaches and alternative methods of research that produce valid findings with a degree of economy. Therefore, a mail questionnaire rather than personal interviews was selected as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was constructed and mailed to two-hundred and forty trustees at a nominal cost.
The use of the questionnaire, although economical, was a type of limiting factor. It consisted of a series of closed questions that offered respondents a choice of alternative responses. This meant that some respondents were inhibited from giving full, descriptive answers to the questions. The author feels that these limitations are offset by the fact that the mail questionnaire allowed for uniform data collection, simple process procedures and ease of analysis.

A fourth and final limitation to this research was nonresponse. Although the questionnaire, according to some methodologists (explained fully in Chapter III), is recommended for its economy, it tends to have a higher rate of nonresponse than personal interviews. An additional problem developed, in this case, due to bulk mailings to institutions to be distributed to individual trustees.

In follow-up procedures, it was discovered that some of the questionnaires were never distributed to the trustees. Other trustees responded by stating that their terms of office had expired or their time could not be given to completing the questionnaire.

Organization of the Study

This research effort is organized in accordance with the established research formats provided by the O.S.U. Graduate School, the department of Educational Administration within the College of Education, and the guidelines provided by the researcher's major advisor. The components of the research format are congruent with those
recommended by researchers in the field of education. The primary divisions of the research and their contents are indicated below.

Chapter I provides the introduction to the research. It consists of an overview of the problem, statement of the problem, research questions, research hypotheses, the purposes and limitations of the study.

The review of the literature on public two-year college boards of trustees and related literature on decision-making processes is presented in Chapter II.

Chapter III presents the research methodology which includes the research design, a description of the sample and its selection, and data collection procedures. In addition to the above, the methods of analysis are delineated.

The data relative to the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the research questions are presented in Chapter IV. These data are analyzed in the aggregate with the aid of descriptive statistics.

In Chapter V, each of the three research hypotheses are analyzed using appropriate statistical tests.

Chapter VI provides a summary of the research findings, conclusions and implications for administrators and trustees in higher education institutions and recommendations in terms of future research and practice.

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It is hoped that the findings in this inquiry will be a contribution to both educational research and practice. First, from a research perspective, it is hoped that this inquiry will furnish a new knowledge base on trustees and decision-making in public two-year colleges. The majority of the literature to date has focused upon (1) demographic characteristics of boards, (2) legal roles and responsibilities of trustees, and (3) the categories of decisions that they are required to make. This effort focuses upon the process(es) that trustees use in arriving at board decisions.

Second, it is hoped that the data collected will make public two-year college trustees aware of their decision behaviors as they relate to the development and authorization of institutional policy. Their cognizance of current practices may motivate them to examine them and to explore new methods in an attempt to improve board operational procedures. Public boards have been criticized as being inefficient, and ineffective. This direction and thought may ultimately lead to the improvement of trustee performance in their roles.

The third objective of this researcher is to provide a data base which can be used as a nucleus in the development of board orientation programs. Board orientations are important to public two-year colleges since their boards are comprised of lay persons who know little about the nature of the educational process. Orientations are used to familiarize new trustees with the college, its governance process and its community. The content of this effort could be useful in the development of a rationale for how boards should function.
Further, it could serve to alert newly elected board members to the several kinds of input into the policy process -- internal to the board, internal to the institution and located with the broader college community.

Finally, it is hoped that the findings in this inquiry will provide administrators and board members with a focal point for initiating the development of a systematic decision-making process for their institutions. This process could account for both information requirements and social interaction as they relate to the formulation and establishment of institutional policy.

Summary

This chapter presents an overview of the format used by the researcher. It provides a rationale for the organization of the research which produced the data that are reported in subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

The chapter began with a central focus: What is the decision-making process utilized by trustees of public two-year colleges? Three independent variables were selected as factors which affect trustee decision behavior: (1) length of time on board, (2) type of campus, and (3) institutional size. This chapter also highlighted the research interests of the researcher and the hypotheses that were derived from the related literature. These hypotheses were tested against the data obtained from trustee responses to the survey instrument. The results of these tests will be presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Boards of trustees are composed of individuals with varying socio-economic backgrounds, ethnic origins, interests and perspectives, but they must function as single entities. These controlling bodies represent the highest level of legal authority in the governance of local public two-year colleges. As such, they are accountable for the overall direction and management of the institution. Their responsibilities include making major policy decisions relative to budget, personnel, institutional planning and educational programs. These decisions may also be related to potential opportunities and problems. The opportunities may include, but are not limited to, the acquisition of additional properties, the development of programs, and the expansion of the college campus. The problems that become the foci of board decisions may be tied to a variety of issues, the concerns of college constituencies, the interpretation and implementation of state and federal guidelines, relevant court decisions, and the appropriation, allocation, and disbursement of fiscal resources.

Chapter I briefly outlined the policy making role of the community college board. It was noted that the task of the board is not a simple one. And it was further emphasized that the task is complicated
by the college environment, and concerns of local constituencies, the problems of the college staff, and the increasing number of legal issues that the board must address. The focus of the present chapter is on the early development of the trusteeship in public two-year colleges and the state of boardsmanship in the public two-year college today. Selected aspects of decision-making theory are also examined in an effort to set the stage for exploring the decision-making process of persons who currently serve as trustees on boards of public community colleges.

Development of the Trusteeship in Public Two-Year Colleges

The heritage of the public two-year college board can be traced to two levels of American public education: (1) the high school and (2) the four-year colleges. From its inception, American education was inherently public in its governance although there was little board structure. Zoglin provides the following observations regarding the development of public school boards. In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the common school was considered an extension of the home. The community was responsible for operating the schools. Decisions were made at annual town meetings. As the number and size of the schools grew, the town meetings became an anachronism for the purpose of deciding institutional policy. The responsibility for making decisions regarding the operation of the schools was then delegated to a group of Selectmen. Much later, a school committee was elected to serve as
a Board of Education. In its early development, the board tended to be somewhat autocratic, dictating, among other things, what the school master should teach, how he should act, and when he should cut wood. Boards even examined the students to determine their levels of competence. As time passed, however, these responsibilities were delegated to professionals who attended to the daily management of the schools.

Early college boards were quite similar in orientation to public school boards. They set priorities, hired and fired the staff in addition to attending to such matters as establishing the budget. Gradually they, too began to delegate many of their responsibilities to professional administrators. The amount of delegated authority, however, was dependent upon several factors: size of institution, type of control and the local circumstances.

Perkins notes that the board has evolved through several stages of role development. Initially, the board was an agent for the legal parent of the college or university, the state. As higher education opportunities began to expand, a second role was thrust on the board--

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56 Zoglin, p. 6.
57 Ibid., p. 7.
that of bridge between the college and society. Further expansion made it necessary for the board to assume a third role. This role has two dimensions: (a) The Board acted as a court of last resort when disputes arose between internal constituencies; (b) The board responded to external pressures in order to utilize the institution as an "active instrument" for achieving social justice. The public two-year college board today continues to assume all of the roles outlined by Perkins. (a) As an agent of the state, the board must be responsible for adherence to state statutes and regulations, the development and implementation of master plans, as well as state directives in other areas deemed legal, necessary and appropriate. Operational policies at the local level must be in compliance with those established by the state. These state policies emanate from a variety of decision structures, including the state department of education, coordinating councils and state coordinating and governing boards for two-year colleges. (b) As a bridge between the college and the community, the board keeps abreast of changing community needs and student populations in order that programs and policies may be relevant. Serving as a bridge or communications link enhances the flow of information between the college and its community. As a result, the "town and gown" chasm

60 Perkins, p. 207.  
61 Ibid., p. 211.  
which often develops between some colleges and their local communities is diminished. (c) As the court of last resort, the board has the final word in disputes that may arise between internal groups, including both classified (clerks, secretaries, janitors) and certified staff, administrators, and faculty. The board is obligated to hear grievances and to propose solutions when the chief executive is unable to resolve internal conflicts. In many cases, by carrying out this role, the board may avert legal actions against the school.

Boardsmanship in the Public Two-Year College

The community college board of trustees may be described in many ways. It is smaller than other college boards. Over 87 percent have fewer than ten members.64 While public two-year college boards are composed of five to twenty-five members, the average number varies between seven and nine.65 Board members of public two-year colleges are either elected or appointed from among the residents of the community in which the college is located. They are typically white, male and represent the middle to upper class in income and social orientation; and they are business minded. As individuals, trustees possess values, desires, and perspectives which do not necessarily reflect the concerns and mores of the community. Many things can be said of boards and the actions of their membership. One chief executive has described his


65 Ingram, p. 17.
board in very uncomplimentary terms. He depicted his board as being composed of one common crook, one alcoholic, and one total illiterate. Collectively, he portrayed them as "a bunch of peanut politicians—so low they could walk under a snake's belly."66

The duties and responsibilities of the board are determined by constitutional and statutory provisions of the state in which the college is located.67 These legal obligations include the empowerment to promulgate whatever policies and procedures are necessary to direct the affairs of the college. Several writers, including Burns,68 Henderson,69 and Pray70 have elaborated on the legal responsibilities of local boards of trustees. They indicate that the single most important duty of the board may be the selection of the college president. Other responsibilities, however, appear equally important. These include managing the institution in the public interest; developing clear statements of institutional philosophy, goals and objectives; being accountable for fiscal appropriations, disbursement and audit; developing and conserving institutional resources; and evaluating the five

66 Zoglin, p. 51.
69 Henderson, pp. 110-111.
70 Pray, A New Look at Community College Boards of Trustees.
principal areas of college operation: finances, administration, educational program, student programs, and the board.

There are additional responsibilities that board members have. One responsibility is to be accountable. Board accountability extends in many directions—to taxpayers, to society, to students, to the appointing or electing body, and to the institution. Accountability refers not only to the legal duties and responsibilities but also to the maintenance of certain ethical and moral standards. No state statutes deal with the problem of boards violating their trust. However, abuse of the trusteeship is not only possible, but, in many cases, likely. Common abuses include becoming overly influenced by political considerations, awarding lucrative institutional contracts to preferred commercial firms, business associates and friends. Board involvement in conflict of interest situations such as those cited above is an abridgement of the ethical standards which it is supposed to maintain.

Boards have a responsibility to be knowledgable. They are called upon to make a wide variety of decisions. These decisions range from student relations to educational policy. Since it is impossible to have a board composed of experts in all decision areas, the need for that broad knowledge is confirmed.

Most trustees who sit on the board of public two-year colleges may know little about the problems that they address although they are competent in their own professions. Yet they are required to make decisions that cover a broad range of institutional concerns. It appears that they must be knowledgable about each problem that the board
addresses. The most serious mistake that a trustee can make, according to Pray, is to believe that he can become an expert in any field in time to know the key questions to ask and to judge between alternative proposals. Board members with specific kinds of expertise may best be able to provide other laymen with guidance in the process of making judgments among the recommendations and reports of experts. These knowledgable board members will not only be able to ask probing questions but to clarify and interpret aspects of the policy issues. Knowledgable board members can assist in defining the issues and suggest appropriate bases for judgment. The duty to be knowledgable entails being cognizant of policy issues in the context of both higher education and local community needs.

Another responsibility of the board deals with the organization of that body and its duty to reason and reflect. Community college boards are typically smaller than other boards and often do not have the luxury of functioning committees. Essentially, this means that they frequently function as executive committees, a role that can be counter-productive in terms of management effectiveness. In larger boards where committee systems are operative, resources are more readily available. Hence, time and manpower are available for the development of working committees that can explore problems in depth and can serve as surrogates for the total board. In this arrangement, the whole board then has time to devote part of its energies to reasoned, reflective consideration of the mission and goals of the

71 Pray, p. 11.
institution. This provides a philosophical and unifying background for making decisions in a broader context than is possible under day-to-day pressures.\textsuperscript{72}

Often in their eagerness and desire to be of assistance to their chief executives, members become involved in administrative matters. Pray maintains that the time spent in board discussion varies in inverse proportion to the amount of money involved. Put another way, discussion varies inversely to the real importance of the decision to the institution.\textsuperscript{73} Part of this could be alleviated if a competent chairperson sets up committees and requests staff assistance from the president. This type of structure could increase the knowledge base trustees in specific issues, make more efficient use of time and allow for greater understanding of institutional problems, issues and alternatives.

Lastly board members have a responsibility to be decent--to conduct themselves in a manner befitting of their position and of the image of the institution. Boards should attain a high degree of humanity, mutual respect, and agreement on decency in interpersonal relationships. Setting a tone of dignity does not obviate active debate that often characterizes board meetings. Needless to say, "horror" stories about board actions exist and persist. They include such tales as (a) individual trustees giving direct orders to members

\textsuperscript{72}Pray, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid.
of the college staff, (b) trustees inviting faculty members to serve as their pipelines to the college, and even (c) trustees fomenting disruption by holding unauthorized meetings with students and staff. While these stories may not be peculiar to public two-year college boards, their political impact upon the community makes it imperative that board members behave in such a manner as to facilitate the successful development and operation of the college.

Board composition, as indicated in Chapter I, is derived from two processes—election and appointment. These processes, in effect, create a political entity which responds to centers of political activity, such as the office of the Governor, the legislature, municipal or county governments, religious and labor groups and special interest groups with ethnic, racial or social emphases. This point is made graphically clear in a disclaimer by Moore which states that boards are "not simply a body of public spirited, selfless, objective, understanding well-informed citizens."74

In elections, board members are selected by popular vote. Platforms upon which board members are elected do not necessarily relate to the educational issues within the community. Rather, platforms often relate to personal popularity, occupational and political participation or community involvement. In appointments, individuals are chosen to serve as board members by a state official, such as the Governor, or by a local elected official. In most cases, this is a

74 Moore, p. 172.
city Mayor. In some cases, however, appointments are made by the municipal or state legislature (New York). In the event of death or resignation, individuals may be appointed by the public college board to complete unexpired terms.

One trustee describes the selection process in the following way:

The selection of a trustee is a political act and each actor (appointing authority, voter, trustee, college president, etc.) in the process pays a certain price or cost and, hopefully, reaps a certain benefit, or payoff, from it. By price or cost we mean any detriment, or potential detriment, which an actor may suffer, or obligation which an actor may owe, as the result of being appointed or elected.75

Boards, then, are comprised of individuals who serve as board members for a variety of reasons and who often anticipate some form of reward for that service. Benefits for service may range from being viewed as a person of status within the community to realizing that public service is an effective steppingstone to a rewarding career as a future government official. According to one observer, there are five types of individuals who serve on community college boards:

(1) Clients who protect the students;
(2) Guardians who protect the taxpayer's dollar;
(3) Benefactors who offer their services out of a sense of noblesse oblige;
(4) Politicians who use their board position as a steppingstone to higher political office; and

(5) Mavericks who may not know why they are on the board. Regardless of the backgrounds and orientations of individual trustees, it is apparent that each board member "marches to the tune of a different drummer."\(^{76}\)

It is a legitimate question to ask "How effective can boards be given their political nature and voluminous responsibilities?" Gibbs, a board member, was interested in board effectiveness and knowing whether or not boards are indeed emasculated by the growing bureaucracy in higher education and whether the contention is true that major decisions are being pushed away from the local campuses. Gibbs examined the operational styles of a random sample of 19 of 99 boards in the California Community College system. In order to observe these boards, she visited a variety of campuses--urban and rural, single campus and multi-campus--with enrollments of 500 to 100,000 students and budgets of six million dollars and above.\(^{77}\)

After two months of intensive study of board activities observed during regularly scheduled meetings, Gibbs concluded that each board has its own distinctive personality. She found, however, that while there was great variation in behavior among boards, the lack of initiative was disturbingly similar across college boards. Although each board had its own mood, timing, decorum and procedures, Gibbs discovered that most of them "followed a pattern of acquiescence to a

\(^{76}\)Zoglin, p. 57.

prepared agenda of legal busywork with a docility born as much of apathy as a trust of their administrators. 78

It has been documented by Gibbs and Zwingle that most boards "rubberstamp" administrative decisions. They report that the lack of preparation for board agendas results in board members approving administrative positions without critical review. While many board members attempt to prepare themselves for their official agendas, others wait until they are in board meetings to read their agenda materials. Gibbs and Zwingle call these board members "yes men and women." 79 In fairness to some board members, it must be said that agenda materials are mailed late by administrators.

