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Empowering Teachers as Leaders

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by
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Under the Direction of
Dr. Nabhani

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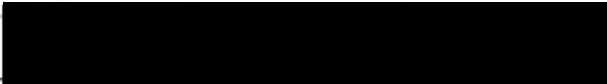
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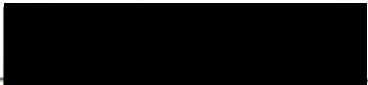
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ABSTRACT

Teachers' empowerment is the basis for most educational reform. This case study was designed to examine whether or not teachers are empowered in a selected private school and whether empowerment affects teachers' satisfaction. Participants were 25 teachers and the principal of the school. The instruments used were a questionnaire that included 19 questions, distributed to teachers and a semi-structured interview conducted with the principal. Results revealed that teachers are partially empowered in the school. They are involved in a limited extent in school's decisions school. They are also satisfied with their job. However, the major problem that hinders their full empowerment is financial and teachers are asking for increase in their wages.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the years many teachers went through a period of teaching under the supervision of principals who are described as authoritarian. They have been stressed out with heavy paper work and inadequate support from their principals. They were treated as employees who are required to do specific tasks planned in details by their principals or coordinators. Those teachers sometimes reached the point where they became bored, resentful and unhappy.

Empowering teachers is essential to school reform. It is one way to increase teachers' happiness and effectiveness in schools. What is meant by empowerment is giving teachers the opportunity to have autonomy, choice, responsibility and participation in decision-making in the school (Short, Greet & Michael, 1991). Knowing what empowerment has done for some teachers, it is crucial that all teachers experience the same opportunities other teachers have experienced. Empowering teachers as leaders is seen as a way to put teachers at the center of the reform movement and to keep good teachers in education. It will ensure that the teaching profession will be a rewarding experience (Erlandson & Bifano, 1987). In addition, it will increase teachers' satisfaction, which refers to the degree of teachers' identification with the organization, their perceived ability to contribute positively to the organization, and their feelings that they are doing a good job and that their opinions are valuable (Edwards, Green & Lyons, 2002).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether teacher empowerment affects teachers' job satisfaction. Principals should be aware of the fact that if teachers are empowered they will develop a sense of responsibility towards the school and will become effective staff members. Teaching will be more than just another job (Carr, 1997).

The research questions that this study addresses are:

- How, if at all, are teachers empowered in a selected private school?

- Does empowerment affect the level of teachers' job satisfaction in that school?

Method

This is a single-site case study of a private school. It examines teachers' and their principal's perceptions regarding teachers' empowerment and the effect of this empowerment on teachers' job satisfaction. It is based on the results obtained from a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire.

The reason why this school was chosen is that the researcher is a partner in that school and is currently working there. One feels that teachers in this school are satisfied; however, it is not known whether they truly feel empowered and whether or not this affects their job satisfaction. This study will be a great help for future practices.

Sample

A semi-structured interview was conducted with the principal of the selected private school. A questionnaire was distributed to 25 teachers working in the school. The questions in both the questionnaire and the interview are based on the research questions stated above.

Data collection and analysis

Information obtained from the interview is put in three different files. The first file is the transcript file. It includes every detail the interviewer and the interviewee mentioned during the interviews as well as any information the interviewer finds necessary for the analysis. The second file, the personal file, includes the interviewer's impression and perception of what was going on and being said during the interview. The third file, the analytical file, provides the basis for the data analysis. The first step of analysis is to develop a list of coding categories. Then a short name is assigned to each and a number to each subcategory. The codes are allocated in the transcript file and after that data coded to each category are collected together using index cards (Burns, 2000).

As for the questionnaire, it contains statements on a four point likert type scale including the categories: strongly agree, somewhat agree, strongly disagree, and somewhat disagree. The circled answers from the questionnaire are distributed under 4 columns, each representing one answer. Then, the number of circled items is tallied in each column. The product obtained in each column is the percentage of how many participants have circled the answer (Burns, 2000). The data analysis from the interview is checked against the information provided by the questionnaire.

Expected results

At the end of this study, the collected data were used to answer the research questions. One expected finding is that the more teachers are involved in different areas of school administration, the more they will be satisfied.

In this chapter, the purpose of the study and the method of how the data will be collected are stated. The next chapter, chapter 2, includes the literature review, chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study, chapter 4 presents the analysis and discussion of findings and chapter 5 summarizes and concludes the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent education reform one focus has been on developing ways which would improve teachers' commitment to their school. However, for teachers to be committed they should be satisfied in the institution in which they are working (Ma & Macmillan, 1999). Since empowered teachers are more satisfied in their chosen profession (Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002), this study focuses on examining teachers' perception of empowerment in a selected school and its effect on their job satisfaction. The reviewed studies will focus on teachers' empowerment, its effect on teachers' job satisfaction, and the role the principal of the school can play in empowering teachers.

Teachers' empowerment

In traditional school systems teachers are busy doing paper work and keeping order in their classrooms. They are required to follow rules set by administrators and teach assigned lessons without being able to give their opinion in what they are doing (Short & Rinehart, 1993). Studies were conducted to find a way that will help restructure the system in order to improve the quality of education provided to the new generation (Hackel, 1993). One outcome was the teachers' empowerment movement that urged administrators to allow teachers to perform their leadership duties and be part of the decision-making process in their schools (Edwards & Allred, 1993).

Lightfoot (1986) defined empowerment in the educational context as teacher's opportunities for autonomy, choice, responsibility, and participation in decision making in organizations. Mareoff (1998) suggested that teachers' empowerment consists of the three elements of improved status, increased knowledge and access to decision making. Czubaj (1999) noted that empowering teachers means teachers who are most knowledgeable of students' needs are given the chance to allocate funds, search for ways for improving the school, decide on educational programs, and decide on staff members. Teachers are essential in school improvement. Hence teachers must be given significant chances to be part of the critical decision making phases that

affect education within schools (Short, 1994a). For teachers to be leaders, they must assume new roles in school reforming such as being decision-makers, risk takers in change related matters, and effective collaborators (Walker & Peel, 1993). One of the best ways for improving the school system is by empowering teachers and allowing them to exercise discretion on issues concerning curriculum, policies and decisions affecting the school (Stone, 1995). Glickman (1990) notes that " the empowerment movement has put a light back into the eyes of talented, experienced teachers... the empowerment movement sends the message that teaching no longer has to be routinized, isolated, individual, and mindless"(P. 71).

