

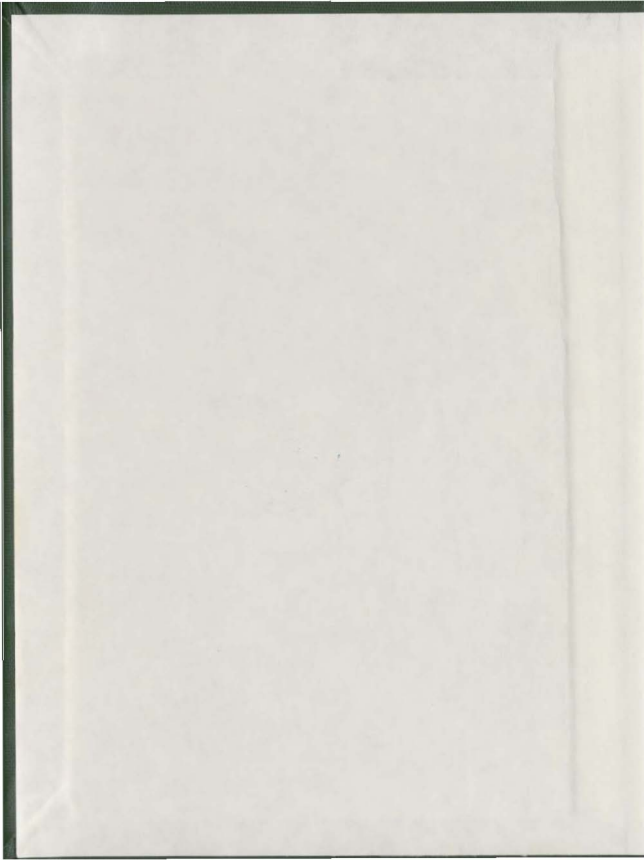
THE ROLE OF THE POLITICIAN AND THE  
CIVIL SERVANT IN THE POLICY PROCESS:  
A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CASE STUDY

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THE ROLE OF THE POLITICIAN AND THE CIVIL SERVANT  
IN THE POLICY PROCESS: A DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION CASE STUDY

by



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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze and describe the role of the politician and the civil servant in the policy process. The case study approach was utilized by the researcher and focused on the amendment to Section 12a of "The Schools' Act, 1968." Particular attention was paid to the decision-making process as it applied to influentials in a governmental Department of Education.

Data were collected during a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was an adaptation of an approach used by Stapleton in a 1975 study concerning the politics of educational innovations. Information was also obtained from copies of correspondence and other documentation.

Findings and conclusions from the study indicate that policy making in the Department of Education adhered to a policy process. However, formal communication in the organization was restricted to Senior and Administrative Officials. Input into the policy from external interest groups was present, but decision-makers were identified as top level civil servants.

Recommendations for action included formalized communication methods for Professional Staff and external interest groups. The implementation of a structure evaluation process concerning policy was also recommended. With respect to further study, the researcher recommended the

study of interest group involvement in governmental policy development, a comparison of the roles of politicians and civil servants in various governmental departments in the policy process, and the development of policy as it adheres to particular models.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the needs of handicapped people have become a focal point for a variety of institutions and private groups throughout the world. The International Year of the Disabled, the International Year of the Child and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms have, among other things, highlighted the obvious need for a restructuring of our society when viewed from the perspective of a physical or mental disability.

Change is needed in social mores, in values, and especially, in the economy, if handicapped people are to be fully included in the mainstream of society. The school is the place to begin dealing with society's many inadequacies. In the neighbourhood school the handicapped individual should profit from a program aimed toward the highest degree of independence possible. Just as important, however, attitudes towards disabled people should be formed in an environment which fosters learning for all. Thus, society should eventually view the needs of handicapped pupils in the same light as the needs of all children in the educational system.

This change in philosophy, however, requires modification of the many rules that govern the institution of education. The effects of proposed necessary legislative amendments are viewed in different ways by the systems which

are being asked to welcome the handicapped pupil and provide educational programming. These effects are felt by those both inside and outside the educational structure. A new policy to address the educational needs of handicapped persons is one which characterizes a major refocusing of society as a whole. Because of this, a policy decision is neither easy nor quick; however, most agree it is necessary. Both provinces and states have felt it imperative at least to begin the questioning out of which hopefully will come the answer to the needs of the handicapped person. It is within a structure heretofore concerned with nonhandicapped persons that policy to address the educational needs of disabled persons is considered. As is often the case, the process to formulate policy follows a political path which is ultimately intertwined with the educational route.

Housego (1965) contends that the pattern of policy development in education at the provincial level is typically that of the politics of interest groups. The genteel politics that once characterized educational decision-making is giving way to the politics of protest and confrontation (Cistone, 1972). Consequently, the educational structure is becoming increasingly politicized.

Alternatives have most likely been proposed by those dissatisfied with current legislation. Choices are made based on a variety of circumstances. Therefore, the legislative proposals presented by governmental policy-makers may be perceived as an assessment of political acceptability

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both in and out of government (Jennings, 1977). "Thus, legislative policies originate in demands for action, not in questions of truth, knowledge, wisdom, or cost effectiveness" (Mitchell, 1981, p. 21).

Martin (1962) states that politics is nothing more (nor less) than the contest which develops around the definition and control of policy. He further contends that the political system is the framework of arrangements through which politics is conducted.

A political system may be viewed as an arrangement of human interactions through which valued things in a society are authoritatively allocated and accepted as legitimate. An underlying purpose is the accomplishment of certain goals (Wirt & Kirst, 1972). This authoritative allocation is often contingent upon the struggle demonstrated by individuals or groups affected by a decisional outcome.

Authoritative endorsement of both material and symbolic values exists in all social, political, biological and economic systems. Changes in the system may alter the hopes and expectations of members. This, in turn, may reflect changes in the demands placed on authorities (Easton, 1965b). Nonetheless, mechanisms for value allocations are present, though they may differ in form, time and place.

The accuracy of many decision-making observations may be addressed by analyzing the administrative and political processes through which policy demands are filtered. This filtering mechanism becomes a vital component in the overall

governmental policy process. It performs a key function from the perspective of the politician who is constitutionally responsible for all departmental behaviour (Burns, 1961).

Development and implementation of policy by a governmental body is an intricate and involved process. How the central participants, elected members and officers, carry out their various interrelated roles and activities is a key to understanding this process (Jennings, 1977).

#### Statement of the Problem

The policy-making process is often viewed as a forum wherein needs are identified and people's discontents become known. Policy is made by government to bring services in line with community desires (Jennings, 1977) which reflect community needs.

In Newfoundland, ratification of an amendment to Section 12a of the Schools' Act serves as an example of a major policy shift by a governmental department. As of December, 1979 school boards are now responsible for the provision of educational services for "children who for a physical or mental cause require special classes" (Section 12a, Schools' Act). Prior to this amendment, the responsibility lay with the Department of Education. Analysis of the process involved in relation to roles played by Department of Education officials in the development of this policy was conducted. More specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:



1. What role was played by the Senior Officials, the Newfoundland Minister and Deputy Minister of Education, in the development of the policy decision to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act?
2. What roles did the following play in development of this policy:
  - (i) Administrative Officials of the Department of Education?
  - (ii) Professional Staff of the Department of Education?
3. What access channels were utilized and by whom for input into the policy-making process?
4. What was the reason for the decision to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act?
5. To what extent does this policy process concur with the model proposed by Jennings (1977)?

Theoretical Framework

Easton (1965b) states that systems analysis is a conceptual orientation "that stems from the fundamental decision to view political life as a system of behavior" (p. 23). Easton's systems theory incorporates the aspect of environmental impact upon an organization, while adhering to the interpretation that occurring interactions are predominantly concerned with an authoritative allocation of values. The ability of a system to persist through time is linked to its capacity to respond to both environmental and internal sources of stress (inputs), while at the same time interpreting feedback regarding its past performances (outputs).



Figure 1. A Simplified Model Of a Political System:

Source: David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: Wiley, 1965), p. 32.

Inputs, in the form of supports and demands, may be used as "key indicators of the way in which environmental events and conditions modify and affect the operations of the political system" (Easton, 1965b, p. 114). Linkage between the intrasocietal and the extrasocietal forces and the political system is maintained by exchanges and transactions resulting in an authoritative allocation of values in the form of outputs. A continuous flow of information is required by the system concerning the current state of affairs with respect to supports and demands. This feedback enables authorities of the system to respond by adjusting, modifying or correcting previous outputs. These modified decisions, in turn, become new inputs.

Iannaccone (1967) views education as a major social institution subject to all the forces present in our society. Authoritative allocation of values in the educational subsystem, also described as a miniature political system (Wirt & Kirst, 1972a), exists in an environment of interchange. The

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social, economic and cultural characteristics of the educational milieu affect the interactions regarding policy-making which occur.

Exchanges of petitioners (individuals or groups who seek to influence policy decisions) and allocators (authorities charged with the distribution of resources) impact upon educational decisions (Summerfield, 1971). Who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell, 1950) will depend to a degree on the articulation of the interest group. The ability of such a group to see its demands through various regulated mechanisms of the system determines the success of any influence it may have on decision-making (Massialas, 1969). According to Greenfield (1964), a systems analysis approach to educational organizations may make it possible to discover how effectively certain arrangements within the organization accomplish desired goals.

A crucial element of Easton's model, the Conversion Process, permits an interpretative study with respect to the process of educational decisions within a Department of Education. Government, as an educational policy-maker, presents an arena wherein competitors seek decisions advantageous to their own policy perspective. The pressure of interest group demand is but one factor, albeit important, that must be faced by government when it contemplates major policy shifts (Stapleton, 1977). Reflected also in the policy-making process are the roles assumed by the politician and the civil servant.

Housego (1965) acknowledges that "government officials have been set aside to implement major aims of society" (p. 28). He also contends that to accomplish this they have been clothed with the prerogative of government--authority. The importance of governmental decisions hinges on the notion that governmental action may be more important than that of other organizations because greater numbers of people are affected (Greenfield & Baird, 1962). To answer the question of democratic input into a bureaucratic organization (a Department of Education in this case) requires an analysis of the organization's policy-making process.

A case study approach can be effectively used to identify a specific policy decision of a Department of Education (Isaac, 1971). This approach to research, termed the qualitative method, produces "descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior" (Boğdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 4). In particular, a model of policy-making prepared by Jennings has merit.

Jennings' model was adapted from two sources on policy-making in government, Agger et al. (1964) and Milstein and Jennings (1973). The resulting policy-making process is depicted as a series of steps or stages that illustrate several different kinds of decisions which have to be made by policy-makers. It consists of the following six stages:

1. Initiation of the process.
2. Reformulation of opinion.

3. Emergence of alternatives.
4. Discussion and debate.
5. Legitimization.
6. Implementation.

Jennings purports that decisions within the process are critical for policy outcomes. He further contends that the process is instrumental in shaping governmental services at the operating level.

#### Significance of the Study

This study has significance for the following reasons:

1. The policy-making process of a provincial Department of Education has not been the subject of extensive research to date.
2. School administrators, responsible for implementation of the Department of Education policy, should benefit from information regarding the process and the involvement of Department of Education personnel in the various stages of the process.
3. Knowledge concerning the policy-making process of a Department of Education should prove significant for external or internal groups concerned with policy.
4. Departments of Education will be afforded an opportunity to analyze a particular policy process of an organization while viewing the department from the perspective of a systems analysis approach.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to an examination of the policy-making process within the Newfoundland Department of Education. Specifically, the process resulting in an amendment to Section 12a of the province's Schools' Act was the subject of the study. Cognizant of the influence resulting from interest group involvement, this study concentrated on the policy-making process and the roles played by the Minister of Education, the Department of Education Officials, and Professional Staff.

Limitations

Recommendations arising from results of this study must be considered with regard to the following limitations:

1. Since this study was restricted to one policy decision by a provincial Department of Education, and because decisions on other topics may have been arrived at differently, results may not be generalizable to other policy decisions of that Department.
2. This study was restricted to a decision made by the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, and therefore the results may not be generalizable to other Departments of Education.
3. The limited number of Canadian sources of information on policy development in provincial Departments of Education required reference to some sources which were not Canadian.

4. Interviewing of employees in the Department of Education imposed restrictions on the sample size.
5. Availability of information concerning development of this particular policy was limited due to the subsequent time lapse.

#### Definition of Terms

Access Channel--the point of entry into a system, viewed analytically as the beginning of a pathway along which demands may move.

Closed System--an organization which operates free from external control and constraints, as well as from the unsettling demands of internal change.

Decision Making--a process whereby, over time, an interplay exists between those holding the official power and those representing the plurality of organized goal-seeking groups (Agger, 1964).

Demands--inputs directed towards authorities proposing that authoritative allocation be undertaken.

Environment--the social, economic, and physical influences of which the political system is exposed and in turn reacts.

Gatekeeper--individuals or groups who initiate or react to a demand and who are in a position to determine the extent of its influence.

Input--demands and supports, external to and transmitted across boundaries of a system.

Interest Group--individuals or groups who are involved, either externally or internally, with demands upon the system.

Official Role--that which is clearly stated in the job description of the employee.

Open System--an organization which is open to influence from its environment.

Outputs--the kinds of occurrences described as binding decisions and the actions implementing and relating to them.

Political Influence--acts intended by a political participant to affect someone else's political participation, and result in a predetermined consequence.

Political System--a set of social interactions on the part of individuals and groups that are predominantly oriented toward the authoritative allocation of values for a society (Treslan, 1982).

Satisficing--a deliberate process whereby a system plans to displease the fewest possible (Treslan, 1982).

Support--external actions or internal attitudes which contribute to the promotion of goals, ideas, institutions, actions, or persons.

Withinputs--demands formed through experiences and activities in strictly political roles within the system.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Influence associated with exchanges and transactions that cross the boundaries of a political system modify and shape the operations of the decision-making process (Easton, 1965b). The rules of the influence-game are often the rules of access. Certain groups and individuals are permitted, even encouraged, to participate in decision-making, while others are denied a part (Dyarlove, 1973).

The action of governments in educational policy development may be viewed from the perspective of influence. Consideration of the source of this influence may prove beneficial when it is seen as an element in the role played by governmental decision-makers as receivers and auditors of information. "The effectiveness with which a society's organizations operate is of vital concern to everyone" (Sanford et al., 1976, p. 26). A Department of Education, as an organization, has a special mandate to function effectively. Policies resulting from this governmental decision-making body impact upon the whole of society, both present and future.