Several criticisms have been leveled at public two-year college boards. Although a recent study found that fully 60 percent of board trustees have at least one relative who is employed in some facet of education, 80 they are not only limited in their knowledge about educational governance but they are also unfamiliar with the issues of higher education. Further, they know little about the nature of the institutions that they govern. Consequently, the managerial talents that they bring to the board are compromised. Not only are board members unfamiliar with the institutions that they govern, recent studies indicate that they do not read the literature of higher education.

78 Gibbs, p. 13.
79 Ibid.
education. Moore suggests that trustees may not understand their role in the governance process. This, he emphasizes, is especially true as it relates to such matters as determining the character and mission of the college; developing and enforcing policies and procedures; developing fiscal accountability and understanding how to work with the top level administration. As a result, some board members tend to intervene in the daily management of their institutions. A graphic illustration of this practice can be seen in the El Paso Community College controversy when the board intervened in the daily management of the college and excluded the president from their deliberations. The board demoted the Dean of Instructional Development and employed a "board selected" Equal Employment Officer without presidential knowledge until after the fact.

Board members do not devote enough time to their tasks. This criticism is based upon the apparent lack of preparation that some members exhibit during board meetings. Rauh found that individual trustees spend less than two hours per week in carrying out their function as public servants. This finding is particularly striking

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82 Moore, p. 174.

83 Information taken from a flyer circulated by students, staff and community residents of El Paso Community College, March, 1976.

84 Rauh, p. 67.
given the complexity of the environment in which they must function. That environment is composed of a variety of factors, including shifting power structures, variant student populations and community needs that indicate the need for periodic modification of programs and practices. It is apparent that continuous growth in organizational complexity necessitates that major decision-makers expend more time and energy in deliberation about problems and issues as they arise. An obvious result of trustees spending limited amounts of time in carrying out their task is poor management at the policy level.

After studying board performance and concluding that there is significant need for improvement, Lahti asserted that trustees need to become more competent because they represent one of the most vital of institutional components. They need to become more effective as leaders. Effective leadership, he contends, is essential if higher education in two-year institutions is to remain viable. He underscores the critical nature of effective leadership because the purposes of higher education are being questioned, the independent of the local campus is being eroded by the state and "on-campus conflicts between faculty, students and administration about governance" continue to exist.85

A Context for Decision Making

The role of decision maker is a function of the board which must be analyzed in context. Decision-making in public two-year college

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85 Lahti, p. 72.
boards have political implications. As decision makers, board members necessarily respond to constituencies which are composed of various groups that have special interest in the affairs of the institution. Context, for the public two-year college, refers to an external and internal environment which includes Federal, State and local governments, community, and accreditation agencies. Each of these governmental and institutional components affect the college in distinct ways. The requirements and demands made by them form the constraints under which the college operates. The college, in turn, experiences the affects of these constraints through limits imposed by state legislation and court decisions.

The initial step toward creating the context for the college is taken by the state when it passes enabling legislation which permits the establishment of the college and the procedures for the selection of the board of control. The state defines the organizational structure, legislates statutes, sets up state operating and coordinating boards, and appropriates funds for the operation of the college. And it is not an exaggeration to note that state level involvement at the institutional level is increasing. More specifically, there is a general trend toward state legislatures making many decisions which directly affect the institution at the local level. In many cases, legislators intervene in college affairs to correct what they perceive

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86 Blocker, p. 88.
to be abuses or recalcitrance on the part of the professional personnel as well as students. The legislature of Michigan perceived that professional college staff were abusing their privileges as faculty members and, consequently, passed a statute which set faculty loads. (It was subsequently voided by the courts.) In California several years ago, the legislature inferred that college officials were being recalcitrant by not permitting their faculties to have a formal voice in college decision-making. The California legislature then passed a statute to require that all colleges establish academic senates and accord them certain privileges. 88

Although board authority is defined by the state, individuals within the community often feel that the board has complete control over decisions that impact upon the college. Consequently the board is often subject to a variety of requests, demands and pressures from their constituencies. As a result, board members often find it difficult to distinguish community concerns from individual interests. In some cases, the board is immobilized on an issue due to the range of views that confront them about that issue and their lack of political skill in mediating the conflicting viewpoints. 89 One community group, for example, may be demanding a response to what they perceive as a community need while a second community group may be equally demanding for a response in support of its position that the perceived need is

88Zoglin, p. 15.

unnecessary, a duplication of some existing need, condition, and so forth, or represents a needless expense. At the same time state statutes may compound the problem by preventing the board from acting. The board cannot solve the dilemma and may be confronted with irate citizens who exert their power through recall of board members, election of new ones or influence with officials whom they elect.

Another factor affecting the environmental context of the board related to its decision-making function is people. Individuals within the institution influence decisions by virtue of their actions. Some do not hold administrative positions but major decisions are never made without their involvement.90 Others influence how decisions are made by acting as the "squeaking wheel." The administrative staff exercises considerable influence in the decision-making process through its authority to formulate and implement institutional policy. The various certified and classified staffs may also control the decision direction by virtue of the fact that they may not only provide the board with information upon which decisions are based, but they may also be able to exert some organized pressure. In the first case, the information may be filtered in order that the board will act in the interest of the information givers. In the second case, faculties and others are demanding and using more power in affecting the decision process. Faculty members in particular feel that their expertise best qualifies them to make educational and personnel decisions. As a result,

90 Zoglin, p. 122.
many have organized and negotiate with their boards for power over specific educational issues. The students are also concerned about becoming active participants in the decision process. They are demanding input since they are the clients for whom the college exists, and therefore, should have some control over its programs.

Finance is another factor that affects the context of board decision-making. Increasing inflation, decreased enrollments and the continued proliferation of collective bargaining units are three conditions that affect this context. At the same time, both local and federal support of higher education is declining. The problem of decreasing financial support is compounded by various community demands for specialized programs. More money is needed. Taxpayers, however, have shown a reluctance to continue increasing the amount of revenue to support colleges. The contradiction is unmistakable. While communities are requesting that colleges be responsive to their needs, they are denying the request of colleges for additional funds to carry out that mandate. Either a stalemate or a compromise is inevitable.

The Decision-Making Process: A Theoretical Perspective

Decisions, as products of deliberate bodies, evolve through various processes. These processes have been accounted for in several theoretical models. For the purposes of research and instruction, three of these models have been included in this chapter. They are offered here as examples of empirical views of decision-making under a variety of conditions and circumstances. These three models, (1) Scientific Rationality, (2) The Science of Muddling Through, and (3) The Decision
Process, seem to be the most appropriate illustrations of the activities associated with trustees generally, and with two-year college trustees in particular. A review of these models assisted in focusing the discussion of research data that follows in subsequent chapters.

Scientific Rationality

Rationality is a term which has been variously defined by socio-logical researchers and theorists. Garfinkel, in his exploration of the decision process, defines rationality as

actions conceived...as steps in accomplishing tasks whose possible and actual accomplishment is empirically decidable. Empirical adequacy is then defined in terms of the rules of scientific procedure and the properties of the knowledge that such procedures produces.91

Using this definition as a backdrop, Garfinkel lists the following behaviors as "rationalities":


92 Ibid., p. 73-75.
In extending the features of his behavioristic model, Garfinkel found two distinctions: interests relevant to everyday life and interests relevant to scientific theorizing. He indicates that "where a person's actions are governed by the attitude of daily life" all of the rationalities can occur with four important exceptions. As ideal maxims of conduct, these excepted rationalities state that the projected steps in the solution of a problem or the accomplishment of a task, i.e., the "means-ends relationships," should be constructed in such a way:

(1) that they remain in full compatibility with the rules that define scientifically correct decisions of grammar and procedure; (2) that all the elements be conceived in full clearness and distinctness; (3) that the clarification of both the body of knowledge as a first priority; and (4) that the projected steps contain only scientifically verifiable assumptions that are in full compatibility with the whole of scientific knowledge.

The strengths of the above model are: (1) The explicitness and generality with which the problem is stated may allow additional people to participate in its solution. (2) It allows for the disaggregation of problems, the identification of components and the postulation of relationships. The weaknesses of the scientific rational model, on the other hand, are as follows: (1) Although skepticism is an integral aspect of the scientific process, administrators and trustees who work in public two-year college cannot always doubt their assessment of facts. In order to act successfully, they must assume

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93Garfinkel, p. 7.
94Ibid.
the veracity of certain features of their situation. If the administrator, analyst, or trustee sought to criticize, test and verify every aspect of a problem at the policy level, final decisions would never be made. (2) The real world actor must assume a common language of communication. It would be too time consuming for policy makers in the two-year college to begin a relationship with an outside agency or individual by establishing a common vocabulary and a common value system. A common "intersubjective world of communication" must be assumed simply to get an information exchange started. This assumption, in and or itself, is not scientifically verifiable and, as such it conflicts with the rational properties of clarity and distinctness.

The Science of Muddling Through

The "muddling through" or limited comparison model of decision-making was developed by Lindblom as an alternative to the "classical rational" model. This model has six major premises. The first premise emphasizes that:

The selection of value goals and empirical analysis are not distinct from one another but are closely intertwined.95

Individuals place value preferences on specific options and social objectives. These values fluctuate according to time and circumstances. As a result, it is impossible to separate the selection and evaluation processes in determining valued goals. In actuality, "one chooses

among values and among policies at...the same time."96 Any actor who is faced with a decision in regards to organizational policy will focus upon marginal or incremental values. The only values relevant to his choice are the increments by which scientific policies differ.97 When selection is finally made, decision is based upon choice between policies or marginal values.

The attempt, then, is to clarify objectives in a more rational process than that which the close intertwining of marginal evaluation and empirical analysis allows. Lindblom states that the former is impossible and irrelevant to complex problems. The latter, he emphasizes, is both possible and relevant. An administrator is capable of employing this method of decision-making in that the ranking of individual values98 is not required. His only concern is the analysis of values by which alternative policies differ. This process brings one additional benefit to the administrator. The reduction in need for information on values and objectives assists him in comprehending and relating values to one another.99

96 Lindblom, p. 342.
97 Ibid.
98 The classical rational method of decision-making requires ranking of values through registering public preferences. However, this cannot be done without generating sufficient public discussion as to bring the issue to the attention of the electorate. (See also Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: The Free Press, 1976).
99 Lindblom, p. 342.
The second premise focuses upon the means-ends relationship. Since means and ends are not distinct, means-end analysis is often inappropriate or limited. 100

The means-end relationship is absent since means and ends are simultaneously chosen. This contrasts markedly with the traditional conception which involves the specification of desired outcomes before the selection and evaluation of means.

The third component of the branch method is stated as follows:

The test of a "good" policy is typically that various analysts find themselves directly agreeing on a policy (without their agreeing that it is the most appropriate means to an agreed objective). 101

Where objectives are determined through an incremental approach to values, the possibility of testing the attainment of objectives in a specific policy still exists. Since the objectives take the form of a description of the policy, its "goodness" can be measured in terms of (1) alternative policies or (2) the unitary agreement of the group on a particular policy rather than agreement on values or objectives.

The fourth component indicates that

Analysis is drastically limited:
   i) Important possible outcomes are neglected.
   ii) Important alternative potential policies are neglected.
   iii) Important affected values are neglected. 102

In complex situations, actors, administrators and analysts are incapable of comprehensive thought and rationality. As a result,

100 Lindblom, p. 341.
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
analysis is limited by two factors: (1) human intellectual capacities and (2) available information.

The final step in this decision-making process is

A series of comparisons (that) greatly reduces or eliminates reliance on theory.103

Policy-makers realize that policies can only achieve a portion of what is desired. As a result, policy is made and remade endlessly through a series of policy comparisons and choices. Successions of incremental changes are designed to prevent the possibility of making lasting mistakes as a result of unexpected consequences.

Further, policy-makers are able to rely on knowledge gained as a consequence of past sequences in policy development.

There are several strengths inherent in the model developed by Lindblom. (1) First of all, the process of successive limited comparisons can accommodate both simple and more complex social problems. This aspect makes the model applicable to educational settings. Decision-makers, whether trustees, presidents or state officials, can automatically limit the scope of potential policy statements by observation of a series of similar actions. In establishing institutional policy as a response to a social or educational phenomenon, decision-makers can limit the scope of the problem by examining what happens in similar situations. The consequences both anticipated and unanticipated may be assessed in terms of the philosophy of the institution and the preferred values of the community.

103 Lindblom, p. 341.
(2) Human fallability is recognized and accounted for in the decision process. Comprehensiveness is not an objective since it is beyond human capacity. Thus, successive limited comparisons allow policy-makers to formulate policies more intelligently. It would be folly for actors in educational institutions to assume that they can establish policies which are timeless and embrace all preferred values. As community needs change, the context for decision is modified. Actors, then, must make policies which focus upon the problem but do not immobilize the organization when incremental changes are needed.

(3) Perhaps one of the most unique strengths of this system is that agreement is sought upon the policy itself rather than a set of value preferences. Given the diversity in values and perspectives, it would be impossible for a group of decision-makers, such as boards, to arrive at a consensual statement of values. More importantly, it is possible for board members to evaluate a policy statement where it is impossible to measure values.

There are at least two weaknesses in this system: (1) Important possible consequences of possible policies and their values are limited. This process of elimination does not provide a mechanism for decision-makers to appraise losses in terms of potential policies. (2) No safeguards exist for assessing all relevant values. The input of special interest groups, administrators and others into the policy development body does not crystallize into one or two specific values. Rather, this process contributes to the expansion of preferred values.
The Lasswellian Decision Process Model

In contrast to the two previous models, the Decision Process model considers both the conceptual processes and the contextuality in which decisions are made.

The following functional areas were developed by Lasswell as a result of a series of studies on decision-making organizations. He found that these functions were performed each time that organizational policy was produced.

Intelligence: information, prediction, planning
Recommendation: promotion of policy alternatives
Prescription: the enactment of general rules
Invocation: provisional characterizations of conduct according to prescriptions, including demand for application
Application: the final characterization of conduct according to prescriptions
Appraisal: the assessment of the success and failure of policy
Termination: the ending of prescriptions and of arrangements entered within the framework.140

Policy makers are directly involved in the intelligence function of decision-making in that they collect information as a means of developing a context for planning. The securing of information is a key element in problem solving105 in that data must be collected in order...
that individuals may be able to discover "the past, the present and the future repercussions of collective action." Policy makers subject collected information to individual interpretation. The knowledge which they acquire as a result of personal assessment is then used in developing a context for considering policy questions.

The information used in the intelligence stage may be acquired from a variety of sources. These sources, according to Lasswell, may consist of both formal and informal communications. Formal communications may include statistical data, fiscal profiles, historical documents, research reports and other written accounts. Informal communications may be comprised of personal exchanges between policy-makers, special interest groups, constituents, or other persons who wish to influence the decision-making process. The nature of the information utilized by policy makers is determined by the issue under review. Collins and Guetzkow point out that in situations where the major function of the group is to formulate organizational policy, there is a great possibility that the members will produce the needed information, especially where the creation of ideas and proposals is essential.