Based on the empowerment school district project (Short, 1994a), which was conducted in nine different schools, six dimensions should be the basis for developing ways in which teachers become more empowered in their work. These are decision-making, teacher's autonomy, professional growth, teacher's status, teacher's impact, and teacher's self-efficacy.

The first dimension deals with giving teachers the opportunities to be part of critical decision-making in an open climate. Such work can include budgeting, teacher selection, scheduling, and curriculum planning. If this is done, not only will the school benefit but also teachers themselves become more capable of solving problems and evaluating the quality of the offered programs and more committed to the processes of school growth and development (short, 1994a). One way to measure the level of teachers' involvement in decision-making within schools is to gather information about what is actually happening in schools and what is perceived by different members as to be the best practices that should be present. Then a combination between the reality and the expectations would be of great use in order to understand teachers' level of involvement (Ferrera & Repa, 1993).

Giving teachers the freedom in making decisions related to specific tasks such as lesson organization, curriculum planning, choice of textbooks, and scheduling will help them feel autonomous (Short, 1994a). A survey was conducted by Keiser and Shen (2000) and questionnaires were distributed to nine thousand principals and forty seven thousand one hundred five teachers working in the public schools of fifty states and the district of Colombia, in order to investigate the effect that teachers have on different areas. Findings indicated that principals believe that teachers have more power than they actually think especially when making decisions about curriculum, discipline procedures, and in-service programs. However, it was also indicated that

teachers are not empowered enough when dealing with budgeting and evaluation of personnel. In order to promote autonomy of teachers, they should have the opportunity to work with self-managing teams. These teams have specific roles and responsibilities. They monitor their own performance and assess it. They also take the initiatives for helping each other improve their performance (Short, 1994b).

Another dimension of empowerment is professional growth, which deals with teachers' needs to be given the chance to grow, extend their knowledge and develop all required skills. Teachers must master all teaching skills and be fully competent in the subjects they teach (Short, 1994a) and in related knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Teachers must use their potentials to improve their capabilities and the performance of the whole school (Newman, King, & Youngs, 2000). However, for teachers to develop such confidence and abilities, schools should provide teachers with structured professional assistance that will help them improve themselves and their students. Teachers' preparation programs and mentoring services by outstanding teachers, whether working in the same school or another one, can support growth (Chase, 1998).

Concerning status and impact, teachers should feel that they are highly appreciated by parents, administrators, and peers and that all their efforts are acknowledged. They should be provided with good working conditions, little paper work, and free time. They should believe that their roles are major and that they have great effect on students and the school as a whole (Short & Johnson, 1994).

Self-efficacy is another dimension of empowerment. Teachers must have faith in their abilities to help their students grow, learn, and develop morally and mentally. They should have positive self-images in relation to their effect on students' achievement and personality development (Klecker & Loadman, 1998). Empowering teachers helps in increasing their job satisfaction which in turn improves their feeling of efficacy (Rinehart & Short, 1994).

Teachers' satisfaction

Teachers who are more empowered are more satisfied in their chosen profession (Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002). Empowering teachers increases job satisfaction when teachers are involved in scheduling, budgeting, and curriculum development. To do so, school administrators must develop ways for involving

teachers in management processes in order to be productive and beneficial (Rinehart & Short, 1994). Moreover, empowered teachers become intrinsically motivated, responsible and independent. They take on the characteristics of risk-takers, collaborators, and self-evaluators (Stone, 1995). Based on a study of the weight teachers give to different aspects of their work, results showed that giving them the chance to be part of decision making processes increases their job satisfaction. Having them become part of educational reform is one duty that they would like to be involved in (Shann, 1998).

Job satisfaction leads to high morales of employees which in turn leads to great productivity (Barry, 1997). Therefore, teachers' morale and self-efficacy are critical components in the restructuring of schooling. Without teachers' belief that they can make change, meaningful change can not occur (Ross, 1994). One way to increase staff morale is by giving them rewards, intrinsic personalized rewards such as appreciation by others and external materialistic ones (Latham, 1998). Concerning efficacy, teachers must believe that their behaviors can affect the education of their students. They must recognize that they have the capacity and power to make key decisions which will affect their role and their students' performance (Lampe, 2002). A survey that was conducted to investigate the relationship between teacher participation and staff morale also showed these two variables to be positively correlated, that is, the more teachers participate in decision-making, the higher their morale (Jones, 1997).

Job satisfaction is an indicator of whether individuals will be affectively connected to the institution, will merely comply with directives or will quit (Ma & Macmillan, 1999). Teacher satisfaction can play a critical role in mitigating job-related stress. This is important because stress is common for teachers and because stress can reduce teachers' commitment and effectiveness (Smith & Bourke, 1990). One of the aspects that affect teachers' job satisfaction is a principal who tries to reduce such frustrations as paper work and increase empowering behavior (Ma & Macmillan, 1999). A study on the relation between principals' empowering behaviors and teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and job stress showed that the higher the principal empowering behaviors are evident the more motivated teachers are and the more they feel that their opinions are valuable (Davis & Wilson, 2000). Moreover, the results of a mailed survey that was sent to 4428 American teachers working in schools that have designed their own restructuring plan and have implemented them,

showed that teachers rated positively on all items of the job satisfaction subscale of the National Survey of Teacher Education Graduates (Klecher & Loadman, 1999).

In conclusion, study findings have related teachers' empowerment to increased job satisfaction, which in turn leads to greater teacher productivity. Hence, it is important for school principals to take these findings into consideration since principals can play a crucial role in helping their teachers feel empowered.

