

How High and Low Self-Empowered Teachers Work with Colleagues and School Principals

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This study explores the phenomena of teacher empowerment by describing intrinsic motivation associated with the tasks of working with colleagues and principals for two groups of teachers – those with a high and those with a low sense of self-empowerment. Data were collected via interviews that focused on goals and meanings teachers assigned to the tasks, their perceived competence in completing the tasks, and their self-determination in selecting behaviours to accomplish desired outcomes.

Cette étude tente de regarder la réalité des professeurs avec une haute et une basse conscience de leur capacité. Cela se fait en décrivant la motivation intrinsèque reliée aux tâches professionnelles avec les collègues et les principaux. Les données furent recueillies par le moyen d'entrevues qui mesuraient les buts et les significations que les professeurs donnaient à leurs tâches, la perception de leur compétence en accomplissant les tâches et leur détermination dans le choix des comportements pour accomplir ce qu'ils avaient à faire.

Empowerment of employees as a principal component of management and organizational effectiveness has been a focus among managerial theorists in recent years (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Block, 1987; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kanter, 1983; Vogt & Murrell, 1990). Empowerment as a construct has been viewed from both extrinsic and intrinsic power perspectives. From an extrinsic power perspective, empowerment is defined according to power or control individuals have over others, creating a dependence or interdependence of actors (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Kotter, 1979; Pfeffer, 1981). Conger and Kanungo (1988) view extrinsic power as being "relativistic" whereby managers allocate their power with subordinates through techniques such as "Management By Objectives" and "Total Quality Management" teams. Although individuals may have greater opportunities for involvement in organizational decision-making, the extrinsic power awarded them is relative to power held by leaders within the organization. From an

intrinsic power perspective, empowerment is a process of heightening the motivation of employees to accomplish job-related tasks (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Power in this motivational sense refers to individuals' intrinsic needs for things such as self-actualization (Maslow, 1954, 1962, 1971), self-determination (Deci, 1975, 1980), feelings of competence (White, 1959), and a sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) claim that deliberate attempts to produce a sense of intrinsic power among employees can occur through changes in environmental events that "impinge upon individuals, or upon individuals' manner of interpreting those events (p. 676). Changes can occur that would enhance meaningfulness, a sense of competence, and self-determination.

Empowerment in teacher professional development similarly has been discussed from extrinsic and intrinsic perspectives. From an extrinsic power perspective, teacher empowerment has been viewed as a way of improving the professional status of teachers, whereby the teacher has recognized status, is able to obtain needed knowledge, and is actively involved in collegial decision-making (Maeroff, 1988a, 1988b, 1989). A management technique commonly used in education to establish shared power is "Site-based Management," whereby teachers, parents, students, and school principals work together to make decisions regarding educational practices at the building level (Casner-Lotto, 1988; Duttweiler, 1989; Goodlad, 1984). From an intrinsic power perspective, Maeroff (1988a) explains that teacher empowerment "has to do with [teachers'] individual deportment not their ability to boss others It is the power to exercise one's craft with confidence and to help shape the way the job is done" (p. 4). In this sense power stems from teachers' self-determination, or in the choices they feel they can make about teacher-related tasks, as well as their sense of self-efficacy. Maeroff (1988a) suggests that teacher empowerment from this intrinsic power perspective is essential to teacher effectiveness as it impacts how teachers approach their jobs.

To begin to understand teacher empowerment from an intrinsic power perspective, Wilson (1993) developed an instrument designed to measure teacher self-empowerment (The Self-Empowerment Index or SEI). For her study, self-empowerment was defined according to Maslow's (1954, 1962, 1971) theory of self-actualization needs and Block's (1987) theory of empowerment:

Self-empowerment pertains to an individual's perceived personal, internal power, and to how the individual expresses his/her [internal power] through interactions with others. Self-empowered individuals are autonomous in that they believe the best source of authority comes from within themselves and they accept their thoughts and feelings as being worthy. (Wilson, 1993, p. 729)

The SEI includes 25 items and has a reliability equal to .84. The distribution of SEI scores among the 334 teachers included in this study was normal in shape, with ranges of scores from 20 to 113.