The next phase, recommendation, is the "peculiar province of political parties, pressure groups, other voluntary association and

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107 Bridges, et al., p. 104.
108 Collins and Guetzkow, p. 54.
individuals."109 These individuals or groups recommend that specific actions be taken on particular issues. Their suggestions, based upon value preferences, may be considered as policy alternatives.

After specific policy alternatives have been made, the board policy-making body deliberates. The prescription is a formal rule which can be applied toward the resolution of a particular problem. (The scope of this ruling tends to be more general than specific.)

The invocation function is applied as the board delegates the responsibility for carrying out any prescription. The application of the policy is then the responsibility of the administrative staff. The staff applies the policy by (1) translating it into operational terms and (2) implementing it. After implementation, the policy is monitored by the staff to determine its relative success or failure. Evaluation information is then fed back to the board. If the policy is no longer appropriate, it is the responsibility of the policy body to terminate it. Termination, the step which puts an end to the prescription, is the final function.

While legislators are involved in the intelligence, recommendation, and prescription functions, a series of cognitive processes are operating. Lasswell notes that these processes are implicit rather than explicit.110 He refers to these cognitive processes as being comprised of five intellectual tasks: (1) goals, (2) trends,

(3) conditions, (4) projections, and (5) alternatives. Each of these concepts will be examined in terms of two major aspects of the Lasswellian Model: Problem orientation and contextuality.

A. Goal Clarification

The initial step in problem resolution for any individual or group is "to search for postulates of sufficient generality to provide guidance in coping with the problems that arise in connection with the shaping and sharing of values."\(^{111}\) The group must determine what values it places upon a specific state of affairs. In other words, "what future states are to be realized as far as possible in the social process?"\(^{112}\) Who should participate in the social process? From a Lasswellian perspective, "realization of the dignity of the many or the dignity of the few," will determine who provides valued inputs and whether the decision outcomes are aimed at equal opportunity for participation in the valued outcomes. After values have been delineated, then general statements must be specified in sufficient detail as to enable the group to consider them contextually.

B. Trend Description

Trend descriptions seek to answer the following questions: "To what extent have past and recent events approximated the preferred terminal states?"\(^{113}\) Answers to these questions provide a profile of

\(^{111}\) Lasswell, A \textit{Preview of the Policy Sciences}, p. 41.
\(^{112}\) Ibid., p. 39.
\(^{113}\) Ibid.
the history of the problem. This profile, to be most useful, must be accurately documented and made available to all members of the decision group.

C. Analysis of Conditions

The third problem-solving task is to identify the factors that affect the realization of the preferred goal. These factors must not only be identified but their routine interdependence must be discovered, if possible.

D. Projection of Developments

The projection of developments requires that the group estimate the probable future of the goal being realized if the current policies are continued. The challenge of this task lies in making the future as explicit and dependable as possible.

E. Invention, Evaluation
   and Selection of Alternatives

This task seeks to provide answers to the question: "If goals are to be optimized, what strategies are most advantageous for achieving the objectives sought?" The fifth problem-solving task is not a single process but a series of interrelated ones. It requires the invention of policy proposals, a comparative evaluation in terms of both long-term and short-term benefits, costs and risks, and making a final commitment.

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\[114\] Lasswell, A Preview of the Policy Sciences, p. 55.
Use of the five intellectual tasks promotes the concept of problem orientation. However, in order for the tasks to be carried out in sufficient detail and reliability, a contextual map must be drawn. The acquisition and use of data regarding trends and conditions which relate to the problem tends to promote contextuality. That context includes specific institutional characteristics and the community in which the organization resides. This process also takes into account the institutions which tend to impinge upon the organization.

The strengths of the Lasswellian social process model are:

(1) It is problem-oriented, thereby empowering the public two-year college board to capitalize upon the dual dimensions of any problem situation, (a) to see opportunities in the context of the problem and take advantage of them, and (b) to find solutions to problems as they occur. (2) It builds upon group interactions, thereby emphasizing the importance of the participants as well as the resource environment. The community college board is composed of individuals of diverse backgrounds, attitudes, orientations and values. Their collective deliberation embodies the sharing of values and perspectives which ultimately shape and mold the resultant goals and outcomes—institutional policy. The process of arriving at a solution takes into consideration the community and its multitude of resources—e.g., staff, clientele, businesses. (3) It is flexible. This model is adaptable to the specific needs or purposes of the users, whether it is used to solve problems, to examine contingencies, or simply to provide an arena for open discussion between the board, faculty and administration.
There are at least two weaknesses in the use of this model:
(1) This process requires a significant amount of data to be effective. This being true, an individual needs to be employed to objectively aggregate, document and synthesize any information requested by the board. (2) The individuals who comprise the board may seek to protect self interests and thereby resist acting upon social legislation, such as Affirmative Action, Title IX or Title XX.

Dimensions of the Decision Process

One way that decision, political or non-political, may be examined is in terms of certain variables or clusters of variables. The decision process is an example of those variables which were indicated in the literature. Robinson and Majak note that the term "process" is used to refer to the "sum of the particular techniques, methods, procedures and strategies. . .by which a decision is made." Process in this sense may be conscious or unconscious. "Process," then, designates the "how" as contrasted with the "who" that makes a decision. It is distinct from the participant, conditions and the organizational context in which decisions are made.


116 Robinson and Majak, p. 179.
In this section, the author will describe the decision process in terms of three units of analysis: (1) an intellectual dimension, (2) a social dimension, and (3) a quasi-mechanical dimension. The intellectual dimension of the decision process is characterized by group or individual thought. These thought processes, according to Robinson and Majak, may include such elements as creativity, intuition, insight, cognition, as well as "subjective probability." The intellectual aspect of the decision process is characterized by such activities as problem-solving, collecting and analyzing information, formulating alternatives and defining situations. Economic rationality, scientific rationality and functional decision-making are all examples of the intellectual dimension. Economic rationality requires the maximization of resources among alternatives. The assessment of how to achieve competing goals with limited resources is, in essence, an intellectual function. This optimizing model is a classic example of process.

March and Simon present an alternative to the rational, economic man. The "economic" man requires that all data be accessible before making decisions. In that view, all alternatives must be listed with detailed consequences. March and Simon propose that satisfactory

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117 Robinson and Majak, p. 180.
118 Ibid.
decisions may be sought instead of optimal decisions. A decision alternative, they state, is \textit{optimal} if:

1. there exists a set of criteria that permits the alternatives to be compared, and
2. the alternative in question is preferred, by these criteria, to all other alternatives.\footnote{March and Simon, p. 95.}

Decisions in organizations tend to be more oriented towards satisfaction than optimal results. According to March and Simon, this circumstance is a common finding in human organizations:

Most human decision-making, whether individual or organizational, is concerned with the discovery and selection of satisfactory alternatives; only in exceptional cases is it concerned with the discovery and selection of optimal alternatives.\footnote{Ibid.}

The simplification of the decision process or problem solving process as expressed in this rationale has several measures: (1) satisficing or the attainment of a satisfactory level of an alternative is accepted as opposed to the optimization concept; (2) search processes are used to discover alternative courses of action and their subsequent consequences; (3) organizations and individuals develop alternative or "repertoires of action programs" and these serve as the alternative of choice in recurrent situations; (4) each specific program of necessity deals with a specific range of situations and a restricted range of consequences; (5) there is a semi-independence among action
programs which allows them to be executed. One program is not totally dependent upon another, rather they are loosely coupled together.\textsuperscript{122}

The preceding listing of decision process measures reflects the rationality of organizational boundaries. The stability of an organization depends upon predictable internal and external environments. Total flexibility would bring the organization toward a state of entropy, rather than maintenance of a condition of dynamic homeostasis. The boundaries of rationality, then, are defined as "the properties of human beings as organisms capable of evoking and executing relatively well-defined programs but able to handle programs of limited complexity."\textsuperscript{123}

In contrast to the concepts of optimizing and satisficing, Lasswell presents a functional concept of decision-making that emphasizes an intellectual dimension. There are seven categories of analysis: intelligence, promotion, prescription, invocation, application, termination and appraisal. The intelligence and promotional functions are basically intellectual. The intelligence function includes the gathering, processing and dissemination of information to individuals who are participants in the decision process.\textsuperscript{124} The determination of significant data, its location and the essential processing of such data or information is an intellectual or analytical process. The

\textsuperscript{122}March and Simon, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{123}Ibid., p. 102.
\textsuperscript{124}Lasswell, A Preview of the Policy Sciences, pp. 28-29.
promotional function includes the filtering and refining of the problem in such a manner that individuals may focus upon it as a group.

The intelligence and promotional phases are umbrella concepts which provide a mechanism for group use of the "five intellectual tasks." These tasks relate to goal definition/problem definition, the gathering and use of information and decisions as final products. These tasks may also be viewed as actions which occur within varied types of organizations as they search for alternatives and focus upon one or more alternatives as viable solutions for the problem situation.

The social dimension of decision-making operates when group decisions are made. In this dimension, social processes become the focal point of analysis. Several of these processes have been examined extensively in the literature, but none have been treated in the context of the total decision process. These processes include interest group interaction, coalition formation, and interest aggregation among others. Parsons states that the following characteristics are present in such a social system:

1. two or more persons interact; (2) in their actions they take account of how the others are

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125 Lasswell, A Preview of the Policy Sciences, pp. 34-57.
126 Robinson and Majak, p. 181.
likely to act; and (3) sometimes they act together in pursuit of common goals.¹³⁰

Group interaction, or the exchange of perspectives and the allocation of values to goals, objectives or policies is inherent in any social system.

A simple diagram of the social process model as shown in Figure 3 depicts a flow of interaction in which actors and resources are interrelated.

Human beings, as actors, participate selectively in what they do. Lasswell describes this selective characteristic as the "maximization postulate" which holds that "living forms are predisposed to complete acts in ways that are perceived to leave the actor better off than if he had completed them differently."¹³¹ The maximization postulate refers to act completions that are perceived by the actor as leaving him better off than otherwise. In other words, the values of the individual actors interact with the selection of alternatives and subsequent outcomes in the decision process. Participants seek to maximize values through the utilization of specific institutions which ultimately affect the resources available within the environment.

Social process, Lasswell emphasizes, includes various participants who possess varying perspectives, as a result of involvement in given

¹³¹ Lasswell, p. 16.
Figure 3
The Social Interaction Process
situations, utilizing their base values in shaping strategies to realize outcomes which have specific effects.  

Lasswell also stated that:

> When we describe the decision process of any body politic, then, we expect to find—and we do find—that several official and unofficial participants in the arena of politics are implicated at any given cross-section of time.  

In his explication of the social dimension of decision-making, Lasswell denotes that people attempt to realize personal goals through political means. As group members, these individuals exert their power and influence both directly and indirectly. Collins and Guetzkow support this perspective. They contend that decision-making is a social phenomenon in which participants utilize whatever power sources are available to maximize their influence over decision outcomes.

Sources of power, according to Collins and Guetzkow, may include formal designation as leader, a reputation of competence, and control over task-environmental rewards. Formal designation as leader is a source of power in that the person holding that position has the opportunity to sway the opinions of the group. An individual who has a reputation of competence is respected by his fellow group members, and consequently, his opinion is often sought. A person who has control

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132 For elaboration on the social process and its component parts, see Lasswell, pp. 24-26.

133 Lasswell, The Decision Process, p. 4.


135 Ibid., p. 147.
over task-environmental rewards has power over group decision making. Where these rewards consist of personal favors, such as assuring someone a loan, a contract, or an increment in pay, persons who have direct access to such rewards are able to affect the decision behaviors of those group members who wish to receive those rewards.

The exercise of power and influence is not limited to participants in the decision-making body. Other groups both internal and external to the organization, may participate in the decision-making process. While formal arenas such as political parties and nationally recognized lobbying agencies may be utilized by some groups and individuals in attempting to affect policy at the national level (the Congress), more informal procedures, such as petitions and letters to Congressional representatives, are utilized by persons who will be affected by subsequent policy statements. Not only are national policies affected in this manner, but local policies are perhaps more susceptible to informal meetings by virtue of proximity to the people.

The third dimension of the decision process is quasi-mechanical. Robinson and Majak point out that quasi-mechanical processes are "characterized particularly by decision-makers unconsciousness of their decision-making roles." In fact, decisions rarely emerge from intellectual processes without complementary social and quasi-mechanical processes. Robinson and Majak note that:

137 Ibid., p. 182.
The literature on decision process considered as a whole, strongly supports the interpretation that the process by which a given decision is made should be viewed as a combination of these sub-processes. This implies in turn that the classic optimizing model and Simon's "satisficing" modification of it, sometimes viewed as competing, full-fledged "theories" of decision-making, should be regarded as partial theories (dealing with particular aspects of the intellectual dimension), which are "competing" only in the sense that they are mutually exclusive (i.e., if "satisficing" occurs in the decision process, "optimizing" may not occur). Likewise, the pluralist theory of policy formulation and decision-making offers a theoretical explanation of only a part of the social dimension; it is inadequate as a grand theory of the policy process because it ignores the intellectual and quasi-mechanical dimensions.\(^{138}\)

The quasi-mechanical dimension is characterized by established decision guidelines. These guidelines may include such pervasive contextual guides as laws, the constitution, state and federal regulations, court decisions and the like. Such guides are labeled "legalistic."\(^{139}\) Other mechanical processes include "formal institutional"\(^{140}\) approaches to the decision process: rules, standards, procedures and methods.\(^{141}\) Often the quasi-mechanical process is determined through routine, custom or established rules in organizations, through tradition or law in broader social contexts.

\(^{138}\) Robinson and Majak, p. 182.

\(^{139}\) Ibid., p. 183.

\(^{140}\) Ibid.

Kuhn, for example, has noted that:

Many organizations have periodic decision built into their routines. Some are regular audits which ask in appropriate detail, "Are we going as well as possible?" or "Is there a better way?" In a less obvious way annual reports, financial statements, or budget making may reopen questions for decision. In sum, "deciding to decide" is often "automatically" done, lending a quasi-mechanical aspect to the total decision process.

According to the literature, the three dimensions of decision-making that were described in this section are characteristic of most organizations. On the basis of this examination, several conclusions may be drawn about board members and decision-making, in general. The observations that follow provided the background for the development of the research instrument which was used in the conduct of this inquiry.

(1) Trustees in many cases do not understand their roles in the development and enforcement of institutional policies and procedures.

(2) Trustees do not reflect the populations that they serve.

(3) Due to the rapid growth of two-year colleges, many persons are being asked to serve without any prerequisite experience.

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143 Robinson and Majak, p. 184.
144 Moore, "The Community College Board of Trustees."
145 Collins, "A Redefined Board;" Monroe, Profile of the Community College.
A myriad of constraints are placed upon trustees as decision makers in an open environment.

The community college trustee serves in a highly politicized position.\textsuperscript{146}

Board members, as well as college staff, exercise influence in order to provide direction to policy.

Trustees often confuse policy direction with daily management.

Board members are expected to be involved in the development of educational matters in addition to those traditional financial concerns.

With the increasing court involvement in education and subsequent mandates, board members must be prepared to understand the legal aspects of education.

Decision-makers within educational settings have been accused of "muddling through" or making policy statements by default.\textsuperscript{147}

In complex situations, actors are incapable of comprehensive thought and rationality.\textsuperscript{148}

Decision-making not only requires that information be available, but sufficiently reliable and complete.\textsuperscript{149}

\textsuperscript{146}Zoglin, Power and Politics in the Community College.

\textsuperscript{147}Lindblom, "The Science of Muddling Through."