Role of the principal

Principals, as leaders of the schools, have great impact on everything and everyone. Their role is to facilitate the work of the teachers and to work cooperatively with those to whom they delegated responsibilities (Czubaj, 1999) and help them become more empowered (Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002). A principal must expect leadership attributes from teachers and reward them for it (Carr, 1997), as well as try to help them develop professionally and recognize the efforts done by them (Rinehart & Short, 1994).

Principals need to be aware of the effect that teachers' perceptions of their occupation can have on their level of job satisfaction (Bogler, 2002). Based on the survey (Williams, 2000) that was conducted to analyze teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness, teachers at schools that were nominated for effectiveness and educational quality, viewed effective principals as those with great insight and ability to work cooperatively with all personnel. They are principals who work with their staff to develop school goals and discuss changes. They have great abilities to direct an organization with the help of all faculty members. Therefore, principals should find ways to get closer to teachers and actually listen to them (Green, 1989) and try to establish trust (Edwards, 1992). This is because the relationship that is established between the teachers and the principal has a great impact on teachers' satisfaction and new teachers' sense of comfort and belongingness within their schools (Ma & Macmillan, 1999). Joint effort between teachers themselves and teachers and their principal is a must for productive outcomes. This should be done by having regular meetings and giving teachers the chances to enhance their leadership potentials and make and maintain change. Teachers must not feel powerless (Coyle, 1997).

Thus, school principals are in positions to enhance the job satisfaction of teachers. They need to remember that this may positively influence performance,

quality of work life, and organizational effectiveness (Rinehart & Short, 1994). Principals who involve faculty in decision-making and provide professional growth opportunities may find their instructors experiencing greater job satisfaction, especially if these teachers gain status and autonomy, and have an impact on students' achievement. Teachers experiencing this success will respond with enhanced motivation and work effectiveness (Rinehart & Short, 1994).

Open communication paths help teachers attain satisfaction (Michalsky, 2000). It is essential for principals to learn ways of communication in order to be able to understand their teachers' points of view and reach collaborative decisions (Garmston & Wellman, 1998). Teachers must be motivated to improve the quality of their work and should feel comfortable about discussing matters with the principal in an open communication atmosphere (Barry, 1997). There should be an open climate that enables information to flow smoothly (Davis & Wilson, 2000). Principals must realize that change in their role from controlling figures to those who know how to empower teachers, occurs by acknowledging the role of communication and giving teachers the chance to express their ideas, make suggestions, and be rational risk-takers. After doing so, principals must reflect on their change taking into account their major purpose of change and analyze the reactions and consequences of this change. Finally, administrators must always be willing to search for alternative ways to achieve the desired goal, which is change (Laud, 1998).

In conclusion, principals as well as teachers should be prepared for their new roles. However to prepare them, in-service programs where teachers and administrators understand their roles and acquire the necessary skills, can be of great help (Klecker & Loadman, 1998). This study examines teachers and principals' perception of teachers' empowerment and its effect on teachers' job satisfaction, hoping that the concept of teachers' empowerment will be clearer to principals who decide to follow this new approach in managing schools. It adds reliability to the previous studies conducted in relation to this topic.

The next chapter will address the methodology of the study. It will include the purpose, method, sample, data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents an overview of the case study methodology, the instruments that were used to collect data and the way they were administered. It also includes the sampling method that is used. The research questions that this study addresses are:

- How, if at all, are teachers empowered in a selected private school?
- Does empowerment affect the level of teachers' satisfaction in that school?

The table below states the purpose of the study and its relationship to the research questions.

<u>Purpose of study</u>	<u>Research Questions</u>
To investigate whether teacher empowerment affects teachers' job satisfaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How, if at all, are teachers empowered in a selected private school? • Does empowerment affect the level of teachers' satisfaction?

This is a single-site case study of a private school. It examines teachers' and their principal's perception regarding teachers' empowerment and the effect of this empowerment on teachers' job satisfaction. It is based on the results obtained from a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire.

A case study is a study of a group of persons or events in their own environment. This study examines a small number of respondents and tries to capture reality as it is, as seen and experienced by those respondents. Its purpose is to interpret meaningful human actions and interpretations that people give of themselves or others.

Sample

Since the population is carefully defined, a representative sample can be drawn. Therefore, a random sample was chosen to fill in the questionnaire. This is done to ensure that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected and the selection of one subject is independent of the selection of any other. The number of teachers working in the selected school is 57. Each teacher's name was written on a slip of paper then the slips were shuffled in a container and drawn out at random until the required sample size which is 25 was obtained (Burns, 2000).

The instruments

A case study usually employs research procedures that produce descriptive data like interviews which presents in the respondents' own words their views and experiences (Sarantakos, 1993).

In order to improve the validity of the research, in addition to the semi-structured interview another instrument was used for collecting the data which is a questionnaire. The aim is to study human behavior from more than one standpoint by using a variety of methods. This is because the more the variety of the methods the greater the validity of the research and the researcher's confidence about the findings (Burns, 2000).

Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires are most commonly used in social sciences. They both have advantages over other methods of data collection. The most common advantages of semi-structured interviews are that they provide the interviewer with the opportunity to observe non-verbal behavior and record spontaneous answers. In addition to that, when interviews are employed the interviewer has control over the identity of the respondent, the environment, the order of the questions, the time, place and date of the interview. Questionnaires provide an amount of information that other methods can not provide. They are less expensive than other methods, produce quick results, can be completed at the respondent's convenience and insure greater anonymity for the respondent. In addition, they help to avoid bias and errors caused by the presence of the interviewer and offer an objective view on the issue (Sarantakos, 1993).

Data collection and analysis

A semi-structured interview was conducted with the principal of the selected private school. The reason why a semi-structured interview is chosen is that it permits greater flexibility than the closed-ended type of questions and permits a more valid response from the participant's perception of reality (Burns, 2000).

The questionnaires were distributed to 25 teachers working in the school. The questions in both the questionnaire as well as the interview are based on the research questions stated above.

Information obtained from the interview is put in three different files. The first file is the transcript file. It includes every detail the interviewer and the interviewee mentioned during the interviews as well as any information the interviewer finds necessary for the analysis. The second file, the personal file, includes the interviewer's impression and perception of what was going on and being said during the interview. The third file, the analytical file, provides the basis for the data analysis. The first step of analysis is to develop a list of coding categories. Then a short name is assigned to each and a number to each subcategory. The codes are allocated in the transcript file and after that data coded to each category are collected together using index cards (Burns, 2000).