It is generally assumed that educational policy is neither formulated nor controlled by institutions or individuals alone. It is seen as the outcome of interaction between

individuals and organizations (Thomas, 1983). It may also be assumed that actors in governmental policy development encounter informational sources both internal and external to the organization. The extent of response to this input may often reflect interactions of key officials in the policy process.

This chapter will be divided into four sections. Section One, Governments and Policy, will concentrate on the roles of the politicians and civil servants in the policy process. In Section Two, a perusal of the literature concerned with decision-making and educational policy will be undertaken. The part played by influentials will be summarized in Section Three. Section Four will concentrate on documentation reflecting a systems theory approach to organizations.

#### Governments and Policy

While legislatures, both legally and historically, have a responsibility for providing educational services to citizens, there are other influences within and outside of government which serve to direct educational policy formation (Geisert, 1981). The relationship between the politician and the civil servant in a governmental department is a crucial factor in the establishment of policy. Benn (1980) states:

There are conflicts and tensions within our political system which receive a great deal of public attention. One relationship which has received far less public attention than its importance justifies is the balance of power between Ministers and senior permanent government officials. (p. 29)

The balance of power of which Bann speaks can be viewed from the perspective of interactions between the parties concerned. Their relationship personifies the control that is inherent in a power situation. The study of power, its controls and its effects is the study of politics. Administrative systems, like those of governments, are typically the mechanisms through which power is employed. (Greenfield & Baird, 1962).

The position of Deputy Minister is usually outlined in governmental departments as having two functions: that of policy advisor to the Minister, and administrator of the department. In turn, the main responsibilities of a Minister centre on surveillance (criticism, scrutiny, refinement, and infusion of values) and legitimation (assurance of Cabinet and public acceptance) of a policy (Johnson, 1981). These designated responsibilities ensure the Minister's influence in the policy process. One may be inclined to assume that a strict division of labour exists, with the Minister totally responsible for formulating policies and the Deputy Minister responsible for implementing them. However, upon observation of a governmental policy-making process one is not apt to find even an illusion of exclusive occupancy. (Johnson, 1961) of one role by the Minister and one by the Deputy.

The Deputy Minister, in contrast to the Minister, is not constitutionally responsible. However, essential to the role of the civil servant, is the ability to help provide

the Minister and through him/her the Cabinet with the capacity to govern as effectively as possible. The importance of this aspect of the Deputy Minister's role is determined by the capability of the politician to indeed govern effectively. As Pitfield (1983) argues, it is the duty of permanent officials "by legal and proper means to keep in power the government that the legal process has given to them until such time as the process gives them another" (p. 11). To achieve competence in his/her advisory role, the Deputy Minister must develop an appreciation of economic and social trends, which in turn must be analyzed regarding their possible effects on departmental policies. Top level civil servants who advise on policy should be informed, articulate, and have well-developed views on matters of public policy (Sharp, 1982). Any advice given a Minister should reflect public reaction, particularly when citizen response indicates opposition (Robertson, 1983). The Deputy Minister, in the role of policy advisor, should therefore search out public reaction to programs already in practice or those in the policy development stage. In this way, a range of possibilities will be made available to the Minister who is, after all, the policy formulator. The Deputy Minister

must organize so as to solicit and receive from interest groups their views on the programs for which he (she) is responsible. One might almost go so far as to say that he (she) has a responsibility to seek out public advice on his (her) area of government. (Johnson, 1961, p. 368)

An open communication climate must exist if an organization is to achieve quality decision-making. This is necessary to significantly guarantee achievement of the organization's goals. Governmental decision-makers in general, and Deputy Ministers in particular, can encourage input into policy decisions by fostering favourable communication attitudes. Departmental communication should be "open, honest, and candid. Lack of respect for people's opinions and feelings and lack of trust and support and the consequent fear result in negative attitudes and a closed communication climate" (Sanford et al., 1976, p. 23).

The Deputy Minister must foster an open communication system with staff members to ensure that public reaction received by them becomes part of information represented to the Minister. Caution, however, must be exercised, in that this gathering of public response must in no way compete with the Minister's role of testing, sensing, and reacting to public sentiment.

The degree of ministerial dependence on public servants is likely to be determined by a Minister's leadership qualities (Doerr, 1981). As well, the Minister's technical expertise, or lack of it, affects the independence a Minister achieves in the formulation of policy. This wish for relative independence may suggest why some Ministers have been requested to become not only knowledgeable but expert in matters pertaining to their portfolio (Sharp, 1977). As MacDonald (1980) states, "the less they know at the outset,

the more dependent they are on the only source of available knowledge: the permanent officials. Unsure of their own judgement, unaware of alternatives, they have little choice except to follow the advice of the experts" (p. 30).

Often, Ministers who are faced with decisions, but who lack viable policy alternatives, seek advice from experts outside the department and at times outside the civil service. Crossman (1975-77) encountered what he calls profound resistance by civil servants to interference from any knowledgeable sources outside the department. As well, senior officials, holding positions of power, often react negatively to "creativity and imaginative proposals of those in less senior ranks as they (do) to outside advice" (MacDonald, 1980, p. 31). We can assume that an individual's power is closely related to his/her hierarchical position in the organization. However, equalization of power with resulting participative leadership is not encouraged by some senior officials. Consequently, a negative reaction to less senior rank involvement often results.

While it is the traditional duty of the civil servant to make all information readily available to the Minister, the Deputy Minister should take care never to assume the position of lone access channel of the department for ministerial contacts (Burns, 1961). If such is the case, a potential danger exists in that an individual, acting as an information filter, alone determines the extent to which inputs are considered useful, proper, or desirable to the

policy process. Silverman (1954) maintains that many fingers attempt to reach into the pie of the legislative process. Thus, the predispositions of policy-makers determine the accessibility of public officials to interest group efforts (Zisk et al., 1965). Perceptions of a situation by these decision-makers determine what interest groups will have impact or, if in fact, any input is permitted at all. It is vitally important to note not only inputs directed to government, but also the inputs (Rice, 1963) selected by government. The gatekeeper therefore must endeavour to provide for the Minister the chance for technically feasible and politically acceptable multiple-choice options on policy matters. Even when the Deputy Minister is not in agreement with the direction of the policy development, it must be remembered that the determination of policy is the function of Ministers (Burns, 1961).

Even though he must of course accept the minister's decision, he should always be thinking ahead of it, and he should always be ready to express his own views and to provide the information upon which they are based. For he is primarily concerned with the making of policy. . . ." (Greaves, 1947, p. 48)

It must be realized, nonetheless, that selectivity in the use of information is unavoidable. People vary in the extent to which they examine all sides of a problem (Bruner, 1966; Cherry, 1966), since all humans have a limited capacity to process information. This is especially so when their particular position in society and the organization serves to restrict and define what sources they will permit to impact upon solutions to policy decisions (Dearlove, 1973).

The role of information-controller plays a significant part in the bureaucratic working of a governmental department. Selznick (1949) proposed that the difference between officials of a department and ordinary members of an organized group is that the officials have a special access to and power over the machinery of the organization. Those outside the bureaucratic ranks must first depend upon the decisions of the gatekeeper to gain access. Only then will power become a possibility. Thus, if public participation in the policy process is to become a reality, governments will have to provide formal access to decision-making (Hodgetts, 1981). An increase in the range and number of access channels may be achieved by the establishment of special committees designed to provide interest groups with input opportunities, as well as provide governmental decision-makers with pertinent information. Bryden (1982) postulates that many writers propose restructuring the civil service as opposed to concentrating on improving government access channels in the existing structure. The fact that input may be easier with an increase in access points is immaterial if the input is not listened to (Redford, 1969). In discussing inputs and demands being sent to governments, Milbrath (1960) warns that they still have to penetrate the perpetual screen of decision-makers in government if impact is to be felt in the policy process. Consequently, selectivity of information by the gatekeeper lies at the heart of the problem (Hyman & Sheatsley, 1947; Bauer, 1969), not the amount of information available for the policy-maker's use.



In what Sanford (1976) calls a tall organization, there are a minimum of position holders who have access to the top person. These gatekeepers judge all information with respect to its relevance to the decision at hand and decide what will be passed upward. This is often seen as a beneficial arrangement, although "the optimal formal subsystem would allow some access to the top by lower level position holders" (p. 197). This latter design would guard against any tendency of the filtering mechanism to discard information it perceives as unimportant.

Ministers rely heavily upon their advisors. The latter serve as links to the world, "filtering in what they feel their political masters need to, or at least want to know" (Clapp, 1963; Lindblom, 1968; Barker & Rush, 1970; Sharkansky, 1970; Simon, 1976).

Proven devices are required by departmental officials to guarantee an accurate reading of sentiment both internal and external to the department. Group meetings, message systems and appraisal interviews are just some of the many routes through which pertinent information may travel, either directly or indirectly to the chief decision-maker.

Selectivity is not an exclusive concern of departmental officials. The Minister, as well, needs to be cognizant of all leaders' tendencies to isolate themselves. Michels (1966) views this as the formation of a cartel and the surrounding of themselves "with a wall within which they will admit those only who are of their own way of thinking"

(p. 126). It is indeed necessary for politicians to be selective. However, they must control any inclination "to ignore or suppress information which may undermine the force of their case" (Barker & Rush, 1970, p. 18).

The degree of selectivity displayed by any politician will be partly affected by his professional status. If he makes his living in politics, and if he has special informational services at his disposal, then he can overcome some of the difficulties and limitations of information shortage and faulty or partial evaluation. (Dearlove, 1973, p. 176)

The informational sources mentioned by Dearlove must be representative of public opinion as well as that of departmental professionals. It is to the Minister's advantage that the Deputy Minister keeps him/her mindful of the need for the presence of communication channels (Burns, 1961). Devices utilized by a Minister in gathering and giving advice should permit the rapid and accurate transmission of information. The procedure should never involve rules of priority which dictate methods of avoiding and resisting certain sources and channels of information (Dearlove, 1973).

Although the Deputy Minister is an advisor to the Minister, Blakey (1981) considers it a function of the Minister to bring the public's influence to bear on senior officials. This advisory role of the Minister would make provision for decisions to result from public impression concerning both the what and the how of policy. The Minister must bring to the policy process a direction and determination to "assert the role and responsibility of

ministers individually and the Cabinet collectively" (Spence, 1978, p. 215). This will determine the extent to which policy is formulated at the official level, and it will attest to the necessary premise that "the real focus for the development of new policies" (Johnson, 1961, p. 369) is not the civil service, but the political process.

The administrative dimension of the Deputy Minister's position is certainly no less important than that of policy advisor. As manager of the department, this individual must guarantee that efficiency exists.

The Deputy Minister must foster in his/her staff, not only an "enthusiasm for efficiency" (Johnson, 1961) but a loyalty which is essential in a public service. Without this businesslike atmosphere there remains the possibility of what Blakeney (1981) calls sloppy administration which could lead to the torpedoing of good programs.

To many people, government is an impersonal machine. The Deputy Minister must endeavour to reduce this negative view by instilling in the department a feeling of morale which encompasses a sense of public service. A respect for the rights of citizens served must be paramount in the detail of every program implemented.

The dual role of a Deputy Minister places him/her in the position of "neutral" civil servant and advisor to a "political" master. Exposed at times to the pressures of public and staff input, the Deputy, as senior manager of the department, must "exercise a large amount of judgement and

not merely superintend an efficient process" (Blakeney, 1981, p. 4).

Most important, however, to the role of the Deputy Minister is the exchange of views which must occur between the Minister and top civil servants. It is as a result of this relationship that Ministers "test the strength of the arguments pro and con that they will encounter when they face their colleagues in Cabinet and the public" (Sharp, 1982, p. 34).

#### Decision-Making and Educational Policy

Campbell (1974) supports the view that a major responsibility of administrators in formal organizations is the making of decisions. This involves the entire administrative process wherein decisions are both made and implemented. Certain basic assumptions exist which are characteristic of decision-making in organizations (Litchfield, 1954; Simon, 1976). Seen as a cycle of events which includes diagnosis, formulation, implementation and evaluation, decision-making may be conducted at any point in the policy process. Fundamental to the true meaning of decision-making is the knowledge on the part of administrators, charged with its responsibility, that all problems will never be solved. Blau and Scott (1962) observe that the process of organization development is "dialectical--problems appear, and the process of solving them tends to give rise to new problems" (pp. 250-51). Therefore, decision-making is on-going.

One aspect of decision-making relies on the extent of an administrator's ability to maximize the decision-making process. "Rationality is limited not only by the extent of the administrators' knowledge but also by their unconscious skills, habits, and reflexes as well as by their values and conceptions of purpose that may deviate from the organization's goals" (Hoy & Miskel, 1982, p. 266). Thus, when decision-makers in an educational setting choose an appropriate course of action regarding a specific goal on a complex matter, they may in fact be choosing a satisfactory alternative. This choice may be one of satisficing rather than one which may be deemed completely rational. A rational decision-making environment may be fostered by both the individual and the organization. This may be achieved by endeavouring to remain consistent with the goals, objectives and information of the organizational perspective (Simon, 1976).

Various typologies exist to describe decision-making. Barnard (1938) categorized decisions according to the need addressed. He identifies three main kinds of decisions beginning with those reached as a result of instructional communication from superiors. These he terms Intermediary Decisions. The second type, Appellate, are the result of references by subordinates. The third, Creative Decisions, he attributes to ideas originating in initiative.

Barnard further proposed that the art of decision-making also involved knowing when not to decide--which is

itself a decision.

Drucker (1966) offers two kinds of decisions:

1. Generic Decisions

These spring from organizational problems that occur frequently and with which the organization is ready to deal. Established principles, policies, or rules are usually in place to guide the administrator in such decision-making.

2. Unique Decisions

Oftentimes, decisions will be required which address situations that evolve beyond established procedures. "Here the decision-maker deals with an exceptional problem that is not adequately answered by a general principle or rule" (Hoy & Miskel, 1982, p. 271). Such decisions are sometimes instrumental in redirecting the thrust of an organization.

All educational systems may be termed organizations of decision-making. There exists within such systems

the complex pattern of communication and relationships in a group of human beings. This pattern provides to each member of the group much of the information and many of the assumptions, goals, and attitudes that enter into his decisions and provides him also with a set of stable and comprehensible expectations as to what the other members of the group are doing and how they will react to what he says and does. (Simon, 1976, p. xvii)

These patterns of communication, according to Katz and Kahn (1966) are "the very essence . . . of an organization" (p. 223). Decision-making involves the behaviour of individuals in organizations. Their behaviour can best be understood from a communication perspective (Rogers & Rogers, 1976).