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{149}Ibid.; Garfinkel, "The Rational Properties of Scientific and Common Sense Activities."
(13) All decisions must be considered within the context of the issue under review. The acquisition and use of such data as trends and conditions promotes contextual ity. 150

(14) Group decision-making is fraught with social interaction. Participants bring a variety of values and perspectives to the decision-situation. They interact in an attempt to influence the direction of decisions and realize particular outcomes. 151

(15) Decision-making is a political process.

(16) Problem definition serves as a means of organizing the decision-making process while enhancing group understanding and participation. 152

(17) The five intellectual tasks promote the concept of problem orientation. 153

(18) The analysis of policy alternatives and consequences in terms of both costs, benefits and risks is an integral part of policy development. 154

150 Lasswell, A Preview of the Policy Sciences.
151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
154 Lindblom, "The Science of Muddling Through."
In this chapter, related literature was reviewed with particular reference to research in the area of decision-making. The primary focus in this review was to determine how two-year college trustees make decisions. In an effort to present an integrated analysis of the various approaches to decision making, a theoretical framework was constructed. The decision processes may be more thoroughly examined and understood when the theoretical framework is employed. The review of the literature was separated into several subtopics as a means of accounting for each area that related to the research components of the study:

(1) Development of the Trusteeship in Public Two-Year Colleges
(2) Boardsmanship in the Public Two-Year College
(3) A Context for Decision-Making
(4) The Decision-Making Process: A Theoretical Perspective
(5) Dimensions of the Decision Process

While reviewing the literature, one finds that much has been written about trustees and their roles in higher education. Much of it has been critical of their effectiveness and competency. And while boards are expected to make important decisions, some writers suggest that they often operate without established procedures. The research contains little about how trustees approach the task of establishing institutional policy. Even less of it has focused upon policy development. It seemed appropriate and timely that a study of the decision process of trustees be made as a prerequisite to the
development of a systematic understanding of the trustee role. The utility of such an endeavor could lead to an improvement in the quality of competence in boards of two-year colleges.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The primary concern of this inquiry has been to determine how trustees who serve in public two-year colleges make decisions. In order to determine the boundaries for the study, several decision-making models were examined in terms of their applicability to the two-year college setting. They were found lacking in utility primarily due to the fact that the models lacked one or more of the following:

(1) A human dimension--recognition that people and their perspectives affect the decision-making process.

(2) Realistic data requirements--completely comprehensive data are never available, therefore, it is requisite to define the kinds of data which are essential to problem solving.

(3) A proactive stance--many models place the decision maker in the reactive mode. The decision maker is constantly fighting fires rather than planning toward energy conservation and the development of strategies which will not only utilize the skills of the corporate group but increase the opportunities for organizational growth.
The following categories of information were selected as a means of determining the boundaries of this inquiry:

(1) Demographic data—e.g., age, race, sex, occupation, education.

(2) Information inputs to decision processes—e.g., expert advice, trend data, summary reports, statistical data, presentations by individuals.

(3) Social interaction between board members, administrative staff, faculty, students and community representatives.

(4) Analytical elements used in decision-making—cognitive processes such as problem definition, trend examination, condition consideration, projection and evaluation of policy alternatives through the examination of consequences and obstacles to implementation.

Since the research was descriptive in nature, a survey design was utilized. Surveys, according to Babbie, are frequently administered in order to support descriptive assertions about certain traits or attributes of some population. Although several classifications of surveys exist, the mail questionnaire was selected because it could best serve the purposes of this inquiry. The major concern of the

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researcher was to describe a specific distribution of attributes rather than a rationale for its existence. Babbie supports these statements by noting that

The sample survey provides a vehicle for discovering such distributions. The distribution of traits among a carefully selected sample of respondents from the larger population can be measured, and the comparable description of the larger population is inferred from the sample.  

The Sample

Trustees of public two-year colleges constituted the individuals in the sample. The 1976 institutional membership roster of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges was used as the sampling frame. This frame included all three types of two-year colleges:

1. Community Junior Colleges
2. Vocationa-Technical Institutes
3. Independent Junior Colleges

The total AACJC membership (537) was used. A stratified random sample of 48 institutions was drawn according to the recommendations of Raj.  

Since the frame did not include the names of individual trustees, the latest available institutional catalogs were consulted. The board membership of each institution was then randomized and five members per institution were selected as the study participants.

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158 Babbie, p. 58.
160 Although nationally, two-year college boards average seven members, five was considered an appropriate representation.
The Research Instrument

A mail questionnaire was utilized to gather information. It was designed to elicit responses of members of boards of trustees relevant to their information inputs, social interaction and the analytical procedures that they use to govern public two-year colleges. These areas of investigation were chosen after a comprehensive review of the literature. That literature suggested that trustees are unclear about how they carry out their responsibilities, although they have responsibility for translating the needs of society into operational policy.161

In an effort to cover some of the relevant factors in the decision-making process of trustees and the institutions that they serve, the questions were grouped into two broad categories: (1) Demographic Information and (2) Board Decision-Making Process (see Appendix D).

The first section contained sociological data or factual information such as sex, education, race, political preference and the like. It also included information on the board as a governance structure (term, size) and the institution (location, type of campus, enrollment). According to Kerlinger, such data are indispensable since they are used in checking the adequacy of samples and in studying relationships among variables.162

The second section of the instrument reflected some of the concepts embodied in the literature on decision-making. Those concepts included:

161 Blocker, et al., The Two-Year College, p. 10; Cohen, College Responses to Community Demands, pp. 12-13.
162 Kerlinger, p. 412.
(1) Information inputs to decision processes

(2) Social interaction between board members, staff, students and community representatives

(3) Analytical elements used in decision-making.

Three research questions which incorporated the three decision-making concepts above were developed to guide this research. Those questions serve to focus the interests of the current inquiry.

After the survey instrument had been constructed and mailed, three hypotheses were formulated on the basis of an intensive examination of the literature. (These hypotheses fall under the general umbrella of research questions 2 and 3.) The variables included were drawn from both demographic and process information. These hypotheses and the basis of their ascertainment were presented in Chapter I. The following hypotheses will be tested through statistical methods in Chapter V.

\[ H_1 \] Board members who have less than four years of board experience will report being influenced more by the Chairperson of the board than board members who have more than four years of board experience.

\[ H_2 \] The organization of the decision-making process of trustees in public two-year colleges will differ according to institutional size.

\[ H_3 \] The board decision-making process in multi-campus institutions will tend to be more organized than that in single campus institutions.

The above hypotheses are only three of many plausible research propositions.
Instrumentation followed the recommendations of Van Dalen, Kerlinger, and Oppenheim. The following steps were taken to facilitate responses and data analysis in accordance with their recommendations:

1. A closed form questionnaire was selected as a means of keeping the respondent's mind "riveted" upon the subject as well as facilitating the process of data tabulation and analysis.

2. The organization of the questions began with the more simple and extended through the more comprehensive.

3. The instrument was piloted according to Oppenheim among twelve public two-year college trustees to obtain a critique for improvement. The questionnaire was revised to reflect those changes (see Appendix C).

4. A cover letter was designed to accompany each questionnaire as a means of clarifying the purpose of the study and soliciting the participation of each board member.

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164 Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, 2nd ed.
166 Van Dalen, p. 325.
167 Oppenheim, pp. 43-44.
168 Ibid.
170 Van Dalen, p. 328; Oppenheim, p. 25.
**Data Collection Procedures**

Each of the trustees was mailed a packet containing (1) a cover letter explaining the nature of the study (see Appendix A), (2) a questionnaire and (3) a self-addressed envelope. The following steps were taken in obtaining the data:

(1) Questionnaires were mailed to the 240 persons in the sample on March 25, 1977.

(2) The first follow-up letter was sent at the end of the third week attempting to solicit questionnaires that had not been returned. It was discovered that where questionnaires had been sent to trustees via the institution, low response rates existed. Therefore, other means were sought to acquire the mailing addresses of trustees in the sample (see Appendix E).

(3) A second follow-up letter was mailed at the end of the sixth week to encourage additional responses (see Appendix E).

(4) Telephone calls were made to a random sample of 25 percent of the non-respondents to ascertain why the questionnaires were not returned.

**Unit of Analysis**

The individual is the unit of analysis in this inquiry. Rosenberg notes that this unit is appropriate where surveys are based upon a randomly selected sample of a specific population.\(^{171}\) The questionnaire was constructed and used as a means to gather information concerning

the social phenomenon of individual participation in the decision-making of a particular group. The group, the board(s) of trustees in public two-year colleges, was viewed as the context in which individual participation in group decision-making happens.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis procedure consisted of two phases. First the demographic data which were nominal and ordinal in nature were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics. A brief descriptive profile of the respondents was developed as a means of validating the research. Data relative to the research questions were also analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics. The demographic profile and data relative to the research questions will be presented in Chapter IV.

In the second phase of the analysis, the relationships between selected independent and dependent variables outlined in the hypotheses were examined. Since the data were ordinal in nature, they were tested with the aid of the Chi square statistic. Although the hypotheses were stated in positive terms, they were actually tested in the null form. This arbitrary convention hypothesizes that any relation or difference in the findings was due to chance or sampling error. It is this supposition that is subjected to the probability test.

172This researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975) in analyzing the data.

The Chi square distribution is a non-parametric statistic that is used to ascertain if a certain distribution differs from some predetermined theoretical distribution. This statistic, according to Downie and Heath,\textsuperscript{174} is appropriate to such data as those collected in this study because they are presented as percentages or proportions which can be reduced to frequencies.

The Chi square ($\chi^2$) formula is as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(fo_i - fe_i)^2}{fe_i}$$

This statistic is useful in testing two types of problems—tests of independence and "goodness of fit." In performing these tests, one compares observed frequencies of the sample under study with the theoretical frequencies or those that are expected on the basis of some hypothesis.\textsuperscript{175} In tests of independence, pairs of observations on two variables are necessary while "goodness of fit" requires observation on only one variable.

In the following example, a coin is tossed 100 times and each toss is recorded. A contingency table is constructed showing the observed values and the theoretical values for each category (see Figure 4). Once the table is complete, the Chi square statistic can be computed by taking the difference between the observed and the theoretical frequencies and summing over all categories.


The computation for the Chi square statistic appears below:

\[ \chi^2 = \frac{(65 - 50)^2}{100} + \frac{(35 - 50)^2}{100} = \frac{225}{100} + \frac{225}{100} = \frac{450}{100} = 4.50 \]

After the computations are made, the Chi square statistic is related to a Chi square sampling distribution with \( n-1 \) degrees of freedom. The symbol \( n \) refers to the number of categories in the data being tested, in this case two (heads and tails). The Chi square value with one degree of freedom is 4.50. This figure is significant beyond the .05 level. Significance at the .05 level means than an obtained result could occur by chance only five (5) times in 100 trials.\(^{176}\)

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\(^{176}\)The levels .05 and .01 correspond fairly well to two and three standard deviations from the mean of a normal probability distribution. See Kerlinger, pp. 168-172.
A non-significant $X^2$ value would indicate that there is no basis to reject the hypothesis of independence of the two variables. If the Chi square is significant, one can conclude that the variables are associated.\textsuperscript{177}

The Chi square statistic was applied to the three hypotheses in the study. These data will be presented and analyzed in Chapter V. In addition to the statistical analyses of the research data, the theoretical framework will be used to further extend the data analysis. Chapter VI will focus on the theoretical aspects of the data.

Summary

In this chapter the research method was discussed. The research instrument was explained and the data analysis procedures were outlined. It was noted that descriptive statistics will be used to develop a profile of the study respondents. The Chi square statistic was decided upon as a means of testing the research hypotheses. These data will be presented in Chapters IV and V.

\textsuperscript{177}Wiersma, p. 275.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Three research questions provided the parameters for the research design. They are restated here:

(1) What kinds of information do board members use in the process of making decisions?

(2) What are some of the relevant factors that trustees feel affect their decision-making; and

(3) What are the analytical elements that trustees employ during the decision process?

A questionnaire was selected as the survey instrument to gather data in order to answer the above questions. Data obtained from the two hundred and forty trustee respondents are analyzed and presented in the following sections:

(1) Questionnaire Response Rates

(2) Demographic Profile of Respondents

(3) Results for Research Questions

(4) Summary

The Chi Square Analysis of the Hypotheses are presented in Chapter V.

Questionnaire Response Rates

Questionnaires were mailed to two hundred and forty public two-year college board members. The sample of 240 included five board
members from each of 48 institutions. One hundred and fifty-nine of the board members responded. This constituted a response rate of 67%. However, only 147 (61%) were usable for data analysis, due to completion of board terms and incomplete data.

Three weeks after the initial mailing, 92 of the instruments had been returned. A follow-up letter was mailed to the non-respondents. Thirty-four responses were received within the next three weeks. The second and final follow-up was then forwarded to those individuals who had not yet responded. Thirty-one additional responses were received before the end of the eighth week cutoff date. Only four other questionnaires were received after that date.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Trustees are a group of heterogeneous individuals. They reside in all kinds of communities--urban, suburban, and rural; they hold a variety of positions within their communities--business, law, industry, medicine, and others. Their political leanings are also diverse--Republican, Democratic and Independent. The comments which follow are descriptive of the respondents in the inquiry on selected aspects of board decision making.

Of the one hundred and forty-seven respondents, the majority of trustees were white (87%), male (76%), and between the ages of 41 and 60 (61%). Their levels of formal education varied, from less than twelve years (3%) to post-graduate or advanced work (15%). Seventeen percent of the respondents were high school graduates, while six
percent held an associate degree, thirty-nine percent held a Bachelor's degree and twenty percent held a Master's degree.

The educational statistics mentioned above compare favorably with other research. The data relative to race and sex compare generally with previous research. Table 4 presents some demographic data from the ETS and ACCT studies in addition to the current data. A cross-comparison enables one to readily view some changes in the profile of board members over the last decade.

Upon examination of the demographic variable of race, one finds that current research and the ACCT study show a significant increase in the number of minority board members. The ETS study found that minorities represented on college boards, both two-year and four-year, were black. The ACCT study updated that information. In 1976, eight percent of board members were minority with seven percent being black. The data collected by this researcher indicates a substantial (25%) increase in the numbers of minorities who currently serve as trustees in public two-year colleges.

Figure 5 represents the percentage of minority respondents in the current sample. Eleven percent of the individuals in the sample indicated that they belong to a minority group. The minority respondents may be grouped as follows: Spanish (1%), black (1%), Native American (1%), and others (95%).

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178 Rodney T. Hartnell, College and University Trustees: Their Backgrounds, Attitudes, and Orientations. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1969. This inquiry, conducted in 1967, covered all types of college boards. It is commonly known as the ETS Study. See also, Grafe, The Trustee Profile of 1976. This study was sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees and will be referred to as the ACCT study.
Table 4
Comparison of Demographic Variables in Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full ETS Study</th>
<th>ETS Community College Segment</th>
<th>ACCT Study</th>
<th>Current Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RACE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minorities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL EDUCATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 12 Years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior College</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5
Trustees by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>(128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicano</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=147
American Indian (6%), and Chicano (3%). These data reveal a notable increase in the percentage of ethnic individuals on public college boards with the exception of Blacks. These figures, however, are still not representative of the numbers of minorities who are educated in public two-year institutions. Current research discloses that minorities compose approximately 30 percent of the student population.  