A wide variation of SEI scores among teachers found by Wilson (1993), led us to wonder how differently high and low self-empowered teachers approach working with colleagues and school principals, two tasks required for Site-based Management. To date, no studies on how high and low self-empowered teachers work together and how they work with principals can be found in the literature, even though current reform movements focus on collaboration and cooperative decision-making among teachers and between teachers and principals (Ames & Ames, 1993). Although the SEI demonstrates that levels of self-empowerment differ among teachers, we wanted to gain a more focused description of the nature of these differences as they exist within school settings. More specifically, the purpose for our study was to describe two groups of teachers – those who scored high and those who scored low on the SEI – regarding their motivation to complete the tasks of working with colleagues and working with school principals. Descriptions of how motivation for completing these two tasks is different for high and low self-empowered teachers can provide insight about empowerment from an intrinsic power perspective, and can provide a basis for thinking about how differences in teacher motivation might impact extrinsic power awarded teachers within the school setting, and what school leaders might do to enhance intrinsic power of teachers.

Theoretical Framework for Task Motivation

A cognitive approach was used for this study to gain understanding about teacher motivation. This cognitive approach entails what individuals think and how they feel about themselves according to job-related tasks. Brophy (1985) views teacher cognitions to be important in mediating teacher expectations and as motives for teacher behaviours. Brophy explains that teacher beliefs and knowledge influence the range and types of options open to them, and attitudes and expectations then influence the selection of goals or sets of behaviours. Three cognitive dimensions of motivation described in the literature formed a framework for our data collection and analysis: a) goals and meanings teachers assign to a task, b) teachers' perceived competence to complete a task and, c) teachers' self-determination in selecting behaviours to accomplish desired outcomes.

An understanding of motivation requires an understanding of specific goals toward which individuals are oriented (Ames & Ames, 1989; Deci, 1980; Dweck, 1985). Individuals are oriented toward task-related goals, or goals that provide a framework for knowing the expected outcome, as well as

personal goals associated with the task, or what one hopes to gain from accomplishing the task. Task-related goals are content specific and provide a conceptual framework of what is to be accomplished as a result of one's efforts. An important element of task-related goals is the meaningfulness of the task to the individual. Meaningfulness is assessed according to the importance, or value, of the task and involves the "individual's intrinsic caring about a given task" (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, p. 672). If a high level of caring is associated to a task then there will be a high level of commitment and involvement in completing the task (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kanter, 1968; Sjoberg, Olsson, & Salay, 1983). McClelland (1975) perceives individuals to be motivated if the commitment to achieving a goal is related to whether accomplishing the goal is likely to influence their further thoughts and actions – or whether they will gain something personally from accomplishing the goal. Several authors claim that ultimately a person accomplishes a task as a means of meeting personal needs such as self-actualization (Herzberg, 1966; Rogers, 1955), self-determination (Deci, 1980), and self-acceptance or social-acceptance (Covington, 1984; Maehr, 1984).

Competence refers to how capable individuals perceive they are to complete a task successfully. If they feel they lack competence to perform a task, they have a sense of personal helplessness; and if they feel they are not able to make an impact, regardless of their competence, they have a sense of universal helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). Deci (1980) observed that people have a need to feel competent and engage in many behaviours in order to meet this need. How they perceive their level of competence leads them to seek out behaviours they think will demonstrate their competence. Bandura (1977) found that individuals with low perceptions of competence, or self-efficacy, avoid doing tasks that require skills they perceive they do not have; conversely, high self-efficacy yields self-initiating behaviours, high efforts, and persistence when obstacles are faced. Furthermore, Nicholls (1984) explains that individuals who are "ego involved," as opposed to "task-involved," make judgments about their abilities by comparing them to abilities held by others and according to what others expect of them. Ego-involved individuals tend to limit their behaviours to what will make them look good compared to others. Individuals who are task involved make judgments about their abilities according to whether they are making progress and are more concerned about accomplishing the task than how they compare to others.