An element of decision-making in educational government today is the evolving characteristic of the political nature of educational structures. The possibility therefore exists for a redirection of what Iannaccone (1967) sees as an organization with "closed system tendencies" (p. 100). He contends that political systems are never closed, but he views education as an organization wherein the public is not adequately represented. Knill (1967), in discussing decision-making in education, states "recent developments at every level, federal, provincial, and local throughout Canada support the thesis that education is a political issue" (p. 17). According to Cistone (1972), the autonomy that once characterized educational decision-making is being eroded by the impact of competing demands and forcefully articulated expectations.

"There is nothing inherently evil or wrong about the fact that interest groups exist and attempt to pressure or influence the uses of governmental power" (Greenfield & Baird, 1962, p. 37). In a formal organization such as a department of education, decisions resulting in authoritative actions may frequently run counter to such groups' opinions. Therefore, in true democratic style, involvement of those affected by decisions should be a natural progression. The interactions of those within and outside the educational structure point to the intensification of the politicization of decision-making in the system. Lachman

(1978) outlines what he sees as the reason behind the link between politics and education:

The paramount result of this broadened participation in public education is that schools are no longer the closed system they once were. This expanded involvement means that schools are now infinitely more vulnerable to community pressures and are less able to stand effectively behind the legend of separation of politics and education.  
(p. 19)

The methods employed in educational decision-making may sometimes be viewed as a consequence of this broadened participation.

The decisional process occurs out of an interplay between goal-seeking formal groups in conflict and those holding the official power (Kimbrough, 1964). This indicates the political atmosphere within which educational decisions are made. Educators at every level work within the realm of those who are the power structures, those who make the decisions. "One of the tenets of a pluralistic and democratic society is that power should be equalized across all groups and individuals" (Tye, 1980, p. 226). However, society in general and the educational system in particular do not exemplify an equalization of power in decisional processes. Decisions are often conducted in an atmosphere of consensus and conflict. Housègo (1965) makes the point that "the operation of democratic politics in the field of educational administration depends upon consultation and compromise" (p. 31). He further contends that it is the job of the decision-maker to address the dissatisfactions of the



participants to provide an atmosphere for consensus and effective decision-making. One would therefore assume that power which is rarely if ever given up voluntarily, would not play the decisive role it now does. Milstein (1980) states that there are new rules to the educational game and that these in turn "open the system to more participants being involved in more decisional areas" (p. xii). Nevertheless, the participation does not guarantee an equal voice in these decisional areas. Power, influence and control are still the keys to decisional outcomes.

Decision-making by educators often requires the making of choices to achieve intended ends. A guide which can effectively aid in the making of appropriate decisions for the accomplishment of a desired end may be thought of as a policy (Jennings, 1977). In effect a policy is a setting out of solutions to a problem. The process involved in policy-making produces "from a confusion of conflicting and competing views a stream of policy sufficiently coherent to realize one of all the possible combinations of achievement . . ." (Vickers, 1974, p. 6). Jennings (1977) observes that devising a policy which will guide future decisions, itself involves a decisional process. How the policy will be developed, who will participate in its development and what contributions they, in turn, will make are crucial decisions on the policy-making process. Needs and demands must be addressed, as well as conflicts which will inevitably

arise, since "policy administration always acts to enhance the safety, income and status of some persons and groups while detracting from others" (Wirt & Kirst, 1972a, p. 17).

#### The Jennings' Policy-Making Process

A policy-making process has been adapted by Jennings (1977) from two sources on policy-making in government, Agger et al. (1964) and Milstein and Jennings (1973). This process consists of six overlapping stages: "Each stage raises process questions to which policy-makers respond and, in responding, shape not only the outcome of that stage but also influence what happens in succeeding stages" (Jennings, 1977, p. 38).

The first stage occurs when dissatisfaction is expressed with the present situation either because of an inequity or a lack of adequate fulfillment of a need. In this Initiation stage of the process, there are numerous potential sources for voicing dissatisfaction. It is the job of the policy-makers, at this point, to decide who to listen to and when.

Stage two, Reformulation of Opinion, sees the emergence of leaders to get something done about the problem. These leaders may be members of the public or local government officials. It is at this stage that opinions are gathered and the identification of particular points is highlighted. Articulation of individual and organizational views become consolidated. Opinions are sought or expressed by policy-makers who at this point are endeavouring to clarify the

possible alternative solutions which may be available. Limitations in law, availability of resources and political feasibility all impact upon the range of alternatives. The initial response of the policy-maker may be tested at this point both within government and outside of government.

Emergence of Alternatives, stage three, is when potential solutions to the problem, or ways of fulfilling the need are presented. Any dissatisfactions expressed have now been translated into statements of acceptable conditions. Several alternatives may be proposed by those who are dissatisfied, as well as by the policy-makers who delineate the one or more choices available. These choices are reflective of some assessment of political acceptability both in and out of government. The policy-makers' decision to choose their own alternatives or to consider other alternatives is made at this point. Reflected in this decision is the assessment of the influence wielded by those who are dissatisfied and "the degree of control which the policy-makers feel they can exert over the process through the next two stages" (Jennings, 1977, p. 39).

The shaping of alternatives into policy proposals takes place at this fourth stage, entitled Discussion and Debate. This may involve combining alternatives for the purpose of garnering support or making proposals acceptable to the policy-makers. Mobilization of influence from interested organizations and individuals is directed at those who will decide. Conflict may often result at this stage;

however, compromises may be made through consultation or by separate decisions both inside and outside the government. The policy proposals are fully developed during this stage wherein assessments continue, limits are placed on compromise and modification, and eventually the preferred proposals are chosen. Consent-building both inside and outside the government in addition to the limits to be set are critical to the decisions being made by the policy-makers.

Legitimization, the fifth stage, is the legislation of a policy from among the competing proposals. The policy-makers choose from a selection of final proposal considerations. "These decisions may be taken by a few influential people in the government or by a group of policy-makers that has power to direct others formally or informally" (Jennings, p. 40). Ratification of one policy is then conducted by a majority of the policy-makers empowered to do so by law.

Should the failure to ratify present itself, a reassessment of the situation is conducted by returning to stage three or four in the process where other alternatives may emerge or additional discussion and debate may be required.

Implementation of the policy is the sixth and final stage. With the public or departmental announcement of the policy, administrative procedures and administrative policies are put into effect by one or more departments of government.

Keeping in mind that the above process is cyclical, not static, the ratification and implementation of a policy may serve to call forth new dissatisfactions or problems.

Jennings (1977) feels "it is those policy-makers who command the government machinery that are most likely to control this process" (p. 40). Their technical and political use of the machinery in the form of committees, expertise and advice determines how well in fact they do control the process.

In educational policy-making, the interrelationships of the central participants determines the control to be exerted. The participants in the decision-making process of a department of education may include both the policy-makers and the citizens. The latter, often characterized by the role of electors, may nonetheless have minimal impact on the decisions. Wirt and Kirst (1972b) maintain that "the role which citizens perform in providing inputs to officials through election channels is unknown" (p. 65). The amount of influence and control one group has over the other is instrumental in determining the choice of one policy being formulated and implemented over another.

The extent to which participants understand their organizational and decision-making role hinges on communication methods employed in the organization. Rogers and Rogers (1976) propose that the lifeblood of an organization is communication. Nonetheless, directions taken in an educational organization must be viewed from the perspective

of interrelationships. The decision-making participants and their communication methods, from advice upwards to directions downward, indicate how these interrelationships affect the decision-making process.

#### Influentials

Power, access, and communications may be seen as three critical components in the process to determine policy in an educational organization. Knowing who possesses each and how that person utilizes each in the making of policy, enables one to appreciate the significance of influentials in educational organizations.

Decision-making occurs in all organizations. The authoritative allocation of resources inherent in decision-making is itself a result of intangible or material resources impacting upon policy-makers' choices. Followers of a resource assumption adhere to what Mitchell (1981) labels Influence Theory. The importance of influence in an educational structure's decision-making environment is recognized when it is "conceptualized as resulting from direct interactions among influential individuals and groups or from indirect communications via identifiable third parties" (Mitchell, 1981, p. 43).

Toonen (1983) maintains that organizations are in effect political systems where influence through power plays a critical role in decision-making. Power, according to Housego (1965), is a "successful exercise of intended influence in political decision-making" (p. 30). Often seen as

having predominant power in the formulation of public policy, the institution of government is said to wield, through its appointed and elected officials, legitimate or official power in public decisions (Loewenstein, 1957). This wielding of power may be analyzed from the aspect of who inside government impacts upon the policy process. The extent that decisions are finalized after the influential has penetrated the decision-making mechanism is testimony to the importance of his/her role. According to Greenfield and Baird (1962)

educational aims are determined by the society as a whole; they are not manufactured at random by leaders. . . . Society itself is often not in agreement as to what aims are appropriate or of most importance. Somebody in the institution of education has to identify and clarify aims desired by or of most use to society. (p. 32)

The Department of Education is an arm of government, with all its inherent power. As an educational institution it is concerned with the aims and objectives of its programs. The role of influentials in the policy process of the department may be effectively examined in light of an identification and clarification of societal aims. These aims when incorporated into decision-making, affect forthcoming policy.

Close observance of any governmental structure should aid in the identification of influentials in the policy process, be they public officials or others. The power and control they may exert is indeed worth verifying since Dahl (1961) observes that "it is altogether possible that public officials do not represent the real decision-makers in a community" (p. 63). Government has highly valued resources

to allocate, therefore, within the hierarchy of the formal governmental apparatus, ministers and senior civil servants are central figures in the decision to allocate these resources authoritatively. "The centre of power is surely the Cabinet, but its own effectiveness depends crucially upon the expertise and continuity provided by the civil service" (Presthus, 1973, p. 211).

The advisory role of the Deputy Minister to the Minister has the potential of providing for this civil servant an influential position regarding policy arising from a decisional process. Although "little systematic data exists on the flow of information to the legislator and the sources on which he depends" (Behn, 1981, p. 203), the organization of government is such that one may assume information does indeed flow in some degree from the civil servant to the politician. MacDonald (1980) maintains that it is critical to the survival of an effective Minister for personal staff to play an important role in the evaluation of all policy issues, especially those deemed sensitive. Difficulties occur when civil servants feel obliged to defend a departmental position on policies with which they do not necessarily agree. Such instances may take place when conflict with the party position is evident. The specialist civil servant, after a lifetime of service and study, may be opposed to a particular policy direction of the amateur generalist politician.



Prevented from blatantly opposing the Minister who is the legal formulator of policy, the civil service, occasionally in the person of the Deputy Minister, may control the flow of information by means of selectivity, restriction, delay or cessation. In such instances, an informal communication flow may be used.

It is easy for the civil service to stop a Minister by mobilising a whole range of internal forces against his policy. The normal method is for officials to telephone their colleagues in other departments to report what a Minister is proposing to do; thus stimulating a flow of letters from other Ministers (drafted for them by their officials) asking to be consulted, calling for inter-departmental committees to be set up, all in the hope that an unwelcome initiative can be nipped in the bud. (MacDonald, 1980, p. 29).

Kirst (1970) maintains that most policy is influenced by a few insiders (possibly using informal communication methods). This view supports the emphasis which Easton (1965b) gives to the importance of political gatekeepers who freely channel some interests into the policy system while turning others away. The powers to act as access and to control the flow of information, resulting from extra-societal or intrasocietal input indicates the importance of the role of gatekeeper as an influential. Presthus (1974) says of civil servants: "At the higher levels they are a talented self-conscious elite, possessing highly valued political resources" (p. 23). Armed with these resources, as well as a substantial degree of expertise, the high ranking civil servant develops dexterity in his/her use of power as it relates to the role of information provider.

Bearing in mind that "beneath the facade of democratic politics, a social and economic elite will usually be found actually running things" (Dahl, 1961, p. 6), one must at some point look to the informal communication system which operates within the formal organizational structure. "When one enters a concrete organization in order to observe closely the behavior of its members, it becomes extremely difficult to distinguish what is formal and what is informal in their actions" (Mouzelis, 1967, p. 70).

The communication styles employed in various situations often serve as indicators to the type of relationship existing. The fact that decisions are made in a formal organization, such as a Department of Education, does not attest to the exclusive usage of formal communication patterns. "A gatekeeper is an individual who is located in a structure so as to control the messages flowing through a given communication channel" (Rogers & Rogers, 1976, p. 101). However, the role of gatekeeper is not usually recognized as a formal means of communication within an organization. Regardless of its lack of official status, this information channel gatekeeper is a powerful source of influence in the policy process. The possible autonomous nature of a gatekeeper's decisions regarding the flow of information may be questioned. Forces, resulting from formal or informal relationships with social or economic elites may in fact affect what information the gatekeeper channels to the policy-maker. The effective influence

exerted may rest solely on the wishes of someone inside the organization or indeed someone outside the structure.

The politics of organizational decision-making involves dynamic tensions (Bailey et al., 1962). There are people for and there are people against. A vehicle through which an individual may effectively express opinions on public policy is the organized interest groups. They represent the chief agents in molding public opinion and exercising political power (Stanley, 1953). Knowledge of the role that these groups assume in relation to government may help in understanding the public policy-making process. According to Blaisdell (1957) in "the decisions of government, political pressure groups are of equal, if not greater importance than the agencies of government themselves . . ." (p. 27). Often, however, a participatory atmosphere is not deemed necessary by the governing body. It is felt that the "interests of certain categories of the population are built into government and public policies without the necessity of their organizing into a demand group" (Dearlove, 1973, p. 56). Nonetheless, members of the public, in evaluating many of the decisions made by governmental departments, realize that policy-makers may have a limited perspective of the problem. In considering that legislators bring available information and their personal values to the decision-making environment, citizens have a right to be concerned about the appropriateness of certain decisions. Milbrath (1963) cautions, "all officials arrive at decisions on the basis

of what they perceive and not on the basis of what is objectively true or real" (p. 1845). "To assess and adequately explain the influence which interest groups have in the making of public policy, we must not only study the groups doing the talking" (Masters, Salisbury, & Eliot, 1964, p. 204), but we must also carefully analyze the position of those who are listening. Decisions reached by the listeners will inevitably be determined by the particular basis from which they view all situations. As a prelude to discussing who is listening, observers to interest group demands may wonder if in fact anyone in government is listening. Hodgetts (1981) addresses this viewpoint when he discusses one's perception of the responsiveness of government to the public interest. This sense of governmental response is dependent upon how well one's own interests have been advanced by governmental programs.