Comparatively, white women hold more seats on boards of trustees than members of minority groups of both sexes. In 1967 the ETS study showed that they comprised 13 percent of trustees in all colleges and 14 percent of the cadre of junior college board members. The findings of the ACCT study revealed that women served in 15 percent of the board slots. This latest research indicates that female trustees comprise 21 percent of public two-year college boards (see Table 5). These data represent a significant increase over recent years. They are particularly interesting when one considers that public two-year institutions as a general rule have been more accessible to those individuals who traditionally have been excluded from higher educational opportunities. Further, women comprise 43 percent of the total college population in this country although 54 percent of freshmen are female. These data tend to support previous statements regarding the representativeness of college boards. Indeed, although they are increasing the numbers of women and minorities who serve on community 

179 Gleazer, Project Focus, p. 21.
180 Cross, p. 125.
TABLE 5
Trustees by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 143

boards, they are still not representative of the populations that the institutions serve.¹⁸¹

An examination of the last demographic variable in Table 4--FORMAL EDUCATION--reveals that the data collected in the ACCT study and this current inquiry are congruent. This fact tends to increase the validity of this study.

The age range of individual trustees spanned a continuum of over seventy years (see Figure 6). Four trustees were under thirty (3%) ¹⁸¹ See Collins, "A Redefined Board for a Redefined Community," Zwingle, College Trustee: A Question of Legitimacy.
Figure 6.

Trustees by Age
and eight trustees (5%) were over seventy. The majority of board members, however, were in the age brackets of 41 to 50 (29%) and 51 to 60 (31%). Eighty-nine (61%) individuals were between the ages of 41 and 60.

According to Mills, the average trustee has been a public servant for over five years. The data collected in this inquiry belie these facts (see Figure 7). It is interesting to note that 47 percent of the respondents have no more than four years of board experience. Of those, 38 percent have served between two and four years. Only 57 percent of the total one hundred and forty seven respondents had accumulated over five years of experience. Of those, 21 percent had served eight to twelve years, while only 14 percent had served over twelve years.

Geographically, the individuals represented all four regions of the United States--Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, and Southeast. They serve in a total of seventeen states and in both single campus institutions (see Table 6) and multi-campus institutions (see Table 7). Representatives from single campus institutions comprised 55 percent of the total sample. They reported that the institutions that they represent range in student population from 0 to 10,000. The majority of single campus institutions have enrollments between 0 and 5900 (42%). The enrollment of multiple campus institutions ranged from under 7,000 (22%) to above 26,000 (3%). Only 14 percent of the respondents reported that their institutions serve over 15,000 students.

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182 Mills, "Community College Trustees."
Figure 7

Trustees by Length of Time on Board
### TABLE 6
**Trustees in Single Campus Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 1999</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 5999</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000 - 9999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 up</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>81</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 7
**Trustees in Multi-Campus Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 6999</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7000 - 14999</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15000 - 25999</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26000 up</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>62</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents represented all types of public two-year institutions—
independent junior colleges, community junior colleges, and voca-
tional and technical institutes. Nineteen (13%) indicated that their
college provided only a college parallel curriculum. Thirty-five (24%)
reported that their curriculum was vocationally or technically oriented.
Ninety-two (63%) indicated that they served in institutions that pro-
vided a comprehensive curriculum.

The demographic profile of the respondents in this inquiry com-
pares favorably with some of the data collected in previous research.
It was presented here as a means of viewing and understanding the
trustees in this study as well as checking the adequacy of the sample.

Results from the Research Questions

The data that follow are relevant to the three questions men-
tioned above. Data relative to the research hypotheses will be explored
in Chapter V.

Information Needs of Board Members

Since information is critical to decision-making, several ques-
tions were asked to determine what kinds of information trustees rely
upon. According to the respondents, several kinds of information are
used. The types included institutional research, summary narrative
reports, historical reports, as well as information provided by
experts (see Table 8).\textsuperscript{183} Responses to questions related to kinds of

\textsuperscript{183} The figures in Tables 8 and 9 were derived from research ques-
tions that allowed multiple responses. Therefore, the figures do not
equal 100%.
## TABLE 8

Percentages of Trustees Using Various Kinds of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Information</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary Reports</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Advice</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Consultation</td>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations/Explanations by Initiator of Proposed Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research, Summary Reports, Expert Advice</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research, Summary Reports, Historical Reports, Expert Advice</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Consultation and Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Consultation, Presentations and Expert Advice</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
information used showed the following: 20 percent of trustees rely on summary reports; 14 percent use both institutional research and summary reports as well as expert advice; thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents noted that they employ historical reports, summary narrative reports and institutional research, as well as expert advice.

When asked if they have enough information to adequately make decisions, 92 percent answered "yes." Of those, 35 percent indicated that they always have enough information. Trustees were then asked to respond to a question regarding how they make decisions when the issue is unfamiliar. They pointed out that they seek advice from a variety of sources. Several individuals (11%) indicated that they seek consultation with the administration of the college while others (10%) seek an explanation from the initiator of the proposed policy change. Another group of respondents (13%) reported that they seek both consultation and explanation. Almost half of the respondents (48%), however, indicated that they seek expert advice in addition to consulting with members of the administration and requesting that the initiator of the proposed policy make a presentation.

Factors That Affect Board Member Decision-Making

The second research question focused upon what trustees see as relevant factors in decision making. Trustees were asked to note a series of factors which impact upon their decision processes. A list of suggested factors included intuition, political support, facts, and moral or value orientation (see Table 9). Other items, such as
TABLE 9

Percentages of Trustees Finding Various Factors Relevant to Decision-Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another Trustee</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td></td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>(135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>(35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts and Moral Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>(41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts, Moral Orientation and Intuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>(31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
personal experience and philosophy, were noted by a few respondents. However, twenty-four percent (24%) of board members reported that facts alone serve as the basis for their decision-making. Twenty-seven respondents (28%) revealed that they base their decisions upon two factors: facts and moral orientation. However, another group of individuals (21%) communicated that intuition is important in addition to moral orientation and consideration of the facts.

In an attempt to obtain information on the social interaction of board members, the respondents were asked to answer a series of questions regarding various groups that may influence the decision process. Trustees were asked to indicate whether the following groups affected their decision behavior: community groups, faculty, students, media, legislators, another trustee, the chairperson, or other unspecified individuals. A few respondents (5%) specified that administrators influenced them the most. However, a larger percentage (47%) of board members pointed out that three particular groups have the most impact on the process: trustees or other board members (17%); the instructional faculty (17%); and community groups (13%). Finally, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they tended to follow the recommendation of their presidents. Fully 93 percent of the individuals said that they did follow their president's recommendation.

As noted above, trustees were asked to indicate those factors upon which they based their decisions. They were also asked to indicate how specific individuals close to the institution influence them. Finally, they were asked to state the factors upon which they would
base their decisions in an ideal situation. The range of choices included such factors as community values, board coalitions, information, intuition, personal values, institutional coalitions and special interest groups. Although taxpayers, institutional goals, and information on cost were listed as sometimes being determinative, trustees, for the most part, singled out three factors as being of high importance. Twenty-two respondents (15%) designated that community values, coupled with information, should determine the direction of their votes. Eleven (8%) noted that community values, information, and intuition should play a vital role. And forty-six trustees (31%) noted that community values, intuition, and the information available should influence the direction of their decisions.

Analytical Elements Employed

The third research question focused upon the analytical elements that trustees employed during the process of making decisions. A series of questions were asked in an attempt to obtain a description of what analytical elements trustees focused upon during the process of carrying out their roles as makers of institutional policy (see Table 10). The first question centered around defining the problem under review. One half of the respondents (60%) specified that they always attempt to define policy problems. Forty-six individuals (31%) indicated that they sometimes do so. Only twelve persons (9%) reported limited use of this analytical tool, with 8 percent indicating rarely and 1 percent indicating never.
Table 10

Percentages of Trustees Who Employ Various Analytical Elements During Board Decision-Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical Elements</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defines Problems</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(88)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine Trend Data</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(105)</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considers Conditions</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(60)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considers Consequences</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(72)</td>
<td>(68)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses Obstacles</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>(75)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 147
When asked if trend data were used as part of their data base, the majority of board members (71%) reported that trends were often used. Twenty-nine individuals (19%) indicated that they rarely use trends data. Only three percent reported always using trend data while two percent reported never using them.

Another question focused upon the consideration and discussion of the conditions, or variety of things, which encompass the problem or issue under review.

Consideration of conditions relative to problems appeared to be a major concern of the respondents. Fifty-two (52) percent of the respondents indicated that they always consider the conditions while forty-one (41) percent reported that they often do so. Only seven (7) percent reported little or no consideration in this area with six (6) percent designating rarely and one (1) percent designating never.

Building upon the intellectual tasks of problem definition, trend and condition examination, two questions were posed to determine the extent to which trustees evaluate the policies they develop. The first item dealt with whether board members consider the consequences of policy alternatives. Trustee response showed that forty-nine (49) percent indicated that they often use this method of policy analysis. When asked if possible obstacles to implementation were discussed, fifty-one (51) percent of the trustees indicated that they often do so. Forty-three (43) percent noted that they always discuss possible obstacles to the implementation of new policies. Only six percent indicated that obstacles were rarely discussed as a strategy to ensuring policy implementation. For the most part, trustees revealed that they did
employ the analytical elements noted in the survey instrument. The one aspect that they appeared to consider least was the use of trend data.

Overall, board members designated that their decision practices are flexible. The overwhelming majority of the individuals (98%) designated that their decisions are sometimes based on precedents, sometimes based on new ideas, inputs, and new approaches. Only one percent of the respondents indicated that their decisions were always based upon precedents—past decisions or practices.

Summary

This chapter included data relative to the research questions that stimulated this inquiry. The data were reported as a demographic profile of public two-year college trustees and indicated that certain changes have occurred. These changes, in contrast to traditional conditions in public two-year institutions, are seen primarily in board composition. The data showed that (1) more women are now serving on boards, (2) there is more ethnic minority group presence, and (3) trustees reflect a broadened range of personal and professional experience.

Not only is the appearance of boards changing, but their attitudes and self-concepts seem to be shifting toward more individualism. In responding to the research questionnaire, trustees showed marked diversity in their perspectives on decision-making and data requirements for their participation in board decision processes.
With the assistance of statistical procedures, these data were analyzed and presented in a way that hopefully accounts for the energies that trustees expend in the process of making decisions for public two-year colleges.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Introduction

As indicated earlier, the hypotheses were developed as a supplement to the research questions, especially research question two which focuses upon the several factors which may influence trustee decision-making. These hypotheses were formulated to explore trustee decision processes. The research hypotheses and the rationale for their selection were stated in Chapter I.

This section focuses upon the independent and dependent variables and their interrelationships as exhibited in the Chi square analyses. Three independent variables and two dependent variables were selected for observation and analysis. These variables were ordinal in that they meet the qualification that each characteristic be rank-ordered ordered. The independent and dependent variables are examined below.

Independent Variables

Three independent variables were derived from the literature and formulated into testable hypotheses. They are re-introduced to

\[184\] Kerlinger, p. 436.
show how they were affected by the results of the inquiry. The independent variables included in the hypotheses were:

(1) Length of time on board
(2) Type of campus
(3) Institutional size

Length of Time on Board

This variable was selected because it appeared to be a crucial factor in trustee performance. Several authors have suggested that it takes trustees approximately five years to understand their roles and responsibilities. Of the one hundred and fifty-nine respondents in this study, 47 percent had spent from 1 to 4 years in board service.

Type of Campus

This variable was selected as a structural determinant of trustee behavior. As indicated in the literature, factors such as size of campus and type of campus are structural determinants, which influence the behavior of those persons who set organizational policy.

Decision-makers in public organizations find that their decisions and the method of arriving at those decisions are tempered by the college and its relationship with its community and the state. These relationships become increasingly more critical as a result of changing

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185 Mills, "Community College Trustees;" Gleazer, Project Focus.
conditions and changing community preferences. For this study, this variable had two levels—single campus and multi-campus.

**Size of Institution**

This variable was used in the construction of the questionnaire because it seemed to be a potential factor in affecting decision behaviors in boards of trustees. In the literature, it was clear that colleges with large student populations tended to be confronted with a variety of social problems such as employment, housing, cost of living, continuous community interface, conflict with law enforcement and unionism. A corollary of the large student population is a sizeable faculty. This, too, adds unique social pressures. The board of trustees has to formulate policies in all of these areas, as an effort to make the college responsive to the community while providing educational advantages for its students. The variations in institutional size seem logically linked to differential patterns of individual and collective board decision behavior.

**Dependent Variables**

An examination of the literature on decision-making indicated that many factors impinge upon the process. Individuals interact with each other politically. They try to influence each other through status and personal competencies. The specific roles that they assume internal and external to group decision-making acts as an indirect

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source of power and influence. For example, the formal designation as leader, supervisor, or chairperson is a source of power.

Sources of power, such as leadership roles, access to rewards, and competence may come into play during any decision-making effort. The interaction of decision participants and these sources of power often determines the analytical steps involved in the decision process. In many cases the influence exerted by decision makers determines the ultimate decision outcome.

The following factors were selected as dependent variables.

(1) Influence of the chairperson
(2) Analytical procedures

**Influence of the Chairperson**

This variable was selected for examination since the board chairman is an authority figure. First, that individual enjoys a close working relationship with the president. Second, he/she is responsible for providing other board members with critical information about the college and the problems and issues before the board; and third, he/she directs the discussions that lead to policy action. In addition, it is known that individuals in leadership roles have a significant amount of power. That power, according to Collins and Guetzkow, can be readily translated into influence over the direction of decisions.  

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Analytical Elements

This variable was selected as a means of examining trustee decision processes. According to the literature, there are several step-by-step approaches to decision-making. These include such beginning points as the clarification of relevant values and definitions of problems. Do trustees in fact follow such rational approaches in their decision making? Do such explanations of decision-making hold for trustees? In many cases, the procedures outlined by the various authors were rational but inappropriate for educational settings.

The analytical procedures used:

(1) Problem definition.
(2) Use of trends.
(3) Consideration of policy consequences.
(4) Consideration of obstacles to implementation.
(5) Use of institutional goals as guidelines for decision making.

These procedures were selected because they appeared to be appropriate to the public two-year college setting. The nature of the institution and its locus in the community require that decision-makers recognize problems as well as their symptoms.

The literature suggests that individuals who are responsible for planning in community colleges follow this analytical process. They examine trends on higher education on both a state or national level. They interact with community groups, faculty and staff, and legislators. They look at the conditions affecting the situation in order to define it. Finally, they evaluate the policy alternatives, not only in terms
of consequences and obstacles, but in terms of their relevancy to institutional goals.

Interrelationships Between Independent and Dependent Variables

In this section, the hypotheses are restated. These hypotheses were tested for statistical significance with the aid of the Chi Square statistic ($X^2$). The statistic and its selection were explained in Chapter III. The data were also examined for substantive significance, which is defined as a difference in responses of five to ten percentage points.

Findings

Hypothesis one focuses upon the relationship between the length of time on the board and the influence of the Chairperson. This hypothesis seemed particularly appropriate since newly elected board members were thought to be influenced by individuals in leadership positions. Hypothesis one is stated below:

$$H_1 \quad \text{Board members who have less than four years of board experience will report being influenced more by the chairperson of the board than by board members who have more than four years of board experience.}$$

The question used to test this hypothesis was: Do certain board members exercise influence during board decision-making? The available choices included the Chairperson, Particular members, Members in general, and None of the above. These responses were analyzed in the
aggregate and then broken down according to the experience levels of board members as outlined in the above hypothesis.

Trustees with less than four years of board experience did not indicate that the Chairperson exercised influence during the process of board decision making (see Table 11). Of the sixty-nine less experienced board members, only seven percent indicated that the Chairperson exercised influence. This response is particularly interesting since newly elected board members are usually more susceptible to the influence of individuals in leadership positions. Board members with less than four years experience (44%) indicated that particular members exercise influence. That group of individuals, entitled particular members, may have included the board Chairperson; however, this was not delineated. Although this group of respondents indicated that particular board members exercise influence, 35 percent indicated that members in general exercise influence. Finally, 13 percent of the board members with four years of experience noted that none of the board members influenced them during the policy process.