Deci and Ryan (1985) claim that self-determined behaviours are regulated by choices individuals feel they have in selecting behaviours that will lead them towards accomplishing task-related and personal goals. They

perceive that choosing behaviours can create a sense of self-determination which provides opportunities for individuals to take the initiative to act and to be resilient, flexible, and creative when selected behaviours do not produce desired outcomes. deCharms (1968) discusses the concept of "locus of causality," or whether individuals perceive that behaviours they choose will cause the task to be completed successfully. Locus of causality is fundamental to intrinsic motivation and pertains to self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and to a sense of responsibility and autonomy (Hackman & Oldman, 1980).

The Study

Research participants. We were interested in describing teachers' motivation to work with colleagues and principals for two groups of teachers: those who have high self-empowerment (HSE) and those who have low self-empowerment (LSE). Consequently we purposefully selected teachers who scored high and teachers who scored low on the SEI (developed by Wilson, 1993). Rather than continuing to collect quantitative data, however, we chose to collect qualitative data by conducting in-depth, structured interviews with teachers. We wanted to pay attention to the interpretations and meanings that teachers assign to their working with administrators and colleagues in a qualitative way. According to Best (1981), the difference between quantitative and qualitative studies is not absolute, but one of emphasis with no superiority of one over the other. Several writers of educational research recommend supplementing one approach with the other to strengthen studies.

Our qualitative study was limited to three HSE and three LSE teachers who were enrolled in a masters degree program at a university located in the state of Washington. We chose a small sample because we agree with Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) that, "it is as important to look in detail at a small number of cases as it is to look generally at a large number of typical cases" (p. 25). To select the six teachers, we asked 89 teachers enrolled in the program to complete the SEI. They were told that the instrument was being used for a research project and were asked to place their social security number on the instrument, if they felt comfortable doing so. They also were told that some individuals would be asked to participate in interviews at a later point in time. The surveys were numbered and data were entered into a mainframe computer (Note: a normal distribution of scores was obtained for the 89 teachers, with a mean SEI score of 75.82 out of 125 points and a standard deviation of 13.94; scores ranged from 25 to 115). Survey numbers for the ten highest and the ten lowest self-empowerment scores were identified. These surveys were then pulled from the 89 surveys included in the data set. Initially, a colleague not involved in this study, provided us the

names of six teachers: the three highest and the three lowest SEI scores. We were not informed, however, as to which teachers were in the high and low groups. We contacted the six teachers by phone to see if they were willing to participate in the interviews. If a teacher was not able to participate, we informed our colleague who then selected another teacher to replace that teacher. A total of eight teachers were contacted.

The teachers included in the two groups had similar teaching backgrounds. Of the HSE teachers, Doug had been teaching for 18 years and was teaching English in a junior high school; Penelope taught third grade and had been a teacher for 11 years; and Joan had taught for nine years and was a resource room teacher in an elementary school. Of the LSE teachers, Rose had taught for nine years, and was a resource room teacher for grades K-8; Colleen had been a teacher for 11 years and was teaching in an elementary gifted program; and John had been an elementary teacher for 13 years and was teaching fifth grade at the time of the interview. (Note: pseudonyms have been used for the six teachers.)