To achieve any guarantee that someone will, in fact, listen, interest groups should concentrate on the content, frequency, and form of their input (Presthus, 1973). To establish mutually productive liaison with government, the policy position of an interest group should be revealed. The form and frequency of the respective representatives' interactions indicate whether official government apparatus or personal, informal channels of communication are utilized.

Presthus (1973) submits that informal negotiations among political elites are sometimes thought to be characteristic of Canadian policy determination. He found that access

for input is easiest for an elite characterized as politically active in business and who tends to interact with the bureaucracy on a personal level. The holding of common memberships in other groups by a governmental official and an interest group representative further facilitates a network of interaction which provides opportunity for input. Not only does this permit an interest group to influence policy-making in an informal setting, it also provides knowledge as to where not to put energy (Kirst, 1970).

It is assumed that access to government's ear is virtually guaranteed should one be a member of an interest group represented by an elite. Kimbrough (1964) maintains that the greatest unofficial influence on educational policy-making is the plurality of competing formal interest groups and associations. The special interests of the people are most effectively and forcefully expressed through interaction between official power-holders in government and these formal groups. Although Kimbrough (1964) goes on to say that policy decisions are established in formal meetings of the officials of the legislative bodies, contact prior to these meetings often decides the course of events. "The tendency exists for rather firm commitment to be made on basic policy matters prior to the formal meetings" (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 164).

If legislators, as the final determiners of action, decide who gets what, when, how (Lasswell, 1950), a vital concern of the public should be that legislators become

genuine representatives of all legitimate societal interests (Mitchell, 1981). This representation should not be confined to a community elite having a particular social and economic power base. According to Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) an open system committed to pluralism as a democratic institution can be achieved with "the absence of a single elite and the presence of a number of elites with different power bases" (p. 51). In this setting, educational policy, at all levels of government, may not be determined in a social vacuum (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970) but in a political arena with competing forces vying for their particular interests.

At the present time, elite accommodation, according to Presthus (1973), and the resulting allocation of resources are confined to those who have "the required substantive interest and political resources" (p. 4). In other words, access will be gained by interest groups and impact will be felt by the policy-makers when the leaders of both bodies share a certain degree of ideological consensus which supports the social system in place. A caution must be posed here, however. The leader of a governmental body from the perspective of the interest group may not necessarily mean the politician; it may mean the influential civil servant who, because of discretionary power imposed under the authority of delegated legislation, is the most frequent government contact used by interest groups (Presthus, 1973).

The policy-making process is indeed an involved one. Participants impact upon the resulting decisions only if

their power, access and communication are beneficial for each individual process. Difficulties exist for those who wish to participate more fully in the decision-making procedure. However, various factors ranging from inadequate communication channels to new or substantively weak interest groups, prohibit penetration of the decision-making process. This penetration is essential if input is to successfully impact upon policy. Mitchell (1981) views the role of the politician and the civil servant as involving a monumental task:

The important point is that in addition to resolving conflicts and choosing to deflect or defer some interests in favor of others, legislative policy committees work long hours to aggregate many similar proposals or demands into a single legislative program. (p. 32)

One must remember that legislative decisions result in the ultimate allocation of values for society. Therefore, they should be viewed as more than the simple products of interaction among interest groups and lawmakers (Eston, 1965b).

#### Systems Theory

"Systems analysis can lead educational organizations to specify both their purposes and their products so that it is possible to discover how effectively certain arrangements in the organization accomplish desired goals" (Greenfield, 1964, p. 30). Viewing a government department from a systems theory perspective enables one to undertake an analysis of the decisional process. Such an analysis would not focus

exclusively on the internal factors concerning policy formulation. Attention would also be assigned to environmental factors that impinge upon the organizational structure (Baldrige, 1972). The how of the policy process, in addition to the where of the decisional power, permits consideration of the important who in the structure and process of a governmental decision-making mechanism.

According to Easton (1965b), systems analysis is a conceptual orientation "that stems from the fundamental decision to view political life as a system of behavior" (p. 23). He further maintains that when any aggregate of interactions displays a coherent whole and when, under observation, its elements move together, then we are compelled to acknowledge that these interactions form a system. Easton's systems theory incorporates the aspect of environmental impact upon an organization. Close attention to the processes by which the goals of an organization become policies may be facilitated when viewing an organization as a system (Baldrige, 1972).

The appropriateness of applying a systems model to a governmental educational body (in this case a Department of Education) and thus identifying it as a political system may be questioned. However, perusal of the criteria for identifying a political system indicates that this type of organization clearly fits the model. Political analysis investigates the aspects of a department's life which can be described as a set of social interactions on the part of individuals and groups. These interactions are "predominantly



oriented toward the authoritative allocations of values for a society" (Easton, 1965b, p. 50). Governmental bodies in the person of their "officials have been set aside to implement major aims of society" (Housego, 1965, p. 28). To accomplish this, they have been clothed with the prerogative of government--authority. As a result of the legitimacy of this authority, which orients people to be bound by it, government departments are in a position of authoritatively allocating valued things in society. This may be conducted by giving some people access to values while denying it to others or, as sometimes is the case, by the deprivation or obstruction of values which would have otherwise been attained (Easton, 1965b). Therefore, interactions take place both with members of the organization as well as with individuals or groups outside the organization. Decisions forthcoming may be viewed as a result of the arrangement of human interactions.

The ability of a system to persist through time is linked to its capacity to respond to both environmental and internal sources of stress and at the same time to interpret feedback regarding its past performances. In Figure 2, Easton (1965b) has reduced, to its bare essentials, the fundamental processes at work in all systems. Indicated is the source of a system's capacity to persist.

"Since political life is to be conceived as an open system, demands offer us a key to understanding one of the ways in which the total environment will leave its impress upon the operations of a system". (Easton, 1965a, p. 37). As

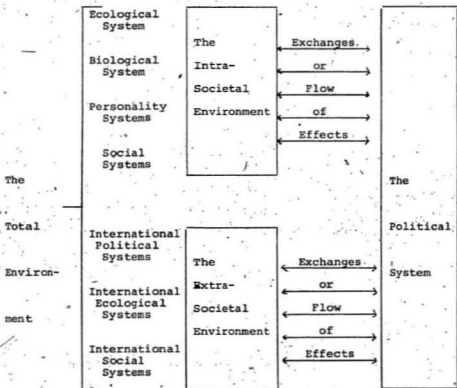


Figure 2. A Framework for Political Analysis.

Source: David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965b), p. 75.

a result of environmental input, consequent modifications affect the operations of the political system. However, to understand satisfactorily the effect of environment on the political system, it is first necessary to distinguish between a system and its environment. For a distinction to exist, the presence of a boundary between the two must be acknowledged. A boundary stands as a "symbol or spatial embodiment of the criteria of inclusion-exclusion with respect to a system" (Easton, 1965b, p. 66). The authoritative allocation of values within the interactions being observed determines the boundary line. What we wish to examine in detail, with respect to authoritative allocations, becomes part of the system, and that which we exclude from detailed observation lies outside the system, in its environment.

Decisions made by government departments affect the lives of many. Consequently, during the decisional process, those to be affected may wish to have impact on resulting policies. The extent of the effect these interest groups may have on the policy process will be guided by the openness of the political system to environmental influence. For example, interest groups may be considered part of the environment of a political system when viewing the latter as a government department. The groups belong to the social system which is itself one of the components of what Easton terms "intrasocietal environment" (p. 71). This, in effect, is the part of the physical and social environment that lies

outside the boundaries of the political system but within the same society. In addition, Easton (1965b) also discusses the extrasocietal environment. This is the international society viewed as a unit external to the political system under consideration (see Figure 2).

Inputs, in the form of supports and demands, may be used as "key indicators of the way in which environmental events" (Easton, 1965b, p. 114) impose strains on "the ability of any political system to survive" (Easton, 1965b, p. 79). Forces, both internal and external to a system, present situations whereby a system's capacity to persist will be tested. If this test results in success, then a system has been able to alter or adapt itself to changing circumstances.

"Without inputs it would be difficult to delineate in any precise operational way how behaviour in the various sectors of society affects what happens in the political sector" (Easton, 1965b, p. 113). The characteristic of openness may be used to describe the nature of a political system to the degree that needs and preferences are transformed and filtered into demands. According to Easton (1965a) these demands may result from sources either within the system (withinputs) or outside. By contrast, a closed system is completely isolated. Raffel (1972) distinguishes two types of closure: systematic closure where a specific subset of groups is denied access and high closure where access for all groups is limited. In a closed system boundaries are sealed against the exchange of information and energy

from the environment (Rogers & Rogers, 1976).

The labelling of a system open or closed depends on the response of the system to its environment. Iannaccone (1967) views education, for example, as a major social institution subject to all the forces present in our society. Authoritative allocation of values in the educational subsystem, described by Wirt and Kirst (1972b) as a miniature political system, exists in an environment of interchange. The social, economic, and cultural characteristics of the environment affect the context within which a demand results in appropriate decisions.

Summerfield (1971) notes that the success of a demand depends upon resources available to the decision-makers. Thus, there are times when preferences may not become demands, as when "a group feels it lacks sufficient influence to affect government policy and thus takes no action to promote its interests" (David & Bellush, 1971, p. 85). The linkage between the intrasocietal and extrasocietal systems and the political system is maintained by the exchanges and transactions that result in an authoritative allocation of values in the form of outputs. Exchanges, between petitioners (individuals or groups who seek to influence) and allocators (authorities charged with the distribution of resources) impact upon decisions made within the political system. Nevertheless, the success of an input depends to a large degree on the ability of an individual or group to guide its demand through the various regulated

mechanisms of the system (Massialas, 1969).

A crucial element of Easton's model is the conversion process. In this process "the inputs of demands and supports are acted upon in such a way that it is possible for the system to persist and to produce outputs meeting the demands of at least some of the members, and retaining the support of most" (Easton, 1965b, p. 131). In this way, outputs may be seen as the product of the system's capacity to respond to stress.

Input benefits can be predicated fairly precisely. Outputs, however, may be more difficult to perceive and measure (Behn, 1981). Because of this, there is a tendency in the realm of political decisions to concentrate on inputs. Schlesinger (1968) states, however, that one of the guiding principles of systems analysis is the emphasis which can be given to authoritative allocations--outputs. Behn (1981) maintains that benefits of a system's program can only be correctly assessed from how much you get out not by how much you put in.

A political system is "endowed with feedback and the capacity to respond to it" (Easton, 1965b, p. 128). It is because of these characteristics that a system has the ability to regulate stress by either modification or redirection of its behaviour. To persist through time a system must both gain and retain support. By being aware of environmental developments, a system is able to acquire pertinent information regarding, for instance, politically influential

members of the system and how they view the effects of the system's outputs. The flow of information, regardless of how it is acquired, must be constantly evaluated by the system. Only in this way will knowledge enable the system to effectively maintain itself in an ever-changing atmosphere of stress. The entire process, from initial output back to the system's authorities, may be referred to as the feedback loop.

Possessed of feedback information, the members of a system are able to infuse their efforts with direction and purpose. It is for reasons such as these that feedback has been recognized as a central phenomenon in human behavior, both individual and collective. (Easton, 1965b, p. 130)

There may be instances where outputs inadvertently improve adverse situations in the environment. In this way, support may be afforded the system without members realizing the reasons why. However, in most cases, members of a system either set out to rectify a damaging situation already in existence or plan to address one which they anticipate. This role of responding to the environment involves a member's perception of the situation. The decision function (Easton, 1965b) of a system's member is not based primarily on what the outputs do in any objective sense, but what the member perceives them doing. Perception by members of a particular environmental reaction is therefore a vital factor in a system's capacity to respond effectively. It is the impact of the "composite stimulus - the difference between what is experienced, what is perceived, and what is

expected as outputs - that governs the feedback response" (Easton, 1965a, p. 396), which in essence decides the fate of the system.

Systems theory, as presented by Easton (1965b), is one way of viewing an organization. It will eventually provide what he calls a "macrotheory" of political and social behaviour. Decisions emitted from organizations are hypothesized to be a result of this "macrotheory."



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Population Sample

The population sample of this study was confined to the Newfoundland Department of Education. The sample was subdivided into three groups: (a) Senior Officials, (b) Administrative Officials, (c) Professional Staff.

The Senior Officials' sample included the Minister of Education and the Deputy Minister of Education. Administrative Officials consisted of the Assistant Deputy Minister--Primary, Elementary and Special Education, the Director of Special Education Services, the Director of School Services, the Director of Instruction, and the Assistant Director of Special Education Services. Professional Staff included the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, the Consultant for Visually Impaired Pupils, the Supervisor of Special Education, and the Registrar for Handicapped Children.

#### Instrument

Stapleton (1975) investigated the credit system in Ontario as a case study for his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Politics of Educational Innovations." He used an open interview technique because, as he stated, "in policy formation, the subjects usually possess data which are inaccessible to the researcher" (p. 67). Since this researcher wished to maintain a framework for questioning,

an adaptation of Stapleton's approach formed the basis for a semi-structured interview. Analysis of all pertinent documentation was also conducted.

#### Instrumentation Validation

It was assumed that face and content validity were present in the original format of the instrument as used by Stapleton in the 1975 study. To further ensure face and content validity, the instrument was submitted to eight graduate students and professors in the Department of Educational Administration at Memorial University for comments with respect to additions and deletions. Moreover, a thorough perusal of literature related to the governmental policy process was conducted. Finally, the questionnaire was administered to one government administrative official in the Department of Career Development in the province who was asked to comment on the instrument's clarity, precision and appropriateness.

#### Administration of the Questionnaire and Interview

Prior to data collection, a letter was sent to the Minister of Education formally requesting approval for the study to be conducted. Permission was sought to interview departmental personnel and a request was made to view all documents related to the amendment of Section 12a of the Schools' Act. When permission was granted, arrangements

regarding the date and time of interviewing and documentation availability were finalized. Following the interview period, and the collection of information from documentation, the researcher analyzed and interpreted all recorded information.

#### Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis was employed in this case study. Analysis of this kind permits a description of an issue from the perspective of the person who has experienced it. The descriptive data resulting from qualitative research permit the subject of the study to be viewed as part of a whole. Qualitative methods enable the exploration of concepts whose essence is lost in other research approaches (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Thus, the amendment of the Schools' Act was examined as the culmination of a policy process. Data collected from the interviews and documentation allowed an analysis of this process while focusing on the participants.

#### Reliability Measures

To increase reliability of the results of this study, a number of measures were undertaken. First, the researcher designed a specific number of questions for the study which were addressed in outline form in the Stapleton instrument. Secondly, systematic recording and coding procedures were employed to ensure the appropriate documentation of the interviewee's response. Thirdly, the researcher strived to maintain objectivity to minimize bias in interpreting the data.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to analyze the role of the politician and the civil servant in a departmental policy process. To facilitate this, a specific case study involving a Department of Education was utilized.

The 1979 amendment to Section 12a of the province's Schools' Act was examined. The researcher was concerned with how specific roles within the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education contributed to the process which resulted in the formulation of a policy, giving mandatory jurisdiction to school boards for education of the province's mentally and/or physically handicapped pupils.

Data on this chapter were collected during a semi-structured interview with 12 people who held positions with the Department of Education. Although there were three Ministers of Education during the time frame of the policy process, one of these could not be interviewed because of serious illness. Information was also obtained from copies of correspondence and other documentation readily provided to the researcher by the Department of Education.

The findings are presented in three main sections, dealing respectively with roles, components in the process to decide policy, and a comparison with Jennings' policy process model. The first section describing roles answers

the first two questions of the thesis. The second section, dealing with the components in the process to decide policy, answers question three of the thesis. Section three compares the findings of the thesis with Jennings' Model and in doing so answers questions four and five of the thesis (see p. 5).

The Department of Education, as depicted in the flow chart (Figure 3) has been divided into three groups-- Senior Officials, Administrative Officials, and Professional Staff. The groups were selected because of the positions they held in the decision-making hierarchy of the Department.

#### Roles

##### Question 1

What role was played by the Senior Officials, the Newfoundland Minister and Deputy Minister of Education, in the development of the policy decision to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act?

##### Question 2

What roles did the following play in development of this policy:

- (i) Administrative Officials of the Department of Education?
- (ii) Professional Staff of the Department of Education?

Respondents were questioned regarding their perceptions of the roles of Senior Officials, Administrative Officials, and Professional Staff in developing the departmental policy to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act (1979). Subjects were asked to describe the roles played by the Minister and

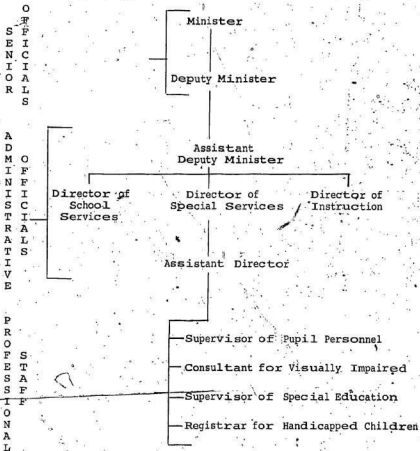


Figure 3. Flow Chart of the Department of Education: 1969.

the Deputy Minister, and in particular to signify any relationship which existed between these positions relevant to this particular policy development.

#### The Role of the Minister

Senior Officials. Members of this group viewed the Minister as leader of the Department. The role in this particular policy process was one of assisting in the implementation by enabling colleagues to synthesize the idea. The Minister was generally thought of as one who initiated the ideas for departmental policies. The Minister was also described as an individual who must be capable of thinking in broad terms so as to view issues from a public rather than a bureaucratic perspective. Labelled as the political head of the Department the Minister was considered responsible for responding to external pressures. However, Senior Officials agreed that this office must refrain from a "blanket accommodation" of viewpoint. Thus, since educational power was described as fragmented, the Minister was considered an assembler of input, consulting with various groups regarding legislative change. Presenting formulated policies to Cabinet for approval, as well as defending policies to the public were also identified as duties of the Minister when acting as the official head of the Department.

Administrative Officials. Members of this group, when discussing the role of Senior Officials, were quick to observe that the Minister was the official spokesperson for

the Department. Described as the official channel and link to the Executive Council, the Minister was portrayed as being responsible for the presentation of proposed legislative amendment to Cabinet. Advice, regarding the underlying educational principles of the policy, was sought by the Minister from Department personnel to guarantee satisfactory explanation to Cabinet. Respondents agreed that the Minister must be aware of all social and political implications of policy recommendations. Since pedagogical concerns were the main responsibility of Department personnel, the Minister must filter all aspects of a proposed policy. It was observed that this filtering provided the Minister with a satisfactory political as well as financial analysis of the proposal which ultimately must be defended by the Minister before Cabinet colleagues. Without the complete understanding and support of the Minister, a policy would not usually advance to the point of presentation to Cabinet. However, as observed by one respondent, there had been times when the Minister had not completely agreed with a proposal but had proceeded with its presentation.

In this particular policy, as with all that involve legislative change, the Minister was required by the Department of Education Act, Section 22, to bring the matter before the General Advisory Committee. As chairperson of this policy-making body, the Minister oversaw the debate by Administrative and Senior Officials concerning this policy.



Described as committed to change, the Minister did not require much convincing to take the legislative change to Cabinet. Understanding of the concept and fully sympathetic to development of programs, the Minister's empathy towards Special Education was described as instrumental in the supportive response given this policy.

Professional Staff. The major role of the Minister in the development of this particular policy was described by respondents in this group as that of offering leadership and encouragement to personnel while remaining cognizant of the political climate concerning the issue. Mention was made of the Cabinet representation of the policy, also described as a duty of the Minister. Of the three persons who were Minister of Education during this period, Professional Staff perceived one as being more involved than the others. The reason given was the Minister's educational background which, respondents felt, provided a better understanding and knowledge of all educational issues.

In general, it was agreed that the role of Minister could not be separated from that of politician. Respondents noted that the Minister must be cognizant of constituency needs and must remain in control of the Department as the people's representative. The Minister was observed as requiring the expertise of the Department to provide assistance in determining when to placate the public. This was deemed necessary by respondents who viewed the Minister's position as tentatively based upon the wishes of the voters.

### The Role of the Deputy Minister

Senior Officials. The Deputy Minister's main function in this policy was described as providing information and recommendations to the Minister regarding principles underlying the proposed policy change. This also included satisfying the Minister that the appropriate political climate was present outside the Department for the presentation of the policy. It was observed that an accurate portrayal of this climate could be presented to the Minister since the Deputy Minister had been involved, for several years, in discussions with external interest groups concerning this particular policy involving Section 12a:

The training and experience of the Deputy Minister in the field of education, provided credibility to advice given the Minister on policy issues. One of the three Ministers of Education involved in this particular policy had training in the educational field. It was observed by respondents that the same philosophical perspective was shared by the Deputy Minister and this particular Minister which fostered a "good, open consensus" on this and other policies. The most important function of the Deputy Minister in all policy centred on implementation of the policy once it had been adopted. This involved aspects of administration, such as budgeting.

The normal working relationship between a Minister and Deputy Minister was described by respondents as providing

an atmosphere for constant dialogue, always mindful of the Minister's responsibility for the far-reaching implications of the Department's policy. Senior Officials felt a similar relationship had existed during this policy development. The Deputy Minister was the main advisor to the Minister, and oversaw the implementation of the policy.

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials viewed the Deputy Minister's role as that of chief advisor to the Minister. One member observed that the Deputy Minister's support was most significant if a policy proposal was to be presented to the Minister, and further described the Deputy Minister as "the one who has to be convinced." The co-ordination of all departmental views on a policy was seen as a vital component in the role of the Deputy Minister. The crystalizing of these views for the Minister and the actual drafting of the legislation were also described as duties of the Deputy Minister.

Administrative Officials observed that the Deputy Minister's philosophy of local educational responsibility assured support of this particular policy. Therefore, any reservations expressed by the Deputy Minister centred on administrative considerations, such as financing the project. Described by one Administrative Official as having learned from the difficult circumstances surrounding a similar change in the Nova Scotia legislation, the Deputy Minister was perceived as providing a "sensitive ear" to all concerns and consequently did not favour a forced approach to the legislative amendment.

Administrative Officials agreed that the working relationship between a Minister and a Deputy Minister had to be maintained in a positive manner. It was further noted that the Deputy Minister had greater access to the Minister than other departmental personnel. It was believed that the Deputy Minister would have the Minister's "ear" where a Divisional Director would not. The Department was described as having a team atmosphere which guaranteed an accurate report of divisional input by the Deputy Minister during advisory sessions with the Minister. It was agreed by respondents that this accuracy was observed by the Deputy Minister in all instances, even when the input opposed the Deputy's view during other policy discussions.

Professional Staff. Viewed as the link between below and above, the Deputy Minister was described by Professional Staff as providing the climate for a Division to analyze its policy. Respondents saw the Deputy Minister's role as being aware of the need for policy but not as one involved directly with policy development. The Deputy Minister was described as the person who ensured that technical and financial expertise were appropriately used in the development of the policy, before advising the Minister of the need for it. Respondents tended to perceive that the Deputy Minister, being in receipt of this expertise, was usually the decision-maker. However, it was sometimes thought that the wishes of the Government or of the Minister may have been followed, often resulting in a necessary compromising of values by the Deputy Minister.

Professional Staff described the Deputy Minister's involvement in this policy development as very high. However, most respondents agreed that the involvement was as advisor to the Minister.

Respondents were not aware of any particular working relationship between the Minister and the Deputy Minister. Depicted as normally working well together, both positions were described in terms of their consultative nature. This supported the view of respondents regarding the Deputy Minister's link with the Minister and the latter's "need to know."

#### The Role of Administrative Officials

Senior Officials. Senior Officials viewed the roles of Administrative Officials as being dependent upon divisional affiliation. Some Administrative Officials were described as occupying a peripheral role where support rather than direct involvement was offered to the policy process. Concerns of external interest groups were often presented to Senior Officials by particular Administrative Officials. As well, credit for originating the idea of mandatory legislation concerning handicapped children was given to this group. It was noted that certain members of the Administrative group were involved from the beginning in this issue and attention was directed to the idea for this policy by the Deputy Minister as a result of a recommendation from the Director of Special Services.

Administrative Officials. The perceptions of Administrative Officials concerning their own roles were diverse with regards to this policy. Certain Administrative positions were described as laying the groundwork for what eventually became the policy. Beginning in 1969 personnel of the Division of Special Services had travelled the province informing school boards of various Schools' Act regulations concerning Special Education pupils. This was described as the foundation for this legislative amendment.

Administrative Officials described their strong support for educational decentralization within the Department. There was a variation in roles played by members according to respondents in this group. Field work was performed by certain members, whereas other Administrative Officials were involved in formal discussion of the policy as members of the General Advisory Committee. This Committee consists of representatives from the Denominational Education Committees, the Newfoundland Association of School Trustees, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, Memorial University of Newfoundland, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Home and School, as well as the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education, the Assistant Deputy Ministers of Education, and the Divisional Directors of the Department of Education. Certain Administrative members viewed discussion by the Committee as peripheral to the actual development of this policy. They identified Administrative Officials who represented the Division of Special Services

as the key individuals in the formulation of this policy.

Professional Staff. Professional Staff perceived two Administrative Officials as being vital to the development of the policy, namely, the Director and the Assistant Director of the Division of Special Services. Other members of the Administrative group were observed as being either on the periphery of the process by promoting attitudinal change in outside agencies or as having no involvement in the policy development.

The Role of Professional Staff

Senior Officials. Senior Officials viewed Professional Staff as having task-related responsibilities. These duties did not include any involvement of this group with Senior Officials concerning policy. When discussing the Staff in the context of this particular policy, Senior Officials were unanimous in their observations that no role was played by the Professional group.

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials did not identify a role for the Professional Staff in the development of this or any policy. The role of Professional members was described as one concerned with the operations of the Department around the province. The Professional Staff was depicted as a link with the field where attitude-formation concerning this policy was important. However, particular involvement in this particular policy formulation was not evident.

Professional Staff. Professional Staff perceived their own role in the policy development as being noncontributory. Respondents described themselves as being supportive of the principle. However, no formal representation was identified. It was noted that they were aware that "something was going on, but we didn't know what." One respondent observed, however, that he was shown the written legislation just before it was tabled.

Components in the Process to Decide Policy

This section answers question 3 of the thesis:

What access channels were utilized and by whom for input/in the policy-making process?

Reporting on factors which influence policy decisions, respondents identified both departmental personnel and external interest groups as having played an influential role in the development of this policy. Communication methods employed to gain access to decision-makers were also presented.

In the pages which follow, detailed information will be presented about influentials within the Department, and about the involvement of external groups in this policy process. Data will be presented also about sources of information, about methods of access to decision-makers, about forms of communication used within the Department and with external groups, as well as about the forms of communication most and least used. Each of these matters will be discussed in turn.



Influentials

Senior Officials. Senior Officials gave varying replies when asked to identify the most influential person within the Department with respect to this policy (Table 1). One respondent observed that the identification of one person was difficult since all departmental personnel were supportive of the policy. Credit for influence was given, however, by the other respondents to the Director of Special Services since he was observed as being a strong proponent of this policy. Respondents also indicated that co-operative efforts of both Senior and Administrative Officials influenced the policy development.

Administrative Officials. Respondents in this group identified Senior Officials as the most influential Department personnel concerning this policy. The Minister's support was described as essential since it was the Minister who had to convince Cabinet of a policy's political and social significance. The Deputy Minister was also identified as being influential in policy development, since it was the Deputy Minister who advised the Minister. Respondents also observed that the Director and the Assistant Director of Special Services had some influence on this policy (Table 1).

Professional Staff. Professional Staff identified the Director of Special Services as being an influential person in the Department with respect to the policy. Both the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister were also



perceived as influential in this policy (Table 1).

#### External Interest Groups--Involvement

Senior Officials. Based upon the perceptions of the Senior Officials regarding involvement of the external interest groups noted in Table 2, 71% of the total external interest group potential was realized. Senior Officials perceived input to have been forthcoming from the Canadian Association for Mental Retardation (CAMR), the Newfoundland Teachers' Association (NTA), Parents, Other Government Departments, the Federation of School Boards, the Superintendents' Association, and the Denominational Education Committees (DEC). One respondent cited Memorial University, and one other--Atlantic Provinces Report of the Special Education Committee to the Ministers of Education (Kendall, 1973)--as having had input. The Council of Ministers and the School Counsellors' Association of Newfoundland (SCAN) were perceived by Senior Officials as having had no input.