In the case of board members with more than four years of board experience, the findings show some similarities and differences in responses when compared with those of younger board members. Only six percent of this group indicated that the Chairperson exercises influence. On the other hand, fully 50 percent of this group of respondents indicated that board members in general exercise influence during decision-making. This is a fifteen percent difference from the responses of the less experienced board members. Only 27 percent of this group of seventy-eight noted that particular members exercise
**TABLE 11**

Chi Square Test of the Association Between Length of Time on the Board and the Exercise of Influence by Individual Board Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do certain board members exercise influence during board decision making?</th>
<th>Four Years and Under</th>
<th>Over Four Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particular Members</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members in General</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No One</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 6.36 \]

Significance .17

\[ df = 4 \]

DK/NA (Don't Know/Not Applicable)
influence. This response is a 17 percent difference from that specified by less experienced trustees.

As indicated in Chapter III, the hypotheses were tested in their null forms. For Hypothesis One, the null would indicate that there would be no difference in the responses of trustees with experience under four years or over four years. The Chi Square statistic for the above question (see Table 11) is 6.36, with a significance of .17. This $X^2$ value was not significant at the .05 level. The hypothesis was not supported.

$H_2$ The organization of the decision-making process of trustees in public two-year colleges will differ according to institutional size.

In order to test Hypothesis Two, the respondents were grouped by institutional size—14,999 and under; and 15,000 and over. This break-down in terms of enrollment was selected as a result of responses recorded on one question which asked the enrollment size and type of campus that the respondents serve.\textsuperscript{189} The figures 14,999 and 15,000 provided a natural breaking point.

Four items in this hypothesis were considered separately as sub-hypotheses in order to determine whether this hypothesis was supported. Each item dealt with an analytical element which individuals may use in the process of making decisions. The first sub-hypothesis stated

\textsuperscript{189}The enrollment figures used in the survey instrument were taken from national enrollment statistics provided by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges in the publication entitled 1977 Community, Junior and Technical College Directory (Washington, D.C.: AACJC, 1977).
a) The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report a concern for defining the problem during the decision-making process.

The findings related to this sub-hypothesis are summarized in Table 12. Ninety-three percent of the individuals from smaller institutions stated that they (as board members) concern themselves with defining the problem before making policy decisions. In contrast, only 80 percent of respondents from larger institutions reported that they focus upon problem definition. This was a substantial difference of 13 percent. The computed $X^2$ was 40.38. This figure was statistically significant beyond the .01 level. The sub-hypothesis was not supported.

The second sub-hypothesis focused upon gathering information or trend data as a means of assisting decision-making:

b) The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report the use of trends or indicators as information for decision-making.

The findings illustrated in Table 13 were not significant. Seventy-four percent of trustees in smaller institutions indicated that they employ trends as information for making decisions. Seventy percent of the respondents from the larger institutions indicated that they use trend data. There was little difference in the responses of the two groups when they reported that they did not use trends. Twenty-two percent of the individuals from schools with 14,999 and under marked "no" while twenty-five percent of the respondents from the larger institutions voted "no." The $X^2$ was 1.58. This figure was not statistically significant ($\leq .81$).
### TABLE 12

Chi Square Test of Association Between Frequencies for Problem Definition by Trustees and the Size of the Institutions that They Serve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less Than 14,999</th>
<th>Greater Than 15,000</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before making decisions, does the board concern itself with defining the problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(123)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 40.38 \]

Significance .00

\[ df = 4 \]

(*) indicates an unstable percentage (less than 20 respondents).
TABLE 13

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequency Use of Trend Data by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the board use trends as information for making decisions?</th>
<th>Less Than 14,999</th>
<th>Greater Than 15,000</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(123)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 1.58 \]

Significance .81

df = 4

(*) indicates an unstable percentage.
the third sub-hypothesis stated that,

\( c) \) The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report the consideration of the consequences of various alternatives during the decision process.

The responses to this sub-hypothesis are noted in Table 14. The data showed that more respondents (98%) in smaller institutions considered the consequences of various alternatives than respondents (85%) in institutions with more than 15,000 students. The negative responses were two percent for trustees in smaller institutions and 15 percent for trustees in larger institutions. The difference in the negative responses of the two groups was thirteen percent. The computed \( X^2 \) was 43.03. The statistical significance was greater than .01.

The fourth sub-hypothesis stated that,

\( d) \) The greater the size of the institution, the more frequently will board members report discussion of obstacles to policies before implementation.

The responses related to Hypothesis 2d are included in Table 15. Trustees in larger institutions reported that consequences were considered by the board in 85 percent of the cases. Board members from smaller institutions reported that the board considers consequences to various policy alternatives 98 percent of the time. The difference in the responses of individuals from larger institutions and smaller ones was 13 percent. This figure also applies to the negative responses reported by the respondents. The \( X^2 \) was 43.03. The statistical significance was greater than .01. Hypothesis Two was not supported.

Upon examination of the four sub-hypotheses, one finds that there is a difference in the responses of board members who serve institutions
### TABLE 14

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Consideration of Policy Consequences by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When making decisions, does the board consider the consequences of various alternatives?</th>
<th>Less Than 14,999</th>
<th>Greater Than 15,000</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(123)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 43.03 \]

Significance .00

df = 4

(*) indicates an unstable percentage.
TABLE 15

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Discussion of Obstacles to Policy Implementation by Individual Trustees and Institutional Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the board discuss obstacles to policies before they are implemented?</th>
<th>14,999 and Under</th>
<th>15,000 and Over</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(122)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 37.31 \]

Significance .00

df = 4

(2) indicates an unstable percentage
with enrollments of less than 15,000 and those who serve colleges with enrollments greater than 15,000. However, the findings did not support the hypotheses as delineated for this inquiry. The facts indicate that the obverse of the hypothesis is true.

Hypothesis Three focuses upon the differences in decision making as reported by trustees who serve in single campus institutions and multi-campus institutions. The major premise of Hypothesis Three stated that,

\[ H_3 \text{ The board decision making process in multi-campus institutions will tend to be more organized than that in single campus institutions.} \]

In order to test this hypothesis, the data were grouped according to the responses from single campus board members and multi-campus board members. Five items in the questionnaire were used as indicators of the amount of organization or attention to decision-making procedures. These items are listed as sub-hypotheses.

Sub-hypothesis one stated that,

a) Board members in multi-campus institutions will more frequently report the use of institutional goals as guidelines when making policy decisions than board members in single campus institutions.

The above statement was not supported by the data. The responses of board members from both single campus and multi-campus institutions were quite similar (see Table 16). Ninety-eight percent of the respondents from single campus institutions reported that they use the goals of the institution as guidelines when making policy decisions.
TABLE 16

Chi Square Test of Association the Frequencies of the Use of Institutional Goals as Guidelines for Decision-Making by Individual Trustees and Type of Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the board use the goals of the institution as guidelines when making policy decisions?</th>
<th>Single Campus</th>
<th>Multi Campus</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(81)</td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$x^2 = 12.66$

Significance .01

df = 4
At the same time, ninety-four percent of the trustees who serve multi-campus institutions indicated that they use the goals of their institutions as guidelines for making decisions. The Chi Square statistic for this test was 12.66. This figure indicates that there was no significant difference in the responses of the two groups of respondents relative to the use of institutional goals. Therefore, sub-hypothesis 3a was not supported.

Sub-hypothesis two stated that,

b) Board members in multi-campus institutions will more frequently report concern for defining the problem during the decision-making process than board members in single campus institutions.

As illustrated in Table 17, there was no significant difference in the responses of the two groups in regard to board attention to defining the problem during the process of decision-making. The responses for single campus board members and multi-campus board members were 91 percent and 92 percent respectively. These percentages indicate affirmative responses. The 9 percent negative responses for single campus board members was only one percent higher than the responses of trustees (8%) who serve multi-campus institutions. The computed $X^2$ for sub-hypothesis 3b was 36.22. This figure indicates that there was no difference in the responses of board members of single campus and multi-campus colleges in terms of problem definition. The sub-hypothesis was thereby rejected.

Sub-hypothesis three stated that,

c) Board members in multi-campus institutions will more frequently report the use of trends as indicators of information for decision-making than board members in single campus institutions.
TABLE 17

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Problem Definition by Individual Trustees and Type of Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before making decisions, does the board concern itself with defining the problem?</th>
<th>Single Campus</th>
<th>Multi-Campus</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(81)</th>
<th></th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

$X^2 = 36.22$

Significance .00

$df = 4$
The findings (see Table 18) do not lend support for the above hypothesis. The responses of the sample respondents were similar regardless of institutional type. Seventy-three percent of the respondents from single campus institutions reported that they use trends as information for making decisions. Seventy-four percent of the individuals in the sample who represented multi-campus institutions noted that they use trends. There were several board members who indicated that they do not use trends. Of the total number of trustees from single campus institutions, 24 percent indicated that they did not concern themselves with using this type of information. Only 19 percent of the individuals who represented multi-campus institutions indicated that they did not use this specific type of data during the process of making board policy. This was a difference of five percentage points. The Chi square computed for this statistical test was not significant ($\chi^2 = 3.27; \alpha = .51$).

Sub-hypothesis four stated that,

d) Board members in multi-campus institutions will more frequently report consideration of the consequences of various alternatives during decision-making than board members in single campus institutions.

Upon testing the above hypothesis, it was found that there was a substantive difference in the responses of the two groups (see Table 19). Trustees from single campuses reported that they consider the consequences of various alternatives in 99 percent of the cases. On the other hand, board members from more complex institutions indicated that they consider the consequences of their act when making decisions in 92 percent of the cases. This is a substantive difference
TABLE 18

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequency of Use of Trend Data by Individual Trustees and Type of Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the board use trends as information for making decisions?</th>
<th>Single Campus</th>
<th>Multi-Campus</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\chi^2 = 3.27
\]

Significance  .51

df = 4

N=147
TABLE 19

Chi Square Test of Association Between Frequencies of Consideration of Policy Consequences by Individual Trustees and Types of Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When making decisions, does the board consider the consequences of various alternatives?</th>
<th>Single Campus</th>
<th>Multi-Campus</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 40.28 \]

Significance .00

\[ df = 4 \]

N=147
of 7 percentage points. Although the $X^2$ statistic (40.28) revealed a high degree of similarity between the responses of the two groups, sub-hypothesis 3d was not supported.

Sub-hypothesis five stated that,

e) Board members in multi-campus institutions will more frequently report discussion of obstacles to policies before implementation than board members in single campus institutions.

The distribution of responses for individuals in multi-campus institutions tended to support the above hypothesis (see Table 20). A substantive difference (6 percent) was evidenced between the responses of trustees in single campus institutions and multi-campus institutions. Ninety-seven percent of respondents who serve two or more institutions reported that they actively discuss possible obstacles to policies before they are adopted and implemented. Ninety-three percent of the trustees who serve in single campus institutions noted that they discussed obstacles to policies before they are implemented. The responses of individuals who indicated that they do not discuss the implementation of policies were eight percent for single campus respondents and three percent for multi-campus respondents. The Chi square computed for this test was significant ($X^2 = 37.11; \alpha = .51$). However, these data indicated that this sub-hypothesis was not supported.

Upon analyzing the five sub-hypotheses for Hypothesis Three, it was found that the data did not support the contention that board members in multi-campus institutions are more organized in their decision process than board members who serve in single campus institutions.
### TABLE 20

Chi Square Test of Association Between the Frequencies of Discussion of Obstacles to Policy Implementation by Trustees and Type of Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the board discuss obstacles to policies before they are implemented?</th>
<th>Single Campus</th>
<th>Multi-Campus</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 101% | 100% | (4) |
| (81) | (62) |

\[ \chi^2 = 37.11 \]

Significance .00

\[ \text{df} = 4 \]
The analysis of data relative to hypotheses two and three required that several sub-hypotheses be formulated and tested. The validity of these hypotheses was dependent upon the sub-hypotheses being supported. The two major hypotheses were rejected due to a lack of support for the sub-hypotheses.

The primary focus of hypothesis two and hypothesis three was the organization of decision-making of trustees as exemplified by the frequency of use of (a) institutional goals as guidelines, (b) problem definition, (c) trend examination and (d) evaluation of policies in terms of both consequences and obstacles to implementation. Some literature on organizational behavior indicates that larger, more complex organizations tend to be highly structured in their tasks as a means of mediating environmental conditions. Thus, it was assumed that the tasks of board members in larger, more complex educational organizations would be highly structured due to a consequence of the environment and their access to research and high level technology. The findings, however, did not support the contention that trustees in larger, more complex educational organizations (multi-campus institutions) would be more organized in their decision processes. In fact, smaller institutions exhibited more organization in some cases. These findings will be discussed in more depth in Chapter VI.

**Summary**

This chapter focused upon the research hypotheses and the Chi square analyses. Subsequent findings indicated that there were obvious differences among individual trustees. However, their responses to
selected aspects of the questionnaire were not generally supportive of the research hypotheses. Individual differences in responses tended to be quantitative rather than qualitative, in that trustees in each of the institutional settings represented in the sample performed their roles in much the same way as all other trustees. In summary, it may be said that there was a difference in the scale of the performance of the analytical tasks when the size variable was introduced as a measurement.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The public two-year college is a unique institution in many ways. Its distinctiveness resides in flexibility in its curricula, a staff drawn from both academic and non-academic backgrounds, a non-traditional heterogeneous student body, and its location within the community that it is supported by and for which it is designed to serve. This institution, like all other academic organizations, has an hierarchical authority structure with a board of trustees at its apex. The role of the board is to make decisions that will guide the overall operation of the college. Such trustee decisions are expected to facilitate the attainment of institutional goals and objectives. These decisions have been designated as policy decisions.

Policy formulation and policy enactment relate to a variety of issues and concerns. They may relate to the development and establishment of institutional goals and objectives that reflect the philosophical, economic, social and political concerns of the college community. They also relate to the structure and function of the organization. Policy decisions are also linked to the professional activities, rights and responsibilities of employees. In many cases, these policies are connected to contractual agreements with employee bargaining units.
Policies developed at the college level must be in compliance with existing laws, court decisions and state and federal mandates.

Although much was known about trustees and their responsibility for policy in institutional governance, little was known about the processes trustees use in developing policies and directing implementation. This lack of knowledge is significant given the complex nature of board tasks and the fact that trustees are unsure about their functions and how they can be more effective.

The main purpose of this research was to identify some of the factors related to trustee decision-making in public two-year colleges. The investigation was a preliminary step toward considering decision-making as a social phenomenon. As such, decision-making was viewed as a process of interaction between and among persons who convene periodically for the purpose of establishing institutional policy.

**General Conclusions**

The decision-making processes of trustees were considered in terms of (1) types of information utilized, (2) patterns of social interaction between and among trustees, and (3) some analytical elements of decision-making.

The sources of information used by trustees in decision making varied widely; however, as a group, board members reported that in the process they used several kinds of information that were identical. The types of information which were identical can be grouped under a category of written communications. These consisted of summary reports, institutional research documents, historical materials, trend
data, and the accounts and proceedings from experts. When considered in the aggregate, board members indicated that they employ trend data more often than any other single source of information. The preference for trend information could be linked to the continuing growth and development of public two-year colleges. The importance of keeping abreast of state and national trends in higher education, it appears, is recognized by the respondents. Needless to say, these data impact directly upon the local community college. The second most used kind of information is that of summary reports prepared by administrative staff. These reports tend to be general, brief, and provide the board with a quick synopsis of a given problem, issue or designated agenda item. However, there was a significant amount of variance between the use of trend data and summary reports.