As for the questionnaire, it contains statements on a four point likert type scale including the categories: strongly agree, somewhat agree, strongly disagree, and somewhat disagree. The circled answers from the questionnaire are distributed under 4 columns, each representing one answer. Then, the number of circled items was tallied in each column. The product obtained in each column is the percentage of how many participants have circled the answer (Burns, 2000).

The next chapter will present the data that will be analyzed. The data analysis from the interview will be checked against the information provided by the questionnaire. The purpose of doing so is to find meaning in the data. Comparisons, contrasts and insights will be made and interpreted. Emerging ideas will be revealed and findings will be related to research cited in chapter two.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The first section in this chapter presents the results of the interview with the principal and the questionnaires that were distributed to teachers. The next section discusses findings of this study by comparing the principal's opinion and the teachers' opinions of empowerment with findings from the literature review. It answers the research questions that this study addresses, which are:

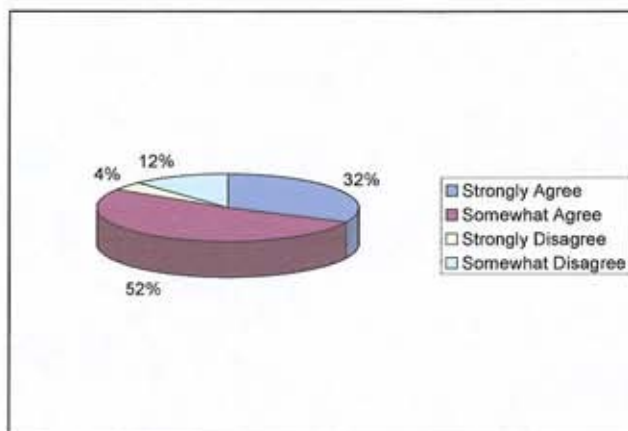
- How, if at all, are teachers empowered in a selected private school?
- Does empowerment affect the level of teachers' satisfaction?

Results of Questionnaire and interview

Principal's role

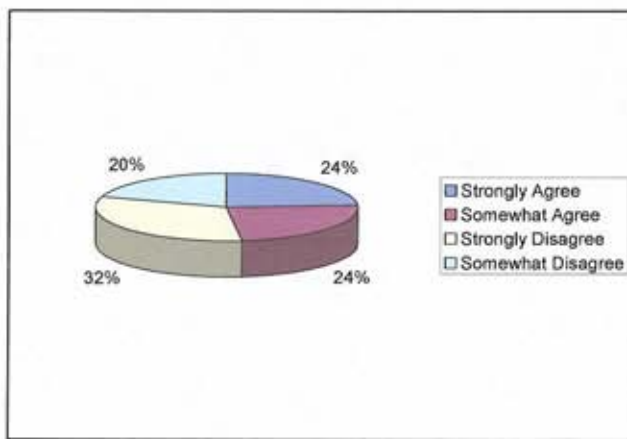
When asked about his role, the principal of the school replied that his main role is to plan for the school and facilitate the work of the teachers. He added that he is the one responsible for making sure that in his school there is an atmosphere of mutual trust, commitment, and respect. He meets with his teachers twice during the academic year and whenever there is something urgent. As for teachers, they feel the same. For instance, 52% of them somewhat agree and 32% strongly agree that there is enough communication between both parties (figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Communication between principal and teachers



The meetings are held with teachers to discuss academic issues, strategies, and problems that they might face with their students. This way teachers and their principal would think of solutions to such problems. However, a large percentage of teachers do not agree with the principal. For instance, 32% of teachers strongly disagree and 20% somewhat disagree that they meet with their principal to discuss curriculum issues (figure 4.2).

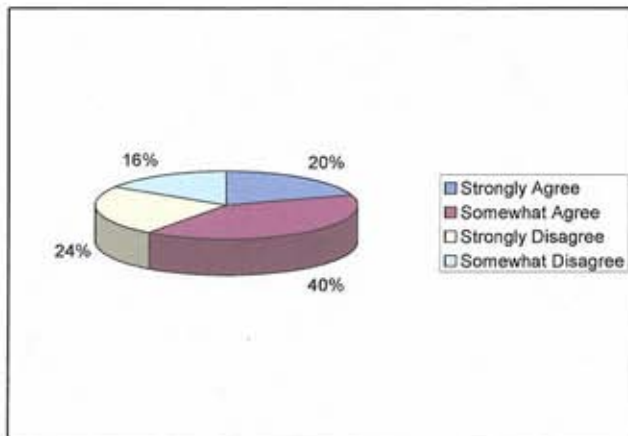
Figure 4.2 Meetings related to curriculum issues



Teachers' empowerment

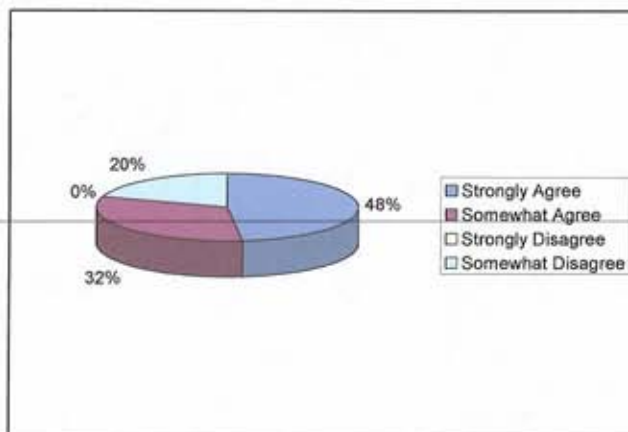
"Teachers are really the main operators in the school. They are the ones who are doing the work...". This was the answer of the principal when asked about teachers' role in the school. It's true that the objectives of the school are mainly set by the board of administration and coordinators, but teachers, besides their roles as instructors, can help in developing the strategy of the school. They can help in giving opinions and ideas on how to operate the school and how to manage it. Their opinion on how different strategies can be administered or how they can be put to work will be taken into consideration. So teachers help as advisors but not the main setters of the objectives. As for teachers, 40% of them somewhat agree and 20% strongly agree that their principal expects them to be a part of critical decision-making in school (figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Teachers as decision-makers