Data collection and analysis. We conducted in-depth interviews with the teachers, each interview lasting about one and one-half hours. A modified version of Patton's (1990) general interview guide approach was used. A guide was prepared to make sure that similar information would be obtained from the teachers. However, we adapted wording and sequencing of questions in the context of the actual interview. This approach allowed us to remain "free to build a conversation within [the] particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style – but with the focus on [the] particular subject [being studied]" (Patton, 1990, p. 283). The interview guide focused on demographic questions and on the tasks of working with colleagues and working with school administrators. (Note: during the interviews, teachers also were asked about the tasks of teaching students and working with parents; however, these data are not reported in this paper.) Similar questions were asked for each task. The questions elicited information about task-related goals and the meanings teachers associate with these goals (e.g., teachers were asked to describe their vision of ideal outcomes for each task and how important each task was to them); their perceived competencies in completing the tasks (e.g., teachers were asked to describe their successes and failures); and their self-determination in choosing behaviours to accomplish their goals (e.g., teachers were asked if they considered themselves to be an "origin" or a "pawn" in completing each task and to explain why). With the teacher's permission, each interview was tape recorded. Verbatim transcripts of the interviews were completed for data analysis.

We were not informed as to which teachers were in the HSE and LSE groups until after all interviews had been completed and at the time of data analysis. Also, we intentionally avoided any in-depth analysis of the data until all data had been collected to avoid transference of analysis to subsequent interviews. In this sense attempts were made to “minimize imposing on the generative process of the interviews what [we] learned from other participants” (Seidman, 1991, p. 86). The data were first organized by arranging transcripts of the tapes. Sections of dialogue were systematically classified according to dimensions of: goals and meanings, competencies, and self-determination. Each dimension was analysed for each of the two tasks: working with colleagues and working with the school principal.

Findings

Because we purposely selected teachers from two extreme groups, HSE and LSE teacher groups, we anticipated a variation in patterns between the two groups. And, indeed, this is what we found. We did not anticipate, however, such a high level of consistency of responses among teachers in each group. Following is a summary of variations we found between HSE and LSE teachers' descriptions of: meanings assigned to tasks, perceived competencies to complete those tasks, and self-determination in selecting behaviours to accomplish the tasks. Each summary is supported by examples of statements made by teacher participants.

Variations in meanings assigned to the tasks. Both the HSE and LSE teachers expressed similar views as to what they hoped to accomplish by working with colleagues. All six teachers saw working with colleagues as being important for the purpose of improving problem-solving and decision-making. There were differences, however, between the HSE and LSE teachers regarding personal values they assigned to the task. HSE teachers valued decision-making that involved a sharing of different ideas and opinions by colleagues. As Penelope stated,

What is important is that each one of us will see something just a little bit differently so when you put all the different pieces together, you get one nice picture ... I think you get a more well-rounded and realistic view.

These teachers valued learning from colleagues:

I like to find answers to how people learn ... including myself ... [and] it is not as important to have your ideas accepted as to be open to changing your knowledge about a topic and not getting hung up on things (Doug); and they valued “being open and never closing [their] thoughts or mind[s] to new things that are coming” (Joan). The HSE teachers also valued collaborating with colleagues because,

If you don't work well with your colleagues, you're not going to enjoy your job ... [and] being a success is to be happy with your job. (Joan)

Personal values assigned to the task of working with colleagues took a different direction for LSE teachers. Rather than being interested in learning from colleagues with different ideas or opinions, the LSE teachers valued "not making waves" (Rose) and "going with the flow" (Colleen). None of the teachers indicated a high personal investment in working with colleagues in their schools. As an example, although Rose thought working with colleagues was important for decision-making, she did not feel working with colleagues was important to her, personally or professionally, because she is "only" a resource room teacher:

I don't know. I think it's important to do it, but being a resource room teacher, I guess I just kind of stand back. I think if I was a classroom teacher a lot of the decisions would be affecting me a lot more, because they're always making decisions about the day-to-day stuff or the month to month stuff in the classrooms or in the school And being the resource room teacher I'm not as involved because they don't affect me quite as much.

The three HSE teachers' beliefs about working with school principals paralleled their beliefs about working with colleagues. They felt that working with principals is important to improve decisions made about students or the school. They valued working with their principals in a collegial manner:

I don't work for them; I work with them ... I share a mutual respect. (Doug)

They also valued working with principals because it can, as does working with colleagues, create a positive work environment. Joan said,

It is very important because the climate of the school is affected by principals and teachers working well together.