Administrative Officials. Based upon the perceptions of Administrative Officials of the involvement of the external interest groups noted in Table 2, less than two-thirds (64%) of the total external interest group potential was realized. Administrative Officials perceived input to have been forthcoming from the Canadian Association for Mental Retardation (CAMR), the Newfoundland Teachers' Association (NTA), Parents, Other Government Departments, the Federation of School Boards, the Superintendents' Association, and the

Table 2

## Perceptions of External Interest Group Involvement

Respondents:	CAMR	NIA	Parents	Council of Ministers	Other Government Depts.	Federation of School Boards	Supt. Assn.	DEC	SCAN	MUN	Other	Total
Senior Officials	1 x	x	x		x	x	x	x				7
	2 x	x	x		x	x	x	x				7
	3 x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	9
Total	3/3	3/3	3/3		3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3		1/3	1/3	
Administrative Officials	4 x	x	x		x	x	x	x				7
	5 x	x	x			x	x	x		x		7
	6 x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x		8
	7	x	x			x	x	x		x		5
	8		x		x	x		x		x		5
Total	3/5	5/5	3/5		3/5	5/5	4/5	5/5		4/5		
Professional Staff	9 x	x			x		x	x				5
	10 x		x	x	x							4
	11 x		x		x	x	x	x				6
	12 x		x									2
Total	4/4	1/4	3/4	1/4	3/4	1/4	2/4	2/4				
Total	10/12	9/12	9/12	1/12	9/12	9/12	9/12	10/12	0/12	5/12	1/12	72/132
Percentage	83	75	75	8	75	75	75	83	0	42	8	

Legend: x = involvement occurred.

Denominational Education Committees (DEC). Memorial University's Education Faculty was credited with influence because of the positive impact its teacher training program had on educational services for handicapped pupils. These qualified teachers were seen as essential to the development of the policy. Respondents did not detect any input from the Council of Ministers or the School Counsellors' Association of Newfoundland (SCAN).

Professional Staff. Based upon the perceptions of Professional Staff regarding involvement of the external interest groups noted in Table 2, 43% of the total external interest group potential was realized. Professional Staff perceived input from the Canadian Association for Mental Retardation (CAMR), the Newfoundland Teachers' Association (NTA), Parents, Other Government Departments, the Federation of School Boards, the Superintendents' Association and the Denominational Education Committees (DEC). The Professional Staff did not perceive input from Memorial University, the Council of Ministers, nor the School Counsellors' Association of Newfoundland (SCAN).

#### External Interest Groups--Influence

Senior Officials. Senior Officials believed that CAMR and the Kendall (1973) Report had the most influence on this policy (Table 3). CAMR was described by Senior Officials as comprising parents and advocates of mentally handicapped persons. The group was perceived as influential because of

Table 3  
 Perceptions of Most Influential External Interest Group

Respondents	CAMR	Parents	MUN	Other	Do not know
Senior Officials	X			X	X
Administrative Officials		X	X		X X X
Professional Staff	X	X		X	X
Total	2	2	1	2	5

members' knowledge of the issues concerning this policy. The Kendall (1973) Report presented the findings of a committee of educators formed in April, 1972 to study the needs of children in the Atlantic provinces requiring special education. Senior Officials observed that this Report was the benchmark in moving toward the direction of mandatory legislation regarding handicapped pupils.

Senior Officials described external interest group input effectiveness in various ways. Personal friends were considered to be effective with regard to influence on Senior Officials. However, one respondent observed that it was most important to listen to the views of parent groups such as CAMR in situations concerning this type of policy.

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials described parents and Memorial University as having had the most influence on this policy. Three respondents could not identify any external interest group as having been the most influential.

Administrative Officials did not identify one external interest group as having effectively influenced them in this policy. Only personal experiences in employment and with their own family members were cited by respondents as having been effective in influencing them on this policy issue.

Professional Staff. Professional Staff identified CAMR and Parents as having had the most influence on this policy. One respondent noted that in all policy, if parents had not made their views known then few things would have been accomplished.

One Professional Staff member described Sir Frederick Fraser School for the Blind in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as having been effective in its influence concerning this policy. Other respondents could not identify any particular influence as being most effective during this policy development.

#### Information

Senior Officials. Two external interest groups were identified by Senior Officials as having been very beneficial sources of information, CAMR and the Kendall (1973) Report. National publications were also cited by respondents as having provided information on the issue.

All Senior Officials named one Administrative Official, the Director of Special Services, as having been an excellent source of information along with CAMR.

Administrative Officials. Related to the topic of information sources, two Administrative Officials indicated that conferences at the national level, other departments of education, and publications were sources of information on this issue. One respondent credited the Department's Division of Special Services as being informative, along with a Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. As well, their own family members were sources of information for some Administrative Officials. One Administrative Official found Superintendents to be sources of information on the policy, while another respondent



described the General Advisory Committee meetings as providing him with information on the topic.

The Director of the Division of Special Services at the Department was described by Administrative Officials as being the most beneficial source of information. He, in turn, found the meetings of Canadian Directors of Special Services Departments across Canada to be most beneficial since "you could have frank and open conversations" regarding the education of handicapped children.

Professional Staff. One respondent cited reports on the Ontario education system as an information source concerning the issue. Journals, textbooks, group discussions, and the media were all identified by Professional Staff as valuable sources of information on this policy.

The Director of Special Services was identified as the most beneficial source of information from one respondent. Other Professional Staff members cited sources outside the Department, such as the Ontario system, as being most helpful with respect to information on this topic. One respondent felt that these external sources of information seemed more broadly developed than that provided by this particular Department.

#### Access

Senior Officials. Influence on decision-makers cannot be achieved unless access to them is obtained. Senior Officials were asked to identify access channels to

decision-makers. Respondents described the unlimited access available to personnel of the Department which provided an informal atmosphere where protocol was not usually evident.

Senior Officials described access by external interest groups as being formal in nature, usually as members of the General Advisory Committee. One respondent described invitations for Senior Officials to speak to parent groups as providing access to outside interest groups. During these occasions, parents initiated discussions regarding this policy. Informal input was provided to Senior Officials by contact with members of associations concerned with handicapped persons.

The perceived point of access in the Department for external interest groups was identified by Senior Officials as being a combination of Senior and Administrative Officials (Table 4).

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials described the Department as being open and accessible on policy matters. Policy was discussed collectively in a process of consultation in the Department at General Advisory Committee meetings.

Accessibility to Senior Officials was described as readily available. However, appointments were usually requested by Administrative Officials out of courtesy. One respondent observed that access to the Minister was limited since policy was discussed with the Deputy Minister. Administrative Officials reported that access to the Minister was

Table 4

## Perceptions of Departmental Access Point for External Interest Group Input

Respondent	2. Administrative Officials Only		3. Professional Staff Only		4. Combination 1 & 2		5. Combination 1 & 3		6. Combination 2 & 3		7. Combination 1, 2 & 3		Do not know
	1. Senior Officials Only	2. Administrative Officials Only	3. Professional Staff Only	4. Combination 1 & 2	5. Combination 1 & 3	6. Combination 2 & 3	7. Combination 1, 2 & 3	8. Combination 1, 2 & 3	9. Combination 1, 2 & 3	10. Combination 1, 2 & 3	11. Combination 1, 2 & 3	12. Combination 1, 2 & 3	
Senior Officials				x	x								
Administrative Officials				x	x								
Professional Staff													x
Total	0	0	0	8	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	

usually available at General Advisory Committee meetings on which Divisional Directors were members.

Respondents agreed that the Deputy Minister was "totally accessible on a daily basis." Weekly staff meetings and daily informal discussions provided access opportunities to the Deputy Minister by Administrative Officials.

Members of this group reported that access to one another was always available since a team approach was used. However, for this particular policy, certain Administrative Officials played a peripheral role, so access was not required.

Table 4 indicates that Administrative Officials identified Senior and Administrative Officials as having received input from external interest groups. Accessibility by these interest groups was described as continual, and General Advisory Committee meetings were cited as the usual vehicle used.

Administrative Officials identified the Director and the Assistant Director of Special Services as the Department employees who received most input from external interest groups. The Minister and the Deputy Minister were also named as receivers of input; however, it was observed by respondents that these two Senior Officials usually referred most of this input to the Division of Special Services (Table 4).

Professional Staff. Professional Staff varied in their observations concerning access to influentials within the

Department. Described by one respondent as having "soft input" regarding the development of the policy, access was perceived as very informal. However, another respondent stated that no access was available in the Department for Professional Staff.

Respondents agreed that ~~unofficial~~ contact was made with most of the interest groups listed. This was as a result of the duties of Professional Staff members, which presented opportunities for multiple levels of involvement with many groups across the province, especially parents.

Professional Staff could not identify a specific Department employee who would have received input regarding this policy. It was generally observed by respondents that external interest group input would have been received by members of the Senior and Administrative groups as well as Professional Staff.

#### Communication--Internal

Senior Officials. Communication within an organization may take a variety of forms ranging from the formal to the informal. Senior Officials were asked to identify the methods of communication they employed with respect to input in the policy development. As a group, respondents employed 19 of 21 potential methods (7 methods times 3 persons) of communication, yielding a group percentage of 90. Two Senior Officials employed all 7 listed methods of communication while one Senior Official employed 5 methods, not utilizing written communication or telephone calls (Table 5).

All Senior Officials identified four methods of communication employed by the Deputy Minister to obtain information from the Minister. One respondent reported that telephone calls, chance meetings, and meetings at social affairs were not used by the Deputy Minister as communication methods for this policy (Table 6). Respondents reported that the Minister in communicating with the Deputy Minister did not rely on telephone calls and meetings by appointment regarding this policy development (Table 7).

Administrative Officials. With respect to communication methods employed in organizational structures, Administrative Officials were asked to identify the methods they used in this policy development. As a group, respondents employed less than half of the potential methods of communication listed, yielding a group percentage of 48. Formal committee meetings were utilized by all respondents. Informal group and chance meetings were used by three Administrative Officials, whereas two Officials used meetings by appointment as a communication method for this policy. Other methods listed in the table were used by only one respondent (Table 5).

When questioned as to their perceptions of the methods of communication employed by the Deputy Minister in communicating with them, Administrative Officials agreed that approximately half (51%) of the potential methods listed were employed (Table 6). No one method was used to obtain

Table 5

## Communication Methods Employed by: Respondents

Respondents	Formal Committee Meetings	Informal Group Meetings	Letters, Reports, etc.	Tele- phone Calls	Meetings by Appoint- ment	Chance Meetings	Meetings at Social Affairs	Other	TOTAL
Group 1:									
Senior	1	x	x	x	x	x	x		7
Officials	2	x	x		x	x	x		5
	3	x	x	x	x	x	x		7
Total	3/3	3/3	2/3	2/3	3/3	3/3	3/3		
Group 2:									
Adminis- trative	4	x	x		x				3
Officials	5	x	x	x	x				5
	6	x	x			x			3
	7	x				x	x		3
	8	x				x			2
Total	5/5	3/5	1/5	1/5	2/5	3/5	1/5		
Group 3:									
Profes- sional Staff	9		x		x	x	x		5
	10		x			x			2
	11					x			1
	12								0
Total		2/4		1/4	1/4	3/4	1/4		
Total	8	8	3	4	6	9	5		43

Table 6  
 Communication Methods Employed by: Deputy Minister

Respondent	Formal Committee Meetings		Informal Group Meetings		Letters, Reports, etc.		Meetings by Appointment		Meetings at Social Affairs		Total
	Meetings	3/3	Meetings	3/3	2/3	2/3	3/3	3/3	Meetings	Other	
<b>Group 1:</b>											
1 Senior Officials	X		X		X		X		X		7
2	X		X		X		X		X		4
3	X		X		X		X		X		7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>3/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	
<b>Group 2:</b>											
4 Administrative Officials	X		X		X		X		X		4
5	X		X		X		X		X		5
6	X		X		X		X		X		5
7	X		X		X		X		X		3
8	X		X		X		X		X		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>	
<b>Group 3:</b>											
9 Professional Staff			X						X		3
10									X		1
11					X				X		3
12									X		0
<b>Total</b>			<b>1/4</b>		<b>1/4</b>		<b>1/4</b>		<b>3/4</b>	<b>1/4</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>43</b>



information from all respondents. One Administrative Official reported that written communication was used, and two respondents described the use of chance meetings and social affairs as being methods of communication employed by the Deputy Minister regarding this policy. One respondent observed that "these chance meetings could have the effect of coloring your thinking" which could affect decisions at formal meetings. He went on to conclude, "Don't discount the social in policy." Four Administrative Officials described the use of formal group meetings by the Deputy Minister and three respondents cited informal and appointment meetings as well as telephone calls being used by the Deputy Minister in communicating with Administrative Officials about this policy development.

Four Administrative Officials reported that the Minister utilized formal committee meetings to gain input from them on this policy. Three respondents cited informal group meetings as having been used by the Minister while written communication, telephone calls, meetings by appointment, by chance, and at social affairs were listed by two Administrative Officials. Thus, this group perceived that nearly half (49%) of the potential methods of communication listed were employed by the Minister in communicating with Administrative Officials about this policy development (Table 7).

Professional Staff. Respondents were asked to indicate the communication methods employed for input into this policy. As a group, Professional Staff utilized just over one-quarter

(29%) of the potential methods of communication listed. Telephone calls, meetings by chance, at social affairs, and in informal groups were used by Professional Staff for input. No formal group meetings were held, although two respondents were involved in meetings, by appointment concerning the policy (Table 5).

When questioned as to their perception of the methods of communication employed by the Deputy Minister, Professional Staff indicated that 25% of the potential methods listed were employed (Table 6). Neither formal committee meetings nor meetings by appointment were perceived by respondents as having been employed by the Deputy Minister to obtain input from Professional Staff on this policy. Members identified written communication, telephone calls, and meetings by chance, at social affairs, or in informal groups as methods of communication employed by the Deputy Minister to obtain input from Professional Staff.

Professional Staff identified informal communication methods as the technique used by the Minister to gather input from them on this issue. Formal methods such as group meetings, written communication, appointments and telephone calls were not utilized by the Minister with these respondents (Table 7).