In addition, teachers agree with their principal that they are treated fairly and their opinion is welcomed as long as it contributes positively to the institution. For instance, 48% strongly agree and 32% somewhat agree that they perceive themselves as important members in the institution (figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4 Perception of teachers

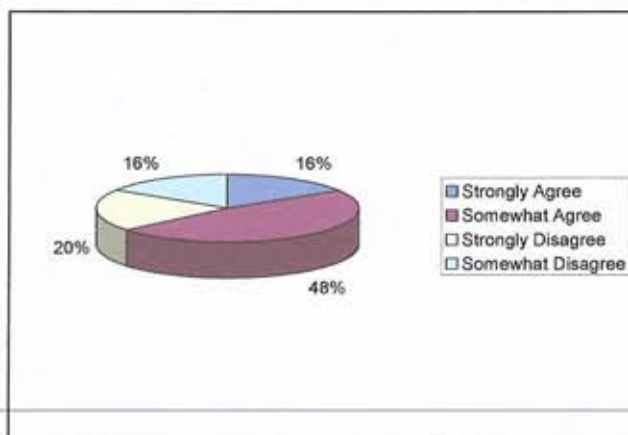


Teachers are considered as leaders in their classes. The principal stated that they are expected to be industrious and hard working, and to sacrifice some of their personal life or time whenever the school is in need for them. The main feature of the teachers' job should be commitment to work and to be truly building a relationship with the student and the supervisor. Their initiatives are most of the time encouraged. However, some initiatives might not be put into work due to financial problems. Due

to these financial problems teachers are not rewarded with merit payment but other ways of recognition are available such as promotion or public appreciation. So the principal agreed that the recognition of teachers is mainly informal and there is no set plan for rewarding them.

According to the principal's interview, the teachers' workload is reasonable considering what is required by law and what other schools are doing. It is between 20 and 27 periods a week which is fair in his opinion. As for professional growth, teachers are required to attend workshops that the administration sees necessary for them to attend. In addition, sometimes the textbooks' publishers offer training sessions to the school teachers. However, it's not always the school that pays for these workshops and again this is due to some financial problems. Both teachers and their principal agree that the school provides teachers with training that they need (figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Teachers' training

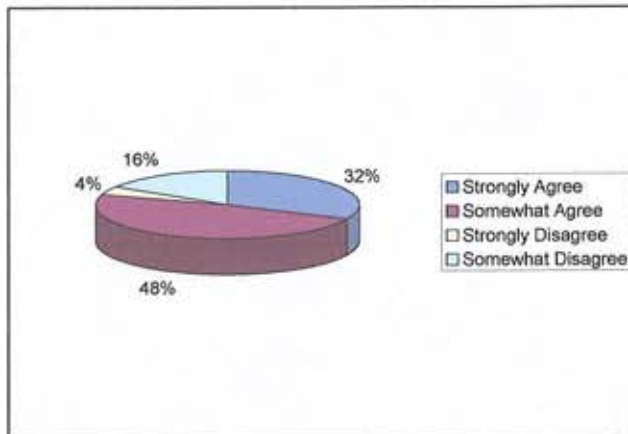


Teachers' satisfaction

The principal thinks that his teachers are happy and satisfied in the school. He said "since many of our teachers have been with us for more than 10 years this shows that they are happy and they have chosen to stay with us". Moreover, "Our relation in the school is just like family. Our teachers have been at our school for a long time, most of them are friends, and there is an atmosphere of respect, commitment and mutual trust. Teachers are all treated fairly. For instance, there's equity in salaries. Everybody's opinions or ideas are welcomed as long as they contribute positively to the success of the school. In addition, any complaint by teachers is taken into consideration and the principal tries to solve it immediately. Teachers feel the same.

48% of them somewhat agree and 32% strongly agree that they feel part of a team working toward the school's mission (figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 Teachers working as a team



The principal also comments that teachers are willing to continue their career at his school since they have a history of keeping teachers more than 10 years. This is true unless some of them might find a more attractive offer. This would probably be the main reason for leaving. Furthermore, his teachers would definitely recommend employment at his school. The only problem is money, and money is only part of the satisfaction for teachers. He believes that when teachers are employed in an organization where they can feel that they are trusted and welcomed, this is a much more important aspect of satisfaction. As for teachers, 62% of them agreed that the school should re-evaluate the wages of teachers. The salaries should be raised and teachers should be promoted according to their work, achievement, degrees and experiences.

Findings from both instruments are somewhat in harmony with each other. Teachers and their principal believe that there is adequate communication between both parties. Teachers meet more often with their principal to discuss different issues and their opinion is valuable. Teachers are satisfied in the school, their workload is reasonable and they are provided with enough training as needed. However, the major problem is financial and teachers are asking for increase in their wages.

Discussion

Throughout this section the principal's opinion and the teachers' opinions of empowerment are compared with the literature review. The questions that this study addresses are answered.

The first question deals with whether teachers are empowered in the school. As mentioned in the literature, six dimensions should be the basis for developing ways in which teachers become more empowered in their work. These are decision-making, teachers' autonomy, professional growth, teacher's status, teacher's impact, and teacher's self-efficacy (Short, 1994). According to the analysis of the data, there is no relationship between teachers' perception of empowerment and teachers' characteristics such as: age, gender, and school level. The outcome of both the interview with the principal and the questionnaire distributed to teachers reveals that teachers' as well as their principal's perceptions of whether teachers are empowered or not are in harmony despite some differences regarding issues like the level of involvement in decision-making and the financial problem. The results show that teachers are somehow empowered in the school and the main problem that hinders their empowerment is financial.