The importance of having positive relationships with the principal was further described in terms of consequences. Doug claimed this relationship to be "exceptionally important [because] It can make or break you." Similarly, Joan emphasized the importance of establishing a positive relationship with the school principal because,

We've all experienced what can happen when [positive relationships between teachers and principals] don't occur.

The LSE teachers saw their relationship with the school principal as being hierarchal. Colleen claimed,

The principal is separated from us. It is him up there, and then there's us down here.

None of the LSE teachers talked about collaborating with the principal for making decisions, or of experiencing mutual trust and respect with the

principal. The principal was viewed as the “decision-maker who cannot be challenged” (Colleen). John explained that ideally

the principal would come into the classroom either before school or after school and pull up a chair and loosen his tie and just have an off-the-record chat ... [and] I'm free to express any opinion and whatever is said is not held against me.

John did not perceive he had this freedom, however. In reality, the main goal in working with school principals for LSE teachers was to avoid encounters to the extent possible and to “play by the rules” so their jobs won't be in jeopardy. Consequently, teachers envisage their principal's approval and satisfaction by doing things right and “keeping things happy” (John).

Variations in perceived competencies. The HSE teachers delineated their competencies in working with colleagues in consistent, self-enhancing ways. They all perceived they are able to impact the lives of their colleagues by inspiring them and by working with them collaboratively. As Doug said,

I can inspire [colleagues] to think, to push them into directions that they may not feel comfortable with.

All three HSE teachers attributed their success in working with colleagues to the relationships they have been able to establish with them, relationships that are based on shared values. Penelope and Joan considered themselves to be good “team players” primarily because other team members also value working collaboratively. In describing a recent experience in working with colleagues, Joan stated,

It's all personalities and we just happen to have four people that can work together and are not clock punchers and are not worried about time.

Similar to working with colleagues, the HSE teachers described their competencies working with principals according to their abilities to establish positive relationships with their principals and to freely share ideas with them – relationships built on trust and open communication. Doug said

I've always had good relationships with administrators ... [in fact] the [principal] just told me, ‘You are one of the easiest people to work with’... [and] if there is some disagreement you are gonna come to me in a productive manner and say ‘here's a problem.’

Penelope also talked about her ability to engage in open honest communication and attributed her success to

being honest, and letting them know when there definitely are problems ... and not being a general nuisance, [and] showing them through research.

Joan was less enthusiastic about her ability to meet with the principal, but felt the principal was “very accepting” of her ideas and claimed that

it is all in how you approach it. I don't think I go to him with things that are out of line. So, consequently, when I go, he is usually very accepting.

All three HSE teachers attributed their success in working with colleagues and principals not only to their abilities to establish relationships with teachers and principals, but also to relationships they have established with family members and friends outside the school setting. The HSE teachers perceived that these relationships contribute to their personal development. For example, Penelope commented,

I was very fortunate to grow up in a family with strong values and I was also fortunate that they were able to empower me to feel good about myself ... I am also very fortunate that I have a very strong marriage and family. So I come to school peaceful.

HSE teachers attributed their failures in working with colleagues and principals to a lack of shared values regarding the relationships they attempt to establish. To work well with colleagues and principals, it is important to share similar values.

Not that ... all have to be on the same train, but at least ... all need to be on the same track. (Doug)

All three HSE teachers indicated that positive relationships they have with school principals are based, in large part, on the fact that their principals value open, honest communication, and respect teachers' ideas.