Board members indicated that written communications may be supplemented by the inputs from several groups. The administrative staff provides input into the policy process through the collection, synthesis and submission of information to the board. It also recommends that the board take particular actions based upon its assessment of institutional and community needs. Faculty members, students, and community representatives periodically meet with the board and provide some input into the policy making process. The comments, explanations, proposals and grievances of these individuals are considered, if not always welcomed, in order that the board may be able to understand not only the quality of the institutional environment but also the implications of proposed policies. When the board
is confronted with a special problem about which it has little knowledge and experience, it may seek the counsel of experts. In sum, the inputs of these varied groups are considered in addition to the reports that the board receives as a part of its agenda materials.

Although board members designated that both formal (written) and informal (personal opinions) information were used during the process of decision-making, they also indicated that these data were not used consistently during the development and authorization of institutional policies. This finding provides a basis for concluding that board decision-making in public two-year colleges is non-systematic. This situation tends to confirm the widely held idea that the board must depend upon the administration for the implementation of an orderly process of decision-making. This is true both in terms of being assured that they have access to the specific kinds of information that decisions require and a format with a consistent procedural process designed to conduct its business.

Patterns of social interaction. Trustees report that a variety of factors influence them during their decision-making process. Among these are the moral and ethical values of the board members themselves, the news media, college faculty and administration and the articulated community concerns both from organized groups and individual taxpayers. Although trustees were affected differentially by these factors, there was a consensus that the community concerns should be considered first in any discussion of policy. This finding correlates with current literature which indicates that certain groups of people within the community have been neglected in terms of board representation.
These groups include minorities, women and the poor. These data seem to suggest that the inclusion of minorities and women on boards would assist in achieving more representativeness for the community. Community concerns could thereby be filtered through their representatives.

**Conclusions Specific to the Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1**

The literature indicated that members of decision-making groups interact politically. They assert their powers in an attempt to influence the actions of others. The members of boards are no different. In this research, trustees reported that they are influenced by other members of their board. Hypothesis 1 asserted that the chairperson would be the most influential member of the board and that the influence of that position would be exerted most actively on the decision behavior of new members of the board. Trustees who responded to the variable which asked about influences affecting their decisions reported that the chairperson had minimal influence upon their decisions although they often voted in the same manner as the chairperson. This was true of both experienced and inexperienced trustees. Experienced board members were indiscriminate in seeking advice and direction from other board members. New board members were more selective in seeking assistance from other board members. They interacted with particular members who held leadership positions rather than the general membership. Therefore it is invalid to assume that interpersonal relations within boards are structured according to an hierarchical theory. The chairperson is only one of several potential sources of influence.
It is in the interest of the college to have a board that is essentially unified and purposeful in its directions, but at the same time open to different ideas and change. Efforts should be made to organize each board into a team which moves systematically through its decision-making process.

**Hypothesis 2**

This hypothesis asserted that board decision-making would be organized differently according to institutional size; however, the data did not support this contention. The findings show that institutional size is not a factor among the various influences that affect board decision behavior. Trustees representing institutions of variant sizes in the sample reported that their approach to decision-making is approximately the same.

Institutional size did not appear to affect trustee use of problem definition, trend examination or the evaluation of policy in terms of its consequences and the obstacles to implementation. Decisions continue to be made without the above considerations. It would be to the advantage of boards of trustees to require that such data be made available which would support informed decision-making.

**Hypothesis 3**

This hypothesis contended that trustees who serve in multi-campus institutions would be more organized in the use of the analytical tools of problem definition, trend examination, consideration of the consequences of proposed policies and obstacles to their implementation. The research revealed that trustees apply these analytical tools randomly when seeking policy solutions. When these data were
considered in terms of type of campus, they showed that single campus board members, regardless of institutional size, tend to have a more systematic decision process than do individuals who serve in multi-campus colleges. It can be argued that this may be due to less complicated organizational structures. Trustees of multi-campus districts reported that they often approach board decision-making with little or no preparation.

A summary of the findings in this inquiry follows. The data from which the findings were derived were presented in Chapters IV and V.

**Major Findings**

1. More experienced board members feel that all members of the board exercise power and influence during decision-making.

2. Board members with less experience feel that particular members of the board exercise influence during the process of establishing institutional policy.

3. The influence of the chairperson over the direction of individual trustee decisions appears to be very low. Board members in general note that the chairperson of the board is not a major factor in their decision-making.

4. Trustees who serve in single campus institutions appear to use the analytical tools of problem definition, examination of trends, consideration of consequences and discussion of obstacles to policy implementation.
more than trustees who serve in larger, more complex (multi-campus) institutions.

(5) The majority of newly elected trustees tend to vote in the same direction as the Chairperson of the board.

(6) While the use trustees make of trend data is minimal, when it is used in the process of decision-making, there is no significant difference in the frequency of its use regardless of type of campus or institutional size.

(7) On the whole, trustees do not employ the analytical tools of problem definition, trend examination, and policy evaluation (consideration of consequences and obstacles to implementation) during the deliberative process.

(8) Trustees in both single campus and multi-campus institutions indicate that institutional goals are used as guidelines for decision-making when new policies must be established.

Ancillary Findings

(1) Trustees do not approach the decision-making process systematically. Their use of different kinds of information and expert consultation appears random rather than consistent.

(2) Institutional research is randomly used. Few trustees indicated its use alone.
(3) Some public two-year college boards have as many as thirty members.

(4) Trustees note that their strongest bases for decision-making are facts or hard data and their moral orientation.

(5) Personal intuition was indicated as being an important factor in trustee decision-making.

(6) Trustees appear to be most influenced by the Presidents of the institutions that they serve.

(7) Board members indicate that the instructional faculty have a large impact upon their decision-making.

(8) Trustees tend to influence each other during the deliberative process by virtue of their interaction.

(9) Community groups were noted as being one of the most significant of several groups whose concerns impact on the board.

(10) Leadership positions within the board are held by the more experienced board members.

(11) Trustees feel that community values should be the one factor which determines the direction of institutional policy.

(12) The number of minorities who serve on public two-year college boards is increasing.
Findings and Implications

Three major findings are presented in the following section. They are discussed in terms of their linkage to decision-making theory and their implications for current board operation.

Regarding Selection of Information. Trustees do not approach decision-making in a systematic manner. Information selection and use is a random rather than a consistent, rational part of preparation for making decisions. In fact, little agreement exists regarding the broad types of information used in focusing the discussion of varied policy issues and concerns. Although expert consultation may be necessary in cases where the board obviously lacks some familiarity with particular issues, less than half of the trustees sampled indicated that such consultation was a standard procedure.

This finding correlates closely with the "muddling through" theory expounded by Lindblom. The traditional style of decision makers who "muddle through" is reactive in that they only respond after certain crises have developed rather than assuming a proactive or planning posture. This results in incidental rather than deliberate decision-making. Final decisions are arrived at through a gradual, prolonged, incremental process. The process is protracted over such a long period of time that new dimensions, and new problems develop, obscuring those under consideration. Less time would be required if boards adopted ordered processes by which they make decisions.

Lindblom, "The Science of Muddling Through."
Valid solutions from existing processes are likely to be fortuitous. Policy development procedures now in use apparently lack planning. They seem to be designed to cope with crises rather than policy which results from systematic planning. Since information has to be extracted from data to be used for decision-making, then it would appear that the methods being employed are not fulfilling that vital function. And without a "system," there can be little or no evaluation of policies. This inevitably leads to other crises such as justification of expenditures, accountability to fund sources and replication of successful projects as a result of now knowing what input was made in original project planning.

Regarding Analytical Aspects of Decision-Making. Although the respondents indicated an interest in the processes of problem definition, trend examination and policy evaluation, their pattern of participation in such board activities indicate an inconsistency between their preferred methods and those that they actually employ.

In his studies on public organizations, Lasswell found that policy making bodies use the intellectual tasks of problem definition, trend examination, analysis of conditions, projections, and analysis of alternative policies in an implicit rather than an explicit manner.\footnote{Lasswell, \textit{A Preview of the Policy Sciences}, p. 14.} Despite the fact that trustee respondents did not report a conscious pattern of decision making, it is probable that Lasswell's theory applies to them as well. Garfinkel agrees with Lasswell that the first step in a deliberative process such as that engaged in by boards
of trustees is to define the problem. According to Garfinkel, if this step is not taken, solutions are not likely to be found.\textsuperscript{192} Lasswell further elaborates on the need for problem definition when he suggested that problem definition provides the context in which the business and purpose of decision-making bodies is defined. It, in effect, establishes the parameters for discussions and provides a view of alternative approaches to solutions.\textsuperscript{193}

In sum, the ambiguity which surrounds boards of trustees and confuses their methods of decision-making probably is traceable to their lack of perspective on educational issues. For some, their corporate experiences have not prepared them for policy level participation in higher education. While they intellectually accede to a logic of planning and analysis, their depth in educational management is shallow and renders them less effective. They are not consciously systematic in their application, notwithstanding the fact that they participate in a sort of problem definition, trend examination and policy evaluation.

\textbf{Regarding Board Member Influences.} Board members feel that they are mutually influential during the decision-making process. More experienced board members feel that all members of the board exercise power and influence while the less experienced members indicate that particular members exercise influence over the process of establishing institutional policy.

\textsuperscript{192}Garfinkel, "The Rational Properties of Scientific and Common Sense Activities."

\textsuperscript{193}Lasswell, \textit{A Preview of the Policy Sciences.}
Lasswell's work supports these findings. He asserts that members of groups exchange perspectives and allocate values to goals, objectives and policies, which constitutes a form of mutual influence. (Although it is generally known that individuals attempt to influence each other during group decision-making, the direction of that influence had not been explored in previous research on public two-year colleges.) In the allocation of values, participants act in such a way as to maximize their own resources. As decision-makers, within the group, they act in ways that accommodate themselves and the interests they represent as well as to produce certain desired outcomes, such as group approval or consensus. Lasswell has described this type of behavior as maximization. Collins and Guetzkow offer further clarification of the social aspects of decision-making. In their view, an individual may use his position within a group to influence other participants. They summarize that some of the bases of individual power are professional status, leadership positions within the decision-making body, business and social contacts and access to task-environmental rewards. Actors and resources are interrelated. Trustees cannot be completely severed from the relationships and the resources to which they have access. In fact, these are often used in mediating conflict for the institution as well as acquiring personal rewards.

194 Lasswell, A Preview of the Policy Sciences, p. 16.
195 Ibid.
In terms of influence, it is possible that more experienced board members perceive all board members as influential because they are aware of the resources and contacts that members bring to the position. More experienced board members understand that both formal and informal leadership occurs within the board. Apparently less experienced board members have not developed this insight. Therefore, they have concluded that only select members wield power and exert influence. Consequently, new board members surmise that they are powerless and less effective than those members with longer terms of service on the board.

Recommendations

Research: Faculty Impact on Board Decision-Making

A number of trustees feel that instructional faculty members influence the direction of board decision-making. This finding is particularly important since many references to board and faculty interaction describe the relationship as adversarial. This may be attributable to the fact that many college faculties have collective bargaining agreements with their boards of trustees. However, of those colleges represented in the current research, only one-third are unionized.

Further research is necessary to determine the specific nature of the interactions between board members and their professional staffs in order to ascertain the rationale behind board consideration of faculty influence in decision-making. Research should focus upon the
organizational issues, development of institutional policy and mechanisms for ensuring faculty input into board deliberation. Faculty as well as trustees should be included in the sample in order to assure that the perceptions of both regarding faculty influence in board decision-making are included.

**Research: Decision-Making Processes in Public Two-Year College Boards**

Given the paucity of data on trustee decision-making, research needs to be continued in order to understand more fully the decision-making processes of public two-year college boards. There are several reasons why the above research would be useful: (1) to assist both administrators and board members in better understanding the nature of policy formulation and enactment in public community colleges; (2) to provide information which could be useful in future planning; (3) to establish systematic procedures for board decision-making, and (4) to help boards become more effective decision-making bodies.

Consequently, it is recommended that this study be replicated on public two-year college boards and comparable samples of boards of corporations, voluntary associations, public schools and private two-year colleges. A comparative design should be developed which would allow for contrasting the different kinds of boards relative to (a) interaction between the board and the president, (b) responsibility of board to its constituency, (2) similarity of decision processes, (d) types of information used in decision-making and (e) interaction between the board and its college staff.
Research on the decision-making processes of public two-year college boards should be approached from two perspectives: (1) controlled observations and (2) personal interviews. Such research should be longitudinal in order that a decision may be traced through time. Such a format would assist in accounting for the variety of inputs and influences a sample population would experience during their tenure. Personal interviews would provide a more accurate assessment of decision factors than a questionnaire alone. Interviews should be designed to get personal accounts of decision-making from individual board members. These two perspectives, controlled observations and personal interviews, would allow for a more accurate documentation of board decision-making and thereby provide greater insights into the decision-making processes of community college boards of trustees.

**Practice: Board Orientations**

Board members are lay persons who know little about the educational policy process. One direct result is that they are sometimes fragmented in their perspectives about the two-year college and how it should be governed. Therefore, it is recommended that the president of each college encourage its board to establish an annual orientation program for new and incumbent trustees. The major organization and implementation would be delegated to the president and his staff.

Several orientation formats could be used: (1) seminars, (2) workshops, (3) simulations, (4) role playing, and (5) advances. Regardless of the format that is adopted, the program should be
structured in such a way as to not only inform board members but to improve their skills as trustees. Programs should relate to (1) the roles of the public two-year college trustee, (2) establishing relationships with the community, (3) relationships with the President and staff, and (4) establishment of legal and ethical procedures for conduct.

Practice: Board Evaluation of Decision-Making

In that the decision-making process of trustees appears more random than systematic, it is recommended that each individual board conduct a major self study to determine how policies are usually formulated. This knowledge could then be used in improving the operational style of the board as it focuses upon problems and issues of concern to the college and its community. A specific decision-making process should be determined in order that the board can effectively move toward solutions that will impact positively upon the growth and development of the institution.
APPENDIX A

Cover Letter
March 25, 1977

Dear Board Member,

As you know, the decisions that members of boards of trustees are required to make are increasing in number and complexity. In addition, board members have few guidelines or precedents which can assist them in making decisions. Recognition of this problem is the reason for this letter and the basis for requesting your assistance in conducting an important piece of research. Before proceeding further, we should indicate that we took your name from your college catalog.

We are conducting a study of public two-year college trustees to determine how they approach decision-making in formulating institutional policy. In order to do this, we must get input from persons who currently serve on governing boards. We placed your name along with many others in a pool and then drew a random sample of the names from this grouping. Your name was drawn in this sample.

We know very little about how boards make decisions. This study focuses upon the board's role in policy decision-making. Results of the study will supplement existing data which have been collected on two-year college boards. We believe that the information gained would be useful in the orientation and preparation of new and experienced board members.

We need your response in order to complete this task. We assure you that all information received will be treated in confidence. No persons will be identified in any report growing out of this study. A code number has been placed on your questionnaire for data processing purposes only.

Please complete and return the questionnaire as soon as possible. An addressed stamped envelop is enclosed for your convenience. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

William Moore, JTD, Professor
Faculty of Educational Administration

JoAnn Horton, Research Associate
P.O. Box 12514
Columbus, Ohio 43212
APPENDIX B

Human Subjects Committee Approval
Protocol No. 77B 107

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

PROPOSED USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS: ACTION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Behavioral Sciences Review Committee has taken the following action:

X 1. Approve

2. Approve with Conditions

3. Disapprove

with regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research entitled: A Survey of Selected Aspects of Board Policy Decision-Making in Public Two-Year Colleges

William Moore, Jr./Joann Horton is listed as the principal investigator.