#### Communication--External

Senior Officials. Senior Officials suggested that of the external interest groups listed, 48% of the potential was realized with regard to methods of communication employed

Table 7

## Communication Methods Employed by: Minister

Respondent	Formal Committee Meetings	Informal Group Meetings	Letters, Reports, etc.	Tele- phone Calls	Meetings by Appoint- ment	Chance Meetings	Meetings at Social Affairs	Other	TOTAL
Group 1:									
Senior	1	x	x	x	x	x	x		7
Officials	2	x	x	x	x	x	x		5
	3	x	x	x	x	x	x		7
Total		3/3	3/3	3/3	2/3	2/3	3/3	3/3	
Group 2:									
Adminis- trative	4	x	x		x	x	x		6
Officials	5	x	x	x	x	x	x		5
	6	x	x	x			x		4
	7	x							1
	8	x							1
Total		4/5	3/5	2/5	2/5	2/5	2/5	2/5	
Group 3:									
Profes- sional	9		x				x		3
Staff	10								0
	11								0
	12								0
Total			1/4				1/4	1/4	
Total		7	7	5	4	4	6	6	39

(Table 8). One Senior Official perceived that all methods of communication were employed by external interest groups.

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials perceived that of the external interest groups listed, 43% of the potential was realized with regard to methods of communication employed (Table 8). All respondents reported that formal committee meetings were utilized by external interest groups to give input into this policy. These meetings were identified as those of the General Advisory Committee. Four Administrative Officials described written communication used by external interest groups, while two respondents reported informal group meetings and telephone calls as being used by external interest groups as a means for input into this policy. One Administrative Official identified meetings both by appointment and by chance. However, meetings at social affairs were not cited by respondents as a communication method used by external interest groups during this policy development.

Professional Staff. Members of this group suggested that of the external interest groups listed, 20% of the potential was realized with regard to methods of communication employed (Table 8). Formal committee meetings and meetings at social affairs were reported as never having been used by external interest groups. Written communication, telephone calls, and meetings by appointment and by chance as well as informal group meetings were all considered used by external interest groups (Table 8).

Table 8

## Communication Methods Employed by: External Interest Groups

Respondents	Formal Committee Meetings	Informal Group Meetings	Letters, Reports, etc.	Tele- phone Calls	Meetings by Appoint- ment	Chance Meetings	Meetings at Social Affairs	Other	TOTAL
Group 1:									
Senior	1	x							1
Officials	2		x		x				2
	3	x	x	x	x	x	x		7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>1/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>1/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>1/3</b>	<b>1/3</b>		
Group 2:									
Adminis- trative	4	x	x	x					3
Officials	5	x	x	x					3
	6	x	x	x	x		x		6
	7	x	x						2
	8	x							1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>			
Group 3:									
Profes- sional	9		x	x			x		3
Staff	10			x	x		x		4
	11								0
	12								0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>2/5</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>32</b>

Communication--Most and Least Used

Senior Officials. Respondents identified the communication methods most and least used regarding this policy. Senior Officials used formal committee meetings most as a communication method whereas they utilized telephone calls least (Table 9).

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials identified the communication methods most and least used regarding this policy. Administrative Officials used formal committee meetings most as a communication method. Least used were written communication and meetings at social affairs (Table 9).

Professional Staff. Table 9 depicts the communication methods most and least used by the Professional Staff. Chance meetings were most used and formal meetings were least utilized as communication methods for input into this policy.

A Comparison with Jennings' (1977)  
Policy Process Model

Since policy is formulated as a result of a need to address various situations, the type of policy may help to identify the underlying reasons for the decision. This section answers questions 4 and 5 of the thesis.

## Question 4

What was the reason for the decision to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act?

Table 9.

Communication Methods Most and Least Used

	Minister		Deputy Minister		Respondents		Interest Groups		Total	
	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
Senior Officials	1	4	1	4	1	3	1	2		
	2	5	2	6	2	4	3	4	1	4
	3		3	7	5		5	6		
	6		5		6			7		
	7				7					
Administrative Staff	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	7	1	3
		4				4				7
		5				7				
		6								
		7								
Professional Staff	2	1	6	1	7	1	4	1		
	6	3		5		3	6	7		
	7	4							6	1
		5								
Total	1	4	1	3	7	3	1	7	1	3
	2	5	2	7			3			7
			6							

## Key: Communication Methods

- 1 = Formal Committee Meetings
- 2 = Informal Group Meetings
- 3 = Letters, Reports, etc.
- 4 = Telephone Calls

- 5 = Meetings by Appointment
- 6 = Chance Meetings
- 7 = Meetings at Social Affairs
- 8 = Other

## Question 5

To what extent does this policy process concur with the model proposed by Jennings (1977)?

The policy to impart mandatory jurisdiction to school boards for the education of the province's handicapped pupils has been analyzed according to a series of related events as observed by Senior Officials, Administrative Officials, and Professional Staff. These events have been examined in relation to the six steps in the policy process model proposed by Jennings (1977).

Step 1. Initiation

This stage occurs when dissatisfaction is expressed with the present situation either because of an inequity or a lack of adequate fulfillment of a need. It is the role of the policy maker at this point to decide who to listen to and when (Jennings, 1977).

Senior Officials. In 1969, the province's Schools' Act provided for the hiring of teachers for Special Education classes. Not long after this, the Association for Mental Retardation in Newfoundland approached the Department requesting that the Newfoundland Government take over financial responsibility for the Association's teachers. Until then, mentally handicapped children had been educated by the Association through a grant and volunteer system.

Pressure from parents forced the Department to address, what one respondent called, its "social conscience" whereby



financial responsibility was assumed in 1971. One Senior Official described this event as the beginning of a steady process that culminated in the amendment to Section 12a. Respondents also agreed that the movement towards the mainstreaming and integration of handicapped people in society was observed by the Department and was regarded as "the right thing to do."

Administrative Officials. Members of this group used the term "evolutionary" to describe the policy process to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act. Citing the beginnings in the 1970's, Administrative Officials highlighted a number of events which paved the way for the policy. One respondent credited the re-organization and consolidation of school boards in 1969 as the beginning of the realization that an inequity existed in the educational structure with regards to handicapped children. Another Administrative Official observed that the discretionary clause in the 1969 Schools' Act regarding handicapped pupils was considered "too loose" by the public. Integration of handicapped pupils was thought by parents to be occurring too slowly under this clause. One respondent argued that the policy was initiated as a result of the Department's meeting the challenge of the times. He surmised that the Division of Special Services initiated the change because of the belief that this was the best educational approach for handicapped pupils.

The Director of Special Services identified the event which he felt had "sparked" the whole movement. He recalled

a news item concerning a group of Grand Falls citizens who were planning to lobby the government on behalf of handicapped pupils. This Administrative Official approached the Deputy Minister with the idea of mandatory legislation concerning the education of the province's handicapped children. The underlying feeling of all those concerned was that the institutions caring for these children were not offering the best education possible. This, as one Administrative Official observed, coupled with dissatisfaction on the part of the public, prompted the Government to initiate this policy.

Professional Staff. Respondents in this group observed that the reason for the initiation of the policy was the realization that educational services for handicapped children were not being adequately provided when morally and ethically they should have been. This corresponded to a belief in "normalization" as opposed to "institutionalization". One Professional Staff member observed that parents had become more vociferous in wanting to have their children attend neighbourhood schools. As one respondent stated, "educational services provided by anyone other than school boards were not as efficient."

#### Step 2. Reformulation of Opinion

This stage in Jennings' (1977) model presents the emergence of leaders. Opinions, views and implications are all discussed regarding the policy.

Senior Officials. Respondents in this group observed that leadership concerning this policy originated in the

Department. One Senior Official identified the Kendall (1973) Report as providing more motivation to the Department than did public pressure. The Report was seen as bringing educators together where a discussion of philosophy concerning handicapped children was facilitated. Senior Officials recalled the gathering of various opinions which were all based on the general principle of the right of all to an education.

Administrative Officials. One Administrative Official proposed that the gathering of opinions concerning this policy was not difficult to obtain. As in most cases, the Department made known its intentions and input was immediately received. The Minister formed an Advisory Committee on Special Education to gather opinions. One respondent observed that input was also sought from the General Advisory Committee. School boards expressed concern with their ability to cope with the proposed change, although they agreed with the philosophy underlying the policy. One Administrative Official commented on the fact that no great difficulties were being experienced by institutions. However, it was decided that professionally trained teachers under school boards would be better than institutional staff untrained in educational methods.

Professional Staff. One respondent noted that consolidation of educators' views that a child's environment was vital affected the discussions of amending Section 12a. The attitude of educators was possibly formed as a result of

the changes in law which were occurring with regards to the rights of the individual. Professional Staff described this policy as a move on the part of the Department to follow ideas and opinions indicative of the national trend.

### Step 3. Emergence of Alternatives

In this stage, potential solutions to the problem are now presented and several alternatives are proposed as the choices available. Assessment of the influence wielded by those who are dissatisfied is conducted with a view to acceptability both in and out of government (Jennings, 1977).

Senior Officials. Respondents in this group observed that the only alternative to the existing discretionary policy considered was the mandatory legislation which would legally give educational responsibility to school boards for the province's handicapped pupils. Senior Officials felt that the existing system was unacceptable to everyone, especially parents.

Administrative Officials. One respondent proposed that the Department displayed its acceptance of mandatory legislation as the only solution, when it refused to set up any new segregated schools after its take-over of the Association's schools, even though pressure from parents was great. It was further observed that this stance was taken because the Department realized that the existing system of educating handicapped pupils was unsatisfactory. As a result, "no major alternative" was ever considered, according to one

Administrative Official, even though the Department was aware of a variety of approaches used in other provinces.

Professional Staff. Members of this group agreed with the Department's philosophy of integration. This could not be adhered to if other alternatives were explored which did not give mandatory jurisdiction to school boards for handicapped children.

#### Step 4. Discussion and Debate

Policy proposals are fully developed during this stage wherein assessments continue, limits are placed on compromise and modification, and eventually the preferred proposals are chosen (Jennings, 1977).

Senior Officials. According to one Senior Official, it took six years of discussion and debate before the enactment of the mandatory legislation in December, 1979. Theoretically, school boards were in agreement with the policy. However, many boards felt that they did not have the proper resources or finances to provide education for handicapped pupils. One respondent observed that although school boards were voicing dissatisfaction with the implications of the policy, the Department realized that parents were anxious to have this policy implemented.

Discussion and debate took place mainly at meetings of the General Advisory Committee. Findings of two reports, the Kendall (1973) Report and the Neufeldt Report on Exon House in 1977 were fully discussed. One respondent concluded that the recommendations of these reports were viewed

as the leverage required to support the Department's policy when it was presented to Cabinet by the Minister.

Administrative Officials. Members of this group observed that disagreements and conflicts were settled by responding to each concern. Although school boards were described as having good intentions, they thought that their schools were "ill-prepared" to assume the educational responsibility for handicapped children. Administrative Officials agreed that the Department did not believe all support services had to be in place before boards assumed that responsibility.

Debate also took place between Department personnel. One respondent described the discussion which occurred when the Department was considering a separate vocational school for handicapped pupils. This Administrative Official observed that such a plan ran counter to the philosophy of integration which was the foundation of this policy. This plan was therefore abandoned.

Professional Staff. One respondent in this group observed that there was apprehension at the school board level concerning this policy. However, Professional Staff agreed that it was the gradual process of change which had best facilitated the acceptance of the policy. The fact that the Department had made "no great push" to implement the change, was seen by respondents as an incentive for boards to comply gradually, before mandatory jurisdiction became law.

#### Step 5. Legitimization

This stage involves the legislation of a policy. Ratification of the policy is conducted by a majority of the policy-makers empowered to do so by law (Jennings, 1977).

Senior Officials. Considered by members as a basic right of individuals, and accepted by school boards as their responsibility, the Minister presented the amendment of Section 12a to Cabinet and subsequently to the Legislature on December 14, 1979. The Minister could not recall "any discussion whatsoever" with regard to the appropriateness of the bill to amend the Schools' Act.

Administrative Officials. One Administrative Official viewed the amendment as offering handicapped children a better education. Another respondent noted that the Section 12a had been changed because the amendment was "pedagogically sound, socially sound, and politically wise."

Professional Staff. One respondent viewed the amendment as a natural progression from the policies that had been in operation in the rest of Canada. Another member described the change as the beginning of the move towards firmer provincial policy. Professional Staff agreed that the benefit to handicapped children was monumental. These children would gradually be able to rid themselves of the stigma attached to being handicapped.

#### Step 6. Implementation

With the public or departmental announcement of the policy, administrative procedures are put into effect

(Jennings, 1977).

Senior Officials. According to Senior Officials, on December 20, 1979, the Minister issued a news release concerning the amendment to Section 12a of the Schools' Act. The Minister observed that this reflected the progressive thinking regarding education in the province. Newfoundland was the third province in Canada to proclaim such legislation.

One respondent noted that it took from 1979 to 1984 for the gradual transfer of all handicapped children from departmental responsibility to that of school boards. Respondents were not aware of any formal evaluative procedures, but observed that parents and teachers expressed opinions at various times. One respondent likened the policy to motherhood stating, "you don't evaluate that."

Administrative Officials. Administrative Officials agreed that the implementation of the policy prompted no great "shift in the graph", meaning that most services were being offered by boards before the amendment. One respondent felt discouraged that it had taken so long to finally implement this policy. Another respondent observed that no formal evaluation had been conducted because of a lack of personnel.

Professional Staff. Professional Staff noted that they had all been involved in some way with the implementation of the policy. As consultants to school board personnel, these respondents took part in a system of "informal feedback"



which served as an evaluation process for the policy. Dissatisfactions are still dealt with on an individual basis by Professional Staff.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to analyze and describe the roles of the politician and the civil servant in the policy-making process within the Department of Education. In particular, roles of the positions of Ministers, Deputy Minister, Administrative Officials and Professional Staff were investigated with respect to the components identified in a policy process.

#### Instrumentation and Methodology

A case study approach was used by the researcher. Specifically, focus was placed upon the policy decision made by the Department of Education to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act in 1979 which gave mandatory jurisdiction to the province's school boards for the education of handicapped children.

Information was collected by means of a semi-structured interview. This interview technique was used to better facilitate the gathering of specific detailed opinions which might otherwise have been withheld. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes and 2 hours.