In contrast to the HSE teachers, the LSE teachers did not describe their competencies in consistent, self-enhancing ways. The LSE teachers seemed confused and unclear about their successes in working with colleagues. John, for example, described his competencies according to being bold and upfront with colleagues. He described his most recent experience in working with colleagues on a neighbourhood schools committee:

I was a party crasher is what I was. They had a regular group of them that met and I just decided to sit down and get in my two cents worth and I went for a couple of meetings Yes, I brought some questions up that I think that other members of the group had but were afraid to ask I think of different ideas that somebody else hasn't thought of and also I am gonna cut the crap and get to the bottom on certain issues.

Although he saw himself as being a "party crasher," whereby he states his opinions and then leaves, he later described himself as being a "good listener" and "open to other's ideas," and then later in the interview stated he was "overly dominant" and needs to "see others' points of view," and tends to "use humour inappropriately." In a similar contradictory pattern, Colleen saw herself as being "fairly flexible" and having "creative ideas." However, if her ideas aren't accepted by others she said,

I usually don't care ... because somebody else probably has one that's just as good. Or maybe next year they will listen to me, or maybe it wasn't a good idea.

Rose described her recent experience in working on a reading curriculum committee as,

I don't think I played a big, big role in it, but I was involved as much as most people.

She continued to state:

I am not one that gets in there and is real vocal, and always give my opinion and stuff, I probably just kind of go with the flow I would like to be more involved, but I lack confidence in a lot of areas [which] keeps my from getting more involved and taking risks [when working with colleagues].

Later in the interview, however, she said she could be "more involved, take more risks, and do a good job if [she] really wanted to."

The LSE teachers described their competencies in working with their principals according to whether they are able to please the school principal. All three LSE teachers indicated they meet with the school principal only on occasion. John said,

I meet [with the principal] every blue moon, only on a formal basis. I only meet with the principal for post observation conference.

However, he considered his meetings with the principal to be successful as "I usually feel like I walk away and he is happy." Colleen said she meets with the principal only when there is a problem with a parent and for her teacher evaluation and does not feel she is able to communicate with him very well. She felt her principal

always has a preplanned agenda, and his goal is to meet all the points on that agenda and that's it.

Rose thought she is able to keep the principal informed about what is happening in her classroom; and she sees her abilities to work with the principal improving because,

She is a principal that I can be real open with. She knows how I feel ... I have had other principals where I wouldn't tell them how I felt.

Rose recognized she needs to "take risks, be more open, talk to her about ideas a little bit more."

Variations in perceptions of self-determination. The HSE teachers seemed less dependent on what others expect of them and to rely more on their personal judgments, compared to LSE teachers. They took the initiative to begin discussions and relationships with colleagues and with principals. They looked for opportunities to learn, and thus were more open to taking

risks by trying new things, and seemed willing to adapt their behaviours based on what they learned. All three HSE teachers talked about the importance of establishing a trusting, open climate in the school setting; and, again, spoke of the importance of having shared values among colleagues in order for them to maximize choices they have regarding sharing new or different ideas with them. Doug described his frustration in working with colleagues in his school. Because he saw several of his colleagues as not having values he considered to be important, being immature, and unable to communicate in a constructive manner, he did not feel free to communicate with them in a "meaningful way." He had little hope that "anything positive would come of it." Neither Joan nor Penelope shared the same frustration felt by Doug. They felt they have a climate that is supportive and positive for working with colleagues. Both Joan and Penelope teach at the elementary school level, however, and described their experiences according to working with a small number of teachers who teach the same grades they do. When describing her self-determination in working with colleagues, Joan stated:

Oh I think I have control over what's happening [to me]. But, again if I'm referring to this group, we make it so that everyone has control over what is happening. And it's always left, this is what we're doing, or what I'm doing maybe. And someone else will say, "Okay, I think I'll not do that this time," and that's never looked down upon. No one is ever forced into something they don't want to do. We all have choices.

Similarly, Penelope described her experience as team leader as being very positive because she and others have choices:

I get more input back from all these people and they can add to the agenda too. They know and they all feel comfortable. That's one good strength of our team. It's a very comfortable team because I know that my role as a leader is more of a negotiator and facilitator than anything else.