Participation in Decision-making

Teachers' level of involvement in school was not really clear. Research findings in the literature reveal that in order for teachers to be empowered, they have to have the opportunity to participate in decision making in the school (Lightfoot, 1986, Mareoff, 1998, Czubaj, 1999 and Short, 1994). The answers of the principal show that he believes that his teachers are involved in decision-making in the school. He sees them as the main operators in the institution and their opinions and ideas are valuable. What the principal said is in harmony with the definition of empowerment by Lightfoot (1986) that empowering teachers is giving them the opportunity for choice, autonomy, responsibility and participation in decision making in the school. But the principal and the teachers have different points of views in relation to the level of involvement of teachers. For instance, the principal believes that his teachers are involved in decisions related to the curriculum but teachers do not agree with him at this point. Findings in the literature reveal that involving teachers in decisions related to curriculum planning not only benefits the school but also teachers themselves become more capable of evaluating the quality of the offered programs

and more committed to the processes of school growth and development. In addition, it will help them feel autonomous (Short, 1994).

Teacher training

As for professional growth which is another dimension of teachers' empowerment, both parties' points of view were the same. The principal believes that he provides his teachers with enough training and they agree with him. This is necessary since teachers must master all teaching skills and be fully competent in the subjects they teach (Short, 1994). However, the problem lies in the fact that the school can not afford to pay for all the workshops, so sometimes teachers themselves are required to pay. This may be a problem because sometimes they cannot afford to pay for the workshops and this will hinder them from attending these. However, there is a solution to such a problem. For instance, Chase (1998) found that teachers' preparation programs and mentoring services by outstanding teachers working in the same school can support teachers' professional growth. This could be done and the money problem will be solved.

Teachers' status and self-efficacy

Concerning status, impact and self-efficacy, teachers feel that they are appreciated for their work and that they are part of a team. They have faith in their abilities and nothing at the school keeps them from doing their best everyday. This is vital according to Klecker and Goldman (1998) because it will help teachers have positive self-images in relation to their effect on students' achievement and personality development. Teachers also feel that their workload is reasonable and their effort is acknowledged. If they do a good job they can count on being promoted; however, they cannot count on making more money (See Appendix C). Again this is due to financial problems that the school is facing. The principal agrees with his teachers and he is convinced that there should be an alternative way of recognition of teachers other than raising their salaries until the school overcomes the financial problem. This is in harmony with Latham (1998) who found that one way to increase staff morale, excluding the external materialistic reward, is giving them intrinsic personalized ones.

Teachers' satisfaction

Teachers are satisfied in the school. One study finding shows that teachers have confidence in the leadership of their school and this feeling is very important because whenever the principal establishes trust with his teachers this would have a

great impact on teachers' satisfaction and belongingness within the school (Ma & Macmillan, 1999). Teachers feel respected by their principal and there is adequate communication between both parties. This is very essential because as it was found in the literature, open communication paths help teachers attain satisfaction in their job (Michalsky, 2000).

Teachers perceive themselves as important members in the institution, are planning to continue their career at school and would recommend employment at the school to friends. Most teachers have already been working in the school for more than ten years and are still willing to continue working in the institution. This may be due to the fact that teachers are partially empowered in the school and as findings in the literature review show, teachers who are empowered are satisfied in their profession (Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002). The only reason that would lead teachers to change the school may be another financially attracting offer as the principal thought. However, again if teachers are really empowered, regardless of the money issue, they become intrinsically motivated (Stone, 1995). This fact may have a great effect over their choice.

In conclusion, in the above case study, teachers were found to be partially empowered. They are involved in a limited extent in decision-making in the school. However, they have confidence in the leadership of their school and they are on good terms with their principal. There is adequate communication between both parties and teachers are treated with respect. This fact makes them feel satisfied with their job and willing to continue their career in the school regardless of the money problem.

The next chapter, chapter 5, includes the conclusion of the study. The first section presents implications for future practices. The second one addresses the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Since teachers' empowerment was found to positively affect teachers' job satisfaction, it is important to look at the implications for school principals. Thus, throughout this chapter the implications for future practices are discussed and then the limitations of the study are stated.

Implications for practice

Principals need to implement different strategies to increase the level of teachers' empowerment. Most importantly, principals should provide a supportive environment that encourages teachers to reflect on their school practices. Principals should also facilitate reflective practices by teachers and make it possible for them to implement those practices. This includes teachers' visions, opinions, and ideas.

Principals must view their teachers as leaders in the school. Teachers should collaborate and share their expertise. Therefore teachers should be given the opportunity to be part of decision-making processes. They should be given the chance to search for ways to improve the school. For instance, they should be allowed to decide on issues concerning curriculum, policies and educational programs. Teachers should also be given the opportunity to take initiatives without fear of consequences. To be able to do so, teachers should be provided with structured professional assistance that will help them grow and improve themselves. For instance, workshops as well as mentoring services will help them expand their knowledge and be updated with new practices and ways of teaching.

Communication between principals and teachers is crucial. Therefore, principals should find ways to get closer to teachers and listen to them. This could be done through regular meetings. During these meetings, teachers should feel comfortable sharing their views. In addition they should feel that their opinions are valuable. In turn, it will increase their morale and motivate them to do their best.

Limitation of the study

This study was conducted in one school and with the participation of a small sample, hence it can not be generalized to all private schools found in Lebanon. It stresses on teachers' as well as their principals' perception of empowerment. Future research should be done on other facets of empowerment by interviewing and observing principals, coordinators, heads of departments and teachers working in different private schools in Lebanon.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers' Satisfaction Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Your specific answers will be completely anonymous. The following questions are for analytic purposes only and your views are extremely important.