The questionnaire was an adaptation of an approach used by Stapleton in a 1975 study concerning the politics of educational innovations. It contained 32 questions which

were chosen to provide information specific to the five issues addressed in this thesis. Information was also obtained from copies of correspondence and other documentation.

Prior to data collection, the instrument was examined by professors and graduate students in the Department of Educational Administration at Memorial University of Newfoundland. The instrument was also examined by personnel of a governmental department other than the Department of Education. As a result of this process, minor editorial changes were made.

All 11 positions originally identified in the study were interviewed. This totalled 12 people, since two Ministers of Education, who were involved in the process, were included. A third Minister could not be interviewed because of serious illness. The interviews were conducted during a 2-month period in the fall of 1984. All respondents agreed that their interviews could be taped.

#### Summary and Conclusions

It is generally assumed that educational policy is the outcome of interactions between individuals and organizations (Thomas, 1983). Interaction which takes place in a Department of Education for the purpose of producing policy must therefore be studied in light of the roles played by participants. Identification of those participants will very often reveal who, either within or outside the organization, are the real decision-makers. The extent of

involvement may, as well, highlight the chief formulators of policy.

The role of Minister was described by respondents as centring on what Johnson (1981) terms surveillance and legitimation. However, the latter, involving Cabinet and public acceptance, was presented as being the more significant aspect of a Minister's role. Respondents readily described this as the constitutional responsibility which accompanies any Minister's position in policy development. The Minister's knowledge of pedagogical principles appeared to determine the extent of input into the educational aspect of the policy. This was indicated by respondents' comments concerning the knowledge a Minister has of the Department's professional area. In this particular policy the Deputy Minister and the Director of Special Services appeared to assume the role of formulators of policy since the technical expertise of two of the three Ministers was limited. As well, the change-over in Ministerial personnel during the time period of discussion of the policy, presented a situation whereby incoming Ministers required guidance from these two permanent officials. This, according to MacDonald (1980), promotes less independence on the part of a Minister "at the outset" (p. 30).

The advisory role, as compared to the administrative role of the Deputy Minister was given prominent status by respondents. In this particular policy development, the Deputy Minister was cognizant of the political climate

concerning the implementation of the policy. This, according to Robertson (1983), is crucial if a Minister is to be guided by a Deputy Minister's advice. Avoiding the immediate use of pressure techniques on boards, and aware of the developments in the Department of Rehabilitation and Recreation concerning the Neufeldt Report, the Deputy Minister, according to respondents, appeared appreciative of the social trends which would affect the Department policy. It was the Deputy Minister, therefore, who advised the Minister concerning the appropriate time of presentation of the amendment to Cabinet.

In accepting the proposal which originated from the Director of Special Services, the Deputy Minister may be portrayed as being open to ideas of "those in less senior ranks" (MacDonald, 1980, p. 31). Also acceptance of advice from groups outside the Department, such as recommendations by two outside studies, the Kendall Report and the Neufeldt Report, showed the Deputy Minister as reacting positively to others' involvement in policy development.

There were no multiple-choice options presented to the Minister by the Deputy Minister concerning this policy issue. Respondents stated that they were not aware of any that were possible. The agreement of the Deputy Minister concerning this policy direction was guaranteed from the beginning since it adhered to his philosophy of decentralized education. Therefore, no disagreements on principle were remembered by respondents.

As stated by Housego (1965), governmental officials have been set aside to implement the major aims of society. With regard to the principle underlying this policy, governmental officials were aware of society's major aim of integrating handicapped persons into the mainstream of society, including the educational component. Factors, both internal and external to organizations, affect the way decisions are reached (Easton, 1965b). The degree of input from various sources, when analyzed, enables the system to be classified as open or closed. To gain input into this policy various communication methods were employed. There was use of formal communication methods by Senior and Administrative Officials both with each other and external interest groups. However, there was no use of this method either by or with Professional Staff concerning this policy issue. One may conclude from the results of the study that input from Professional Staff was almost exclusively gathered on a chance basis. Observers may be tempted to describe a type of closure existing with regard to input from Professional Staff on policy development. It may be questioned as to why the Professional Staff did not initiate a presentation of their opinions in a formalized manner to Senior and Administrative Officials. David and Bellush (1971) propose that this lack of initiative often occurs when a group feels it lacks sufficient influence to affect policy.

With respect to a description of the Department of Education in terms of structure, Sanford's (1976) "tall

organization" cannot be used since there was communication between levels, albeit limited and very informalized at times. The tall organization may be described in terms of access through specific gatekeepers throughout the system, which guarantees control of any communication from various levels. However, access to the top by lower level position holders at the Department of Education is not as available as Sanford (1976) proposes it should be. Thus, one must assume that information received from Professional Staff by Administrative and Senior Officials in informal settings may have been subject to the filtering mechanism of a particular gatekeeper, thus not always reaching the decision-maker as input. One must, therefore, question the advisability of excluding the Professional Staff from formal group meetings. This departmental group is in most contact with the grass-roots functioning of our educational system. Members are exposed to the difficulties as well as the accomplishments of both pupils and teachers. A majority of their work is done in the "field". Information provided by this group would undoubtedly have been beneficial to this policy decision, even if its impact had only been on the length of time it took to gather input concerning the policy.

Many difficulties concerning support services for handicapped pupils are still being experienced by school boards, although the legislation has been enacted for over five years. Input from Professional Staff during policy discussions may have been able to address some of these

difficulties before the amendment in 1979.

The input of external interest groups was formally gathered through the General Advisory Committee. Input from parents was usually in response to a request from them either individually or as members of associations concerned with handicapped children. A majority of input from interest groups other than GAC appears to have been received in the form of written communication to Senior or Administrative Officials. The views of interest groups outside the educational field, usually parents, had impact upon the decision to amend the legislation. However, the extent of their formalized face-to-face input was limited. One must therefore agree with Iannaccone (1967) that education may have "closed system tendencies" where the public is not "adequately" represented.

Influentials within the Department with respect to this policy were in the majority in the Senior and Administrative groups. Professional Staff were not thought to have exerted much, if any, influence. This is also indicated in the area of access to the Department by outside groups. Senior and Administrative Officials, usually exclusive of the Minister, received the most input regarding this policy.

The Director of Special Services usually acted as gatekeeper to information for the Senior Officials, and the Deputy Minister provided most of this information to the Minister. Therefore, as a member of the Influential



designation, as well as gatekeeper to the leader of the Department, the Deputy Minister held the key role with respect to this policy. Influence of the Deputy Minister was also increased in a situation which saw three new Ministers enter the Department during the policy process.

The impact of departmental personnel and outside interest groups was felt upon the decision-making process concerned with this policy. The degree of impact appears to have been controlled by top level permanent officials of the Department. Thus, Easton's (1965a) analysis of a system is represented in this organization. Input was converted by the Department into a decision to amend the Schools' Act. The demands and supports of various individuals and groups played a significant role in how that output resulted.

The development of this policy satisfactorily adhered to the model proposed by Jennings (1977). Five stages were followed. However, an important component of the process was reduced. The cyclical aspect of the process has been affected in that formalized evaluative procedures have not been employed by the Department. Respondents referred to reliance upon informal reaction of teachers and parents. However, a policy such as this, which affects the basis of education in the province, should possibly have a formalized approach to accurate evaluation if a cyclical model such as Jennings' (1977) is to be completely followed.

One possible limitation of Jennings' model is the inclusion of a discussion of alternatives in Step 3. In this particular study, there were no alternatives considered, according to the respondents. Therefore, policy decisions based on Jennings' model need not necessarily follow the sequence suggested by Step 3.

#### Recommendations for Action

The case study technique does not facilitate broad generalizations based on conclusions. However, it may be concluded that the roles of Senior and Administrative Officials were significant with respect to this policy process. It may also be concluded that interest group involvement was substantiated with respect to access to educational decision-making through particular Department personnel. Based on conclusions drawn, the following recommendations for action are presented.

It is suggested that:

1. The role of Professional Staff be given a more formalized status with regard to policy development.
2. Systematic formal communication techniques be employed by Senior Officials to facilitate access for less senior personnel.
3. Input from external interest groups not represented on the General Advisory Committee be presented in a formalized way.
4. A structured evaluation of this policy be carried out by the Department of Education.

5. A model be adopted by the Department of Education wherein the development of policy adheres to a specific process.

Recommendations for Further Study

The following are suggested areas for further investigation:

1. An indepth study of formal interest group involvement in policy development generally within the Department of Education.
2. The study of informal interest groups in policy development within the Department of Education.
3. A comparative study of the roles of Senior Officials in the Department of Education and other Governmental Departments with respect to policy development.
4. The study of the development of other significant policies of the Department of Education with regard to adherence to other policy process models.
5. The study of the specific role of school board personnel in the development of policy within the Department of Education.
6. The study of the role of the General Advisory Committee on policy development within the Department of Education.
7. The study of the politics of education in Newfoundland as it relates to other amendments to legislation.
8. The indepth study of the financial implications resulting from a change in the legislation.

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## APPENDIX A

7

The following is a cross reference of the thirty-two interview questions with the five thesis questions:

	Thesis Questions	Interview Questions
(i)	1 & 2	1-4, 7, 11-17
(ii)	3	8-10, 21-26, 28-30
(iii)	4 & 5	5-6, 18-20, 27, 31-32

Semi-Structured Interview

## A. Background of Respondent:

1. What is your educational background?
2. What experience do you have as a teacher/administrator within school systems?
3. What position do you hold within the Department of Education?
4. What other positions have you held in the Department of Education?

## B. Rationale of the Amendment to Section 12a of the Newfoundland Schools' Act:

5. Why was Section 12a amended?
6. Please describe the events which led to development of a policy to amend the Schools' Act.

## C. Internal Decision-Making Process:

7. What role did you play in this policy development?
8. In your opinion, who was the most influential person within the Department of Education with respect to the amendment process? Comment.
9. What access did you have to this person?
10. What methods of communication did you employ with respect to your input in the policy development?
  1. formal committee meetings
  2. informal group meetings
  3. letters, reports, etc.
  4. telephone calls
  5. meetings by appointment
  6. chance meetings
  7. meetings at social affairs
  8. other \_\_\_\_\_
11. In your opinion, what was the role of the Deputy Minister in this particular policy development?

12. In your opinion, what was the role of the Minister in this particular policy development?
13. What is the official role of the Deputy Minister in departmental policy development?
14. What is the official role of the Minister in departmental policy development?
15. What relationships existed between the Minister and the Deputy Minister in this particular policy development?
16. What is the official relationship between the role of Deputy Minister and the Minister in departmental policy development?
17. What roles did the following people play in this particular policy development?
  1. The Assistant Deputy Minister; Primary, Elementary and Special Education
  2. The Director of Special Education Services
  3. The Director of School Services
  4. The Director of Instruction
  5. The Assistant Director of Special Education Services
  6. The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services
  7. The Consultant for Visually Impaired Pupils
  8. The Supervisor of Special Education
  9. The Registrar for Handicapped Children
18. Did you feel the decision to amend Section 12a of the Schools' Act was a beneficial one? Comment.
19. Were there alternatives explored by the Department? Explain.
20. Was your position supported by others within or outside of the Department? If yes - how? If no - were disagreements settled and how?
21. What methods of communication did the Deputy Minister employ to obtain information from you?
  1. formal committee meetings
  2. informal group meetings
  3. letters, reports, etc.
  4. telephone calls
  5. meetings by appointment
  6. chance meetings
  7. meetings at social affairs
  8. other

22. What methods of communication did the Minister employ to obtain information from you?

1. formal committee meetings
2. informal group meetings
3. letters, reports, etc.
4. telephone calls
5. meetings by appointment
6. chance meetings
7. meetings at social affairs
8. other \_\_\_\_\_

D. Influences External to the Department of Education:

23. Which of the following interest groups had input into this policy development and which was most influential? Rank the others.

1. Canadian Association for Mental Retardation
2. Newfoundland Teachers' Association
3. Parent Groups
4. Council of Ministers
5. Other Governmental Departments - Health, Social Services, etc.
6. Federation of School Boards
7. Superintendents' Association
8. Denominational Education Committee
9. Memorial University
10. Others

24. Did you have contact (official or unofficial) with the interest group(s)? Comment.

25. How did these interest group(s) communicate with the Department concerning this amendment issue?

1. formal committee meetings
2. informal group meetings
3. letters, reports, etc.
4. telephone calls
5. meetings by appointment
6. chance meetings
7. meetings at social affairs
8. other \_\_\_\_\_

26. In your opinion was the interest group(s) effective in influencing you in your decision?

27. At what stage in this policy development did the interest group(s) appear? Comment.

28. What Department of Education personnel received input from external interest group(s) concerning this issue?

Information on an issue is often provided by groups outside as well as inside an organization:

29. Identify the information source(s) which provided information to you concerning this issue?
30. Which proved most beneficial to you?

E. Conclusions:

31. What means of evaluation did the Department employ regarding the decisional outcome?
32. What was your role in this evaluation?



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APPENDIX B





## MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1B 3X8

Department of Educational Administration

Telex: 016-4101

Tel.: (709) 737-7647/8

October 31, 1984

Ms. Lynn Verge  
Minister of Education  
Department of Education  
Confederation Building  
St. John's, Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Verge:

At the present time I am enrolled as a graduate student in the Department of Educational Administration at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I have just completed all my course work and I am now in the process of completing research on my thesis.

My thesis proposal entitled "The Role of the Politician and the Civil Servant in the Policy Process" has been accepted by the university and I am now at the data collection stage.

I have chosen a Department of Education case study as a vehicle through which I may analyze the policy process. Specifically, I hope to concentrate on the process concerned with the 1979 amendment to Section 12a of the School's Act, which gave educational jurisdiction of handicapped children to the province's school boards.

At this time, I wish to request your permission to conduct interview sessions with you and the following members of your staff:

- i The Deputy Minister of Education
- ii The Assistant Deputy Minister-Primary, Elementary and Special Education
- iii The Director of Special Education Services
- iv The Director of School Services
- v The Director of Instruction

vi The Assistant Director of Special Education Services  
vii The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services  
viii The Consultant for Visually Impaired Pupils  
ix The Supervisor of Special Education  
ix The Registrar for Handicapped Children

Also, it would be essential to my study for me to have access to all written documentation regarding this issue. Therefore, I wish to request permission that this documentation be made available to me as well.

Should you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me:

(B) - 753-2351  
(H) - 834-5790.

Sincerely,

Thomasina Cleal

~~Dr. Dennis Treslan~~  
Thesis Supervisor