The HSE teachers saw themselves as self-determined to work with their school principal, but felt this way because they perceived that their principals value open, nonmanipulative communication. Joan described herself as being able to work well with her principal because she felt free to initiate discussion of her ideas. Similarly, Doug said he can be "straight" with principals:

They're colleagues. I've never felt like I work for a principal, I felt like I work with the principal.

Penelope felt she has many choices she can make in working with her school principal, because he is not knowledgeable about educating severely handicapped children; and, therefore, she has to take the initiative to inform him about what she needs to do in the classroom.

All three LSE teachers felt they have choices they can make in working with colleagues, but the choice they described, for the most part, is to work with colleagues as little as possible. They took little initiative to communicate with them. Even though John talked about taking the initiative of being a "party crasher," he chose not to follow-through with in-depth discussions of issues with colleagues; rather, he chose to state his opinion and leave. Colleen and Rose also chose to avoid conflict when working with colleagues. Rose claimed she "chooses to sit in the background when working with colleagues because [I do not feel I have] anything to contribute."

All three LSE teachers described themselves as "pawns" when working with the school principal because of a lack of open communication. Colleen felt she can not talk freely with the principal because he is "separated" from teachers, and Rose explained that she needs to "take more risks, to be more open, to talk to her about ideas a little bit more." John sensed little freedom to work with the school principal because he wants to be a principal one day. He stated,

I need to maintain as positive a relationship with my administrator as possible because he could very possible be my intern supervisor, and be giving me a recommendation. So I have to keep things pretty happy.

Summary and Discussion

Because this study was limited to six teachers – three HSE and three LSE teachers – we recognize the need to be cautious in generalizing the results beyond these six teachers. As we described, interpreted, and reflected on the context of the perceptions revealed by the teachers, we followed Eisner's (1991) recommendation for qualitative research: "The process of inference operates by providing a guide to perceptions, rather than formally forecasting the features of other states of affairs" (p. 103). We considered the generalizations tentatively as ideas to be considered, not as prescriptions to be followed. A summary of ideas that emerged from our study follows.

In this study, we found the HSE teachers to be personally, highly committed to working with colleagues and principals. They perceived themselves along with their colleagues and principals to have shared responsibility for decisions made about the future of the school. Learning from others with different ideas and establishing relationships with others that would facilitate this learning and create a positive working environment were primary goals among the HSE teachers. All three HSE teachers spoke about the nature of the relationships they saw as core to working collaboratively with others – relationships based on open, honest communication and that acknowledge the worth of each individual involved. These teachers considered themselves to be very capable of establishing such

relationships, and took the initiative to communicate with colleagues and principals so that relationships based on trust could be established. These teachers tolerated ideas and opinions different from their own as long as there was an agreement of basic values. All three HSE teachers mentioned the importance of relationships being based on shared values, so that there can be an understanding of the general direction of the school and of the purpose and function of working collaboratively. To these teachers, if there are few shared values, working with others in a productive manner becomes seriously jeopardized.

We found the LSE teachers to have little personal commitment to working with colleagues or school principals. Even though they, like the HSE teachers, saw the purpose of working with others as a way of improving decision making, they did not consider working with colleagues and principals as opportunities to learn or to move the school forward. Rather, working together was described more as a mechanical event that they are expected to perform. They spoke about being expected to make appearances at meetings with colleagues, to do their share of committee work, and to meet with the school principal only for evaluation and when a problem rose with a student or parent. The LSE teachers seemed alienated and distanced from others. This alienation was reflected in their personal relationships and the way in which they worked with others. None of the LSE teachers talked about the importance of building relationships that would support critical discussions. In fact, all three teachers were hesitant to become involved in critical discussions that might lead to "bad feelings" on the part of others or to them "getting into trouble." Experiences of working with colleagues and principals described by LSE teachers indicated they viewed communication with others to be manipulative. All three LSE teachers spoke of problems in their ability to communicate effectively with others. Consequently, the LSE teachers did not take the initiative to establish relationships with colleagues and school principals that would be supportive of shared decision-making.