Section 1

1. How long have you worked for your school?

- Less than one year
- One year to less than two years
- Two years to less than five years
- Five years to less than ten years
- Ten years or more

2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

3. At which level do you teach?

- Preschool
- Elementary
- Intermediate
- Secondary

Section 2

1. I have confidence in the leadership of my school

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

2. There is adequate communication between teachers and the principal of the school.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

3. My principal expects me to be a part of critical decision-making in school

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

4. I meet with my principal more often to discuss issues related to curriculum

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

5. I meet with my principal more often to discuss practices that should be done in School

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

6. I am on good terms with my principal

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

7. My principal treats me with respect

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

8. Nothing at my school keeps me from doing my best everyday

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

9. If I do a good job I can count on making more money

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

10. If I do a good job I can count on being promoted

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

11. I feel part of a team working toward the school's mission

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

12. I feel that my work load is reasonable

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

13. My school provides me with enough training as I need

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

14. Overall I'm satisfied with my school

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

15. I perceive myself as an important member the institution

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

16. I feel that my principal executes my ideas

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

17. I'm planning to continue my career in my school

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

18. I would recommend employment at my school to a friend

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree

19. What can my school do to increase my satisfaction as a teacher?

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions

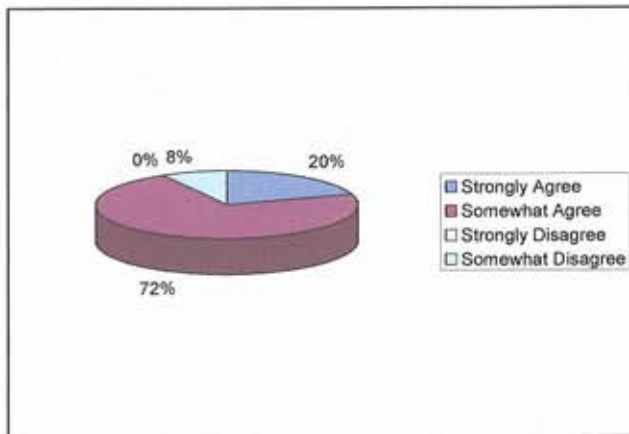
1. What do you think your role as a principal is?
2. What roles do teachers play in your school?
3. How often do you meet with your teachers? For what purposes?
4. How do you involve your teachers in developing goals and changes?
5. What type of relation do you have with your teachers? (Respect, trust...)
6. What leadership attributes do you expect from your teachers?
7. Do you encourage teachers' initiative? How?
8. How do you give recognition for work that is well done? (Being promoted, valued, more money...)
9. How do you describe the workload of teachers?
10. How do you provide training for your teachers?
11. How do you ensure fair treatment of teachers in the school?
12. Do you think your teachers are satisfied in the school? What tells you that?

 - Are their opinions valuable?
 - Do you think that they are planning to continue their career in your school?
 - Do you think that they would recommend employment to a friend at your school?

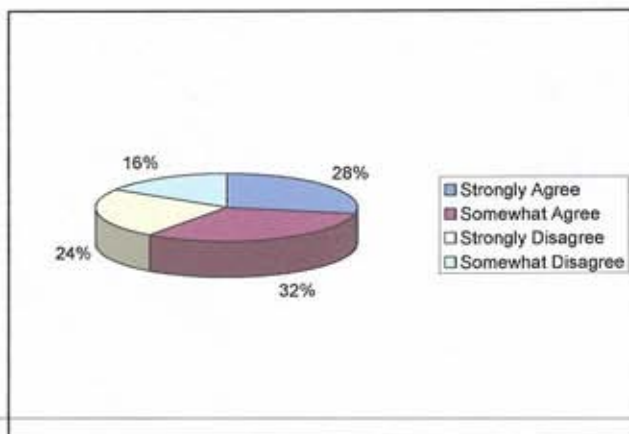
APPENDIX C

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

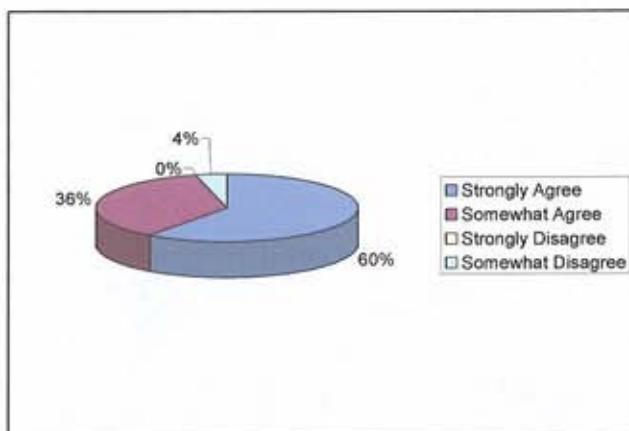
Question 1: I have confidence in the leadership pf my school.



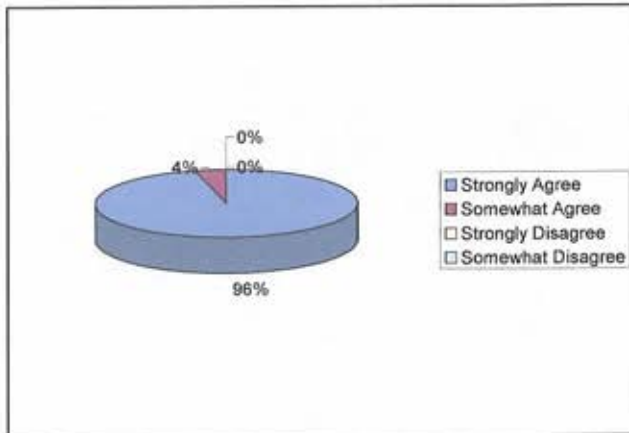
Question 5: I meet with my principal more often to discuss practices that should be done in school



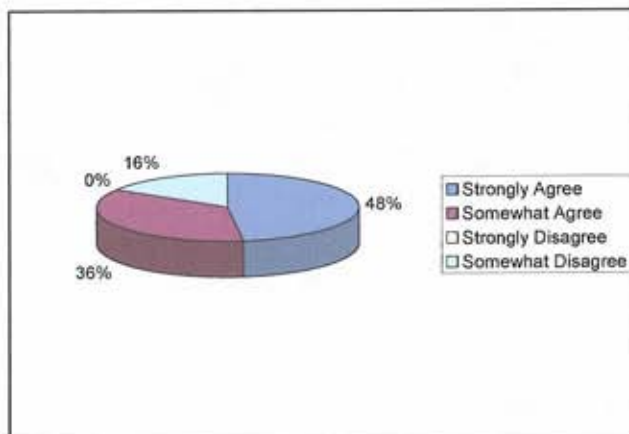
Question 6: I am on good term with my principal