The conditions, if any, are attached and are signed by the committee chairperson and by the principal investigator. If disapproved, the reasons are attached and are signed by the committee chairperson.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least four (4) years beyond the termination of the subject's participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subject Review Committee for the required retention period.

Date March 11, 1977

Signed (Chairperson)

PA-025
February 8, 1977

Mr. John Forlines, Chairman
Board of Trustees
Caldwell Community College and
Technical Institute
Box 600
Lenoir, North Carolina 28645

Dear Mr. Forlines:

I am engaged in a research project at The Ohio State University. The subject of this research is Decision-Making in Public Two-Year College Boards of Trustees. I hope to discover the variety of decision-making procedures that are used in a cross-section of boards. I will draw a sample that will be representative of the total number of two-year college boards in the United States. I need assistance in evaluating my questionnaire.

I am asking you as a board chairman to assist me in getting my questionnaire into the hands of twelve trustees who would review its form and content. If you and eleven other members of your board would take a few minutes to react to the questionnaire, it would be of great assistance to me.

Please make your notations and comments on the questionnaire itself. I am trying to meet a February 20 deadline. For your convenience, I have enclosed a stamped self-addressed envelop.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

JoAnn Horton, Research Associate
The Ohio State University
P.O. Box 12514
Columbus, Ohio 43212

JH:dap

cc: Dr. H. Edwin Beam
President
APPENDIX D

Questionnaire
A QUESTIONNAIRE

A SURVEY OF SELECTED-ASPECTS OF BOARD POLICY DECISION-MAKING IN PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

PREPARED BY

JOANN HORTON
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
FEBRUARY, 1977
I would like a copy of the results (Please check one):

- [ ] I would like a copy of the results
- [x] I would not like a copy of the results

Questionnaire

SURVEY OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF BOARD POLICY DECISION-MAKING IN THE PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

Instructions: In the section to the right marked [ ] , please place a check mark ( ) to indicate your response to the questions below.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:
   - [ ] Less than 30
   - [ ] Between 31 and 40
   - [ ] Between 41 and 50
   - [ ] Between 51 and 60
   - [ ] Between 61 and 70
   - [x] Over 70

2. Sex:
   - [ ] Male
   - [x] Female

3. What is your occupational background?
   - [ ] Business Management
   - [ ] Banking
   - [ ] Law
   - [ ] Medicine
   - [ ] Homemaker
   - [ ] Education
   - [ ] Other (Please specify)

4. Indicate your highest scholastic degree:
   (Please check only one)
   - [ ] Diploma
   - [ ] Associate Degree
   - [ ] Bachelor's Degree
   - [ ] Master's Degree
   - [ ] Ph.D. or Ed.D.
   - [ ] M.D., D.D.S., J.D., etc.
   - [ ] Other (Please specify)

5. To what racial group do you belong?
   - [ ] Black
   - [ ] Caucasian
   - [ ] Chicano
   - [ ] Native American
   - [ ] Oriental
   - [ ] Spanish surname
   - [ ] Other (Please specify)
16. Designate the area in which you live. (20)
   1. Rural
   2. Urban
   3. Suburban

7. What of the following best describes you? (21)
   1. Conservative
   2. Independent
   3. Liberal

8. How did you become a board member? (22)
   1. Elected by the local district voters
   2. Appointed by the Governor
   3. Elected by the local school board
   4. Appointed by County Commissioners
   5. Other (Please specify)

9. How long have you been a board member? (23)
   1. Less than one year
   2. Between two and four years
   3. Between five and six years
   4. Between six and eight years
   5. Between eight and twelve years
   6. Between twelve and sixteen years
   7. Over sixteen years

10. How long are board terms? (24)
    1. Three years
    2. Four years
    3. Five years
    4. Six years
    5. Seven years
    6. Eight years
    7. Other (Please specify)

11. How often does the board meet? (25)
    1. Once a month
    2. Bi-monthly
    3. Quarterly
    4. Bi-annually
    5. Annually

12. Which term best describes your campus? (26)
    1. Single campus (enrollment 0-1,999)
    2. Single campus (enrollment 2,000-5,999)
    3. Single campus (enrollment 6,000-9,999)
    4. Single campus (enrollment 10,000 and above)
    5. Multi-campus (enrollment 0-5,999)
    6. Multi-campus (enrollment 6,000-14,999)
    7. Multi-campus (enrollment 15,000-25,999)
    8. Multi-campus (enrollment 26,000 and above)

13. Which category best indicates the location of your college? (27)
    1. Urban
    2. Rural
    3. Suburban
14. What is the number of voting board members? (28)
   1. Seven ............................................................. 1._____
   2. Eight ............................................................. 2._____
   3. Nine .............................................................. 3._____
   4. Twelve ........................................................... 4._____
   5. Other (Please specify) ........................................ 5._____

15. Have you been chairman of the following: (29)
   1. Board ............................................................ 1._____
   2. Subcommittee .................................................. 2._____
   3. Both of the above ............................................. 3._____
   4. Neither of the above ......................................... 4._____

16. Where are board meetings normally held: (30)
   1. Local campus .................................................. 1._____
   2. District office .................................................. 2._____

17. How would you characterize yourself politically? (31)
   1. Republican .................................................... 1._____
   2. Democrat ........................................................ 2._____
   3. Independent .................................................... 3._____
   4. Other (Please specify) ........................................ 4._____

18. Which of the following best describes the curriculum of your institution? (32)
   1. College parallel ................................................. 1._____
   2. Vocational/Technical .......................................... 2._____
   3. Comprehensive ............................................... 3._____

Directions: Check only that category which applies except where otherwise indicated.

BOARD POLICY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

1. When decisions are required of the board, do you feel that you have enough information to assist you in making the best decision? (33)
   1. Always ............................................................ 1._____
   2. Often ............................................................... 2._____
   3. Rarely ............................................................. 3._____
   4. Never ............................................................. 4._____

2. Does the board use trends or indicators as information for making decisions? (34)
   1. Always ............................................................ 1._____
   2. Often ............................................................... 2._____
   3. Rarely ............................................................. 3._____
   4. Never ............................................................. 4._____

3. When appropriate, does the board make every attempt to understand statistical data and their implications before making a decision? (35)
   1. Always ............................................................ 1._____
   2. Often ............................................................... 2._____
   3. Rarely ............................................................. 3._____
   4. Never ............................................................. 4._____
4. What kinds of information do you feel assists you most in making decisions? (Check all that apply) (36)

1. Institutional research ................................. 1.
2. Summary narrative reports .......................... 2.
3. Experts or consultants ................................ 3.
5. Other (Please specify) .................................. 5.

5. With the exception of the President by whom are you influenced the most during policy deliberation? (37)

1. Community groups ........................................ 1.
2. Faculty .......................................................... 2.
3. Students ......................................................... 3.
5. Legislators ..................................................... 5.
7. Chairperson ................................................... 7.
8. Other (Please specify) ...................................... 8.

6. Is your political persuasion (orientation—if appropriate) an important consideration in your making decisions relative to the board? (38)

1. Always ............................................................ 1.
2. Often .............................................................. 2.
3. Rarely ............................................................ 3.

7. Do you normally vote the same as the chairperson? (39)

1. Always ........................................................... 1.
2. Often .............................................................. 2.
3. Rarely ............................................................ 3.

8. Do you defer to the competency of other board members and vote as they do? (40)

1. Always ........................................................... 1.
2. Often .............................................................. 2.
3. Rarely ............................................................ 3.

9. Do certain board members exercise influence during board decision making? (41)

1. Chairperson ................................................... 1.
2. Particular members ......................................... 2.
3. Members in general ......................................... 3.
4. None of the above .......................................... 4.

10. Do you spend some time on campus in addition to regularly scheduled board meetings? (42)

1. Always ........................................................... 1.
2. Often .............................................................. 2.
3. Rarely ............................................................ 3.

11. Are your decisions based upon the recommendations of the President? (43)

1. Always ........................................................... 1.
2. Often .............................................................. 2.
3. Rarely ............................................................ 3.
12. Do you take into account the views of external individuals when decisions are required?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

13. Are there occasions where you meet with faculty members, students or administrators on an informal basis?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

14. Do you suggest items for the board's agenda?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

15. Are executive sessions held prior to board meetings?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

16. When the board must decide upon unfamiliar issues, is it a practice to seek: (Check all that apply)
1. Expert advice
2. Consultation with the administration
3. Explanation/presentation by the initiator
4. Other (Please specify)

17. Are decision-making processes regarding budget, planning, personnel, curriculum and student life organized in the same manner?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

18. Under normal circumstances, do you feel that the board has enough time to consider alternatives before decisions are required?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

19. When the board makes decisions, does it consider the variety of things which relate to the problem?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never

20. When making decisions, do you concern yourself with the goals of the institution?
1. Always
2. Often
3. Rarely
4. Never
21. When making decisions, does the board consider the consequences of various alternatives? (53)
   1. Always ................................................................. 1.
   2. Often ................................................................. 2.
   3. Rarely ................................................................. 3.

22. Do you feel that the goals of the institution should be used as guidelines when making decisions? (54)
   1. Yes ........................................................................ 1.
   2. No .......................................................................... 2.

23. Before making decisions, does the board concern itself with defining the problem? (55)
   1. Always ..................................................................... 1.
   2. Often ...................................................................... 2.
   3. Rarely .................................................................... 3.

24. Does the board discuss possible obstacles to policies before they are implemented? (56)
   1. Always ..................................................................... 1.
   2. Often ...................................................................... 2.
   3. Rarely .................................................................... 3.

25. Is the board's approach to decision-making: (57)
   1. Always based on precedents (past decision or practices). 1.
   2. Sometimes based on precedents; sometimes based on new ideas, inputs, new approaches 2.
   3. Never based on precedent ......................................... 3.

26. Does the board use the goals of the institution as guidelines when making policy decisions? (58)
   1. Always ..................................................................... 1.
   2. Often ...................................................................... 2.
   3. Rarely .................................................................... 3.

27. Upon what do you base your decisions? (Check all that apply) (59)
   1. Intuition ................................................................... 1.
   2. Political support ..................................................... 2.
   3. Facts ........................................................................ 3.
   4. Moral or value orientation ......................................... 4.
   5. Other (Please specify) .............................................. 5.

28. Given an ideal situation, what factors do you feel should influence your decisions? (Check all that apply) (60)
   1. Community values ................................................ 1.
   2. Board coalitions ..................................................... 2.
   3. Information ............................................................ 3.
   5. Personal values ...................................................... 5.
   7. Special interest groups ............................................ 7.
   8. Other (Please specify) .............................................. 8.

29. How are votes on final decisions usually registered? (Check one) (61)
   1. Show of hands ........................................................ 1.
   2. Secret ballot ........................................................... 2.
   4. Varies (all of the above) ........................................... 4.
Directions: When formulating policy decisions about Budget, Curricula, Personnel, Planning and Student Services, boards follow certain procedures. During the past 12-18 months, which of the procedures listed below were followed by your board, when it considered one of the Decision Areas, listed to the right? Please begin with one decision area and check (✓) each of the appropriate items (1-21) which the board considered from top to bottom. Then select a second decision area and follow the same procedure. Continue as above until all areas are completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCEDURES</th>
<th>DECISION AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget  (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum  (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personnel  (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning  (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Services  (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The problem was introduced to the Board by a Board Member.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The problem was introduced to the Board by a Community Representative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The problem was introduced to the Board by an Institutional Representative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The problem was introduced to the Board by the President.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Institutional goals were reviewed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. State/federal guidelines were reviewed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Accreditation licensing criteria were reviewed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Policy was proposed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Report Review was conducted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Outside experts were consulted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Administrative staff was consulted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Faculty and/or Students were consulted.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Recommendation of President was considered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy formulation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Problem was defined.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Information gathered from various sources was reviewed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Discussed conditions surrounding the problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Discussed what would happen if nothing were done.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Alternatives were proposed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Discussed obstacles to implementation.</td>
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<td>20. Discussed consequences of policy.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Policy decision was adopted.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

Follow-Up Letters
April 18, 1977

Dear Board Member,

On March 25, 1977, Miss Joann Horton, a graduate student and research associate in the Department of Educational Administration, and I sent you a questionnaire: A Survey of Selected Aspects of Board Policy Decision-Making in Public Two-Year Colleges. We have not heard from you and feel that this may be an oversight. We are also aware that your time is quite valuable.

While we do not want to be pests, we do want to say to you again how important your response is to this research effort. Please take twenty to twenty-five minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it to us.

We will offer you a summary of the findings once the study is complete if you desire them.

If your questionnaire is already in the mail, please accept our profound appreciation.

With highest regards, we are

William Moore, Jr.
William Moore, Jr., Professor
Faculty of Educational Administration

Joann Horton, Research Associate
P.O. Box 12514
Columbus, Ohio 43212
Dear Board Member,

On March 25, 1977, a questionnaire entitled "A Survey of Selected Aspects of Board Policy Decision-Making in Public Two-Year Colleges" was forwarded to you. We had so counted on hearing from you. Possibly you have lost our earlier questionnaire; so we are sending you an additional copy. We believe that the information that you and others provide will be invaluable in the orientation and preparation of new and experienced board members with regard to how boards of trustees make decisions.

We need your assistance. Please take a few minutes from your busy schedule to complete the questionnaire and return it to us. If you have responded, please accept our profound thanks.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

With our highest regards,

John Horton, Research Associate
Joan Box 12514
Columbus, Ohio 43212

William Moore, Jr., Professor
Faculty of Educational Administration

JH/WM/ee
Enclosure
APPENDIX F

Definition of Key Terms
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY
AND JUNIOR COLLEGES (AACJC)

This is a non-profit national professional association, made up of two-year colleges, both public and private, and people from those institutions which provide services and directions calculated to assist the colleges in meeting their goals. The national offices of AACJC are headquarters in Washington, D.C. (Association of Community College Trustees, 1973).\(^{197}\)

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY
COLLEGE TRUSTEES (ACCT)

This is a non-profit international association, headquartered in Washington, D.C., which seeks to unify, promote, encourage and develop two-year institutions through the expertise and insight of trustee leadership. Assists trustees in effectively coping with challenges in higher education and to present a national voice on behalf of two-year college governing boards. (ACCT, 1973)\(^{198}\)

BOARD

In this study, the term board will be used to refer to the group of individuals who have the legal authority to govern an individual public two-year college, with a single or multiple campus.\(^{199}\)

COLLEGE TRANSFER

This term is used to indicate that curriculum in public two-year colleges which comprise the first two years of traditional liberal arts courses and lead to an Associate of Arts Degree. This curriculum is designed to prepare students to enter four-year colleges and continue towards advanced academic training.\(^{200}\)


\(^{198}\) Ibid.

\(^{199}\) Orley R. Herron, Jr., The Role of the Trustee (Scranton, Pa.: International Textbook Company, 1969), p. 16.

\(^{200}\) Blocker, p. 4.
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This refers to the procedures utilized in arriving at decisions through social and political interaction.201

FORMULATION

This refers to a procedural step in the adaptation of ideas and articulated demands to specific proposals for action.202

POLICY

This is the official expression of authorized bodies on specific issues and/or problems which embodies goal values and practices.203

PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

This is a tax supported institution offering two years of post-secondary education for transfer credit to a four-year college, or as a requirement for a terminal degree. In this study, the term will refer to community colleges, independent junior colleges, and technical institutes.204

POWER

Individual characteristics that act as resources in sanctioning others.205

POLITICS

In this context, the use of influence by individuals or special interest groups to achieve power.206

203 Lasswell and Kaplan, p. 71.
204 Blocker, p. 41.
POLITICAL SYSTEM

Actions which may be described as a "set of social interactions on the part of individuals and groups."\textsuperscript{207}

BIBLIOGRAPHY