Based on the ideas summarized above, attempts at empowering teachers extrinsically, such as through Site-based Management, may be more successful if teachers within a school setting have a high sense of self-empowerment, high intrinsic motivation, support and encourage the sharing of ideas, and value commitment and participation in relationships through effective communication. What if, however, within schools there are varying degrees of teachers' sense of self-empowerment, intrinsic motivation to work collaboratively? Based on what we found in our study, attempts at working collaboratively may be stymied if teachers do not approach working together in similar ways – if teachers do not share basic values, are not able to

establish positive relationships with others, or can not communicate in effective ways.

Certainly a key to attempts at teacher empowerment is principal leadership, for leadership is critical to empowerment within organizations. Kanter (1983) and Thomas and Velthouse (1990) claim that leaders who have a high level of self-empowerment for themselves are more likely to be able to develop intrinsic and extrinsic empowerment within organizations. High self-empowered leaders would encourage commitment, risk-taking, and innovation (Kanter, 1983), and they would energize workers by tapping idealism and building faith in their abilities to accomplish meaningful goals (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Bass describes leaders as needing to raise others to a greater awareness about the issue of consequence of actions and claims that this

heightening of awareness requires a leader with vision, self-confidence, and inner strength to argue successfully for what he [she] sees is right or good, not for what is popular or is acceptable according to the established wisdom of the time. (1985, p. 17)

If school leaders are not committed to the tasks they must perform, are not willing to take risks, do not have an ideal vision of what they are to accomplish, find little meaning in their jobs, and do not value empowerment (intrinsic and extrinsic), then there may be little hope that a sense of empowerment would be transmitted to teachers.

School leaders would need to be able to enhance intrinsic motivation among teachers in schools. Changes in intrinsic empowerment can occur through changes in organizational culture – changes that would enhance meaningfulness, a sense of competence, and self-determination (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). One way of improving a sense of meaning and commitment is through values clarification. Block (1987) concludes that values and values clarification can provide individuals with visions of what they, personally, hope to contribute to an organization or to life in general. Values create a commitment and hold individuals accountable for their actions. Fullan (in O'Neil, 1994) states: "Personal vision and moral purpose are essential, and they are building blocks of shared visions (p. 2)." Within an organizational setting, shared visions that are based on values provide what Berlew (1986, p. 34) calls the "pull," or the energy and influence that creates the spirit of the organization. Without this "pull" energy, the task of working with colleagues and school principals may have little personal meaning to teachers. Similarly, Hackman and Oldham (1980) explain that when workers do not intrinsically value a task or goal, they possess low degrees of psychic energy in that they display apathy or detachment and view themselves as distanced from significant events. And, when they feel that events control

them, they become emotionally negative and experience diminished self-esteem.

Vogt and Murrell (1990, p. 133) suggest that the process of enacting empowerment within an organization be "visualized on a continuum – from educating with a development orientation, to enhancement of relationships, to transformation of organizations. This process of moving from education to enhancement to transformation "occurs in individuals, work units, and systems as a whole" (p. 134). The development of self is crucial to empowerment in organizations, as McKibbin and Joyce (1980) conclude:

The general milieu of the school and the social movements of the times interact powerfully with the personalities of the teachers to create personal orientations which greatly influence how teachers view the world (and themselves in it), and those views largely control what the individual can see as possibilities for personal and professional growth and the kind of options to which they can relate. (p. 254)

Fullan, likewise, claims the importance of a continuum – of moving from individuals to the organization or system: "It's individuals, working, first of all, despite the system, and secondly, connecting with other kindred spirits, that will begin to develop the critical mass that changes the system" (cited in O'Neil, 1994, p. 2). Through the development of self, followed by the development of relationships with others in the school, teachers can become empowered and join in efforts to renew the school on a continual basis.

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