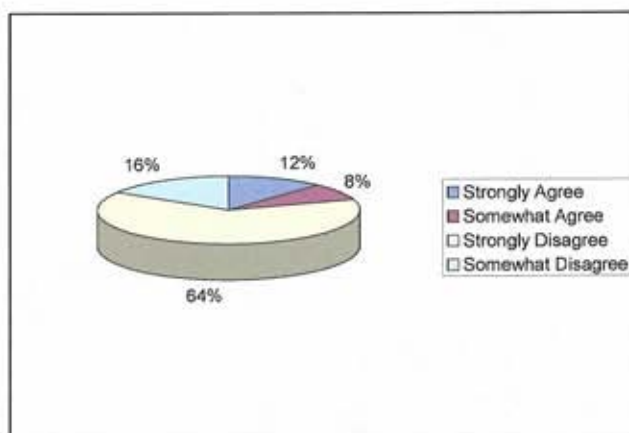
Question 7: my principal treats me with respect



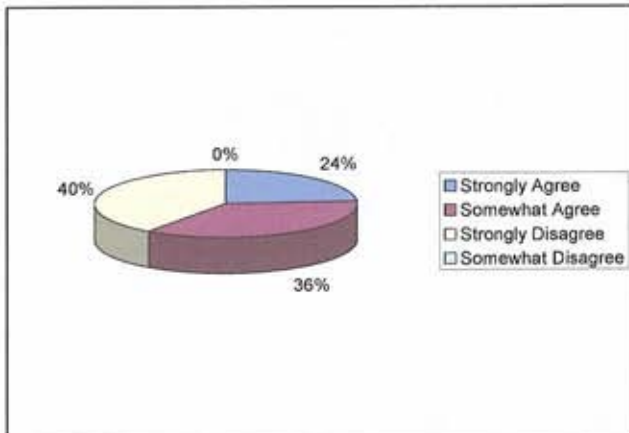
Question 8: nothing at my school keeps me from doing my best everyday



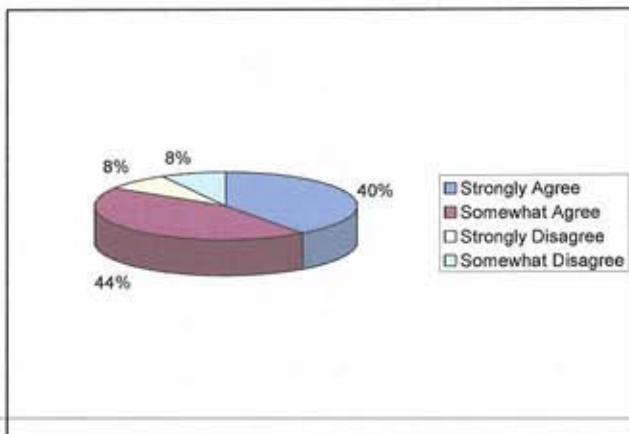
Question 9: if I do a good job I can count on making more money



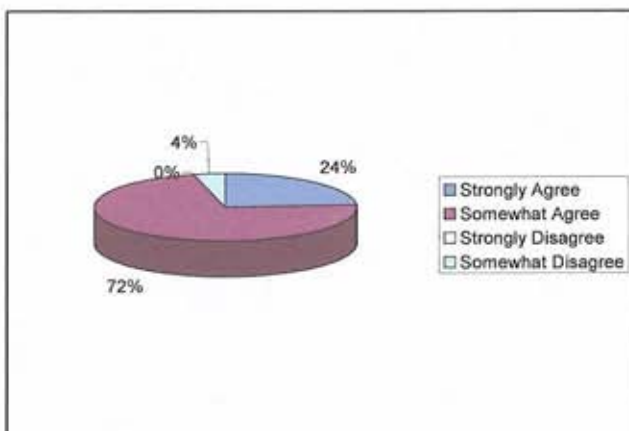
Question 10: if I do a good job I can count on being promoted



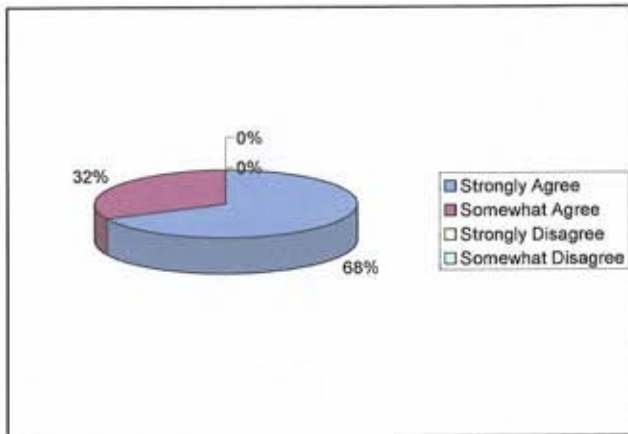
Question 12: I feel that my workload is reasonable



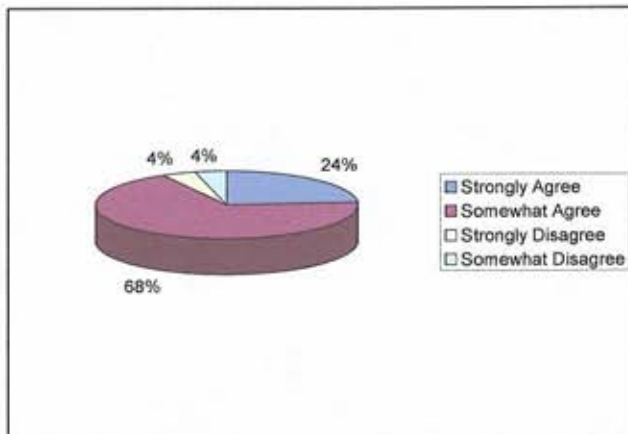
Question 14: overall I am satisfied with my school



Question 17: I'm planning to continue my career in my school



Question 18: I would recommend employment at my school to a friend



Question 16: I feel that my principal executes my ideas.

