

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

This chapter begins with the general background that leads into the core areas and purpose to conduct a case study in the private school environment. Ultimately, it is written to rationalize to the reader an understanding on the problem statements, purpose of research, phases of research and the research questions of the study. Towards the end of this chapter, the researcher will unveil the theoretical and conceptual framework, and some initial limitations of research.

### General Background

Figure 1 provides an illustration to guide the reader into the core areas of research. Marshall & Rossman (1999) uses the funnel metaphor to refer to the general conceptual focus at the large end, and focuses on the areas of the study from midway downwards the funnel. In other words, it guides the reader into identifying the “what” of the study. Subsequently, the problems statements and purpose of the study would be presented together with the key areas needed for research with the support of theoretical and conceptual framework.

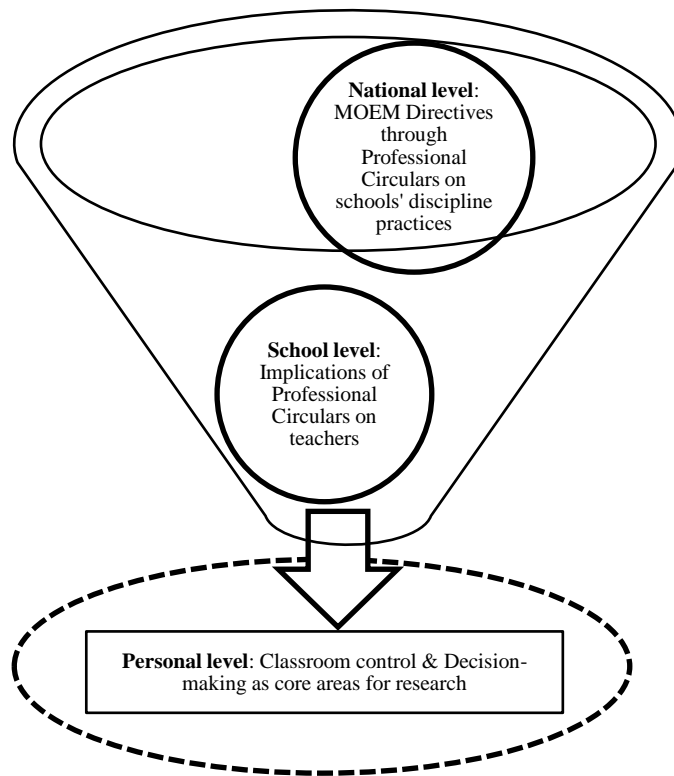


Figure 1. Guide to the core area of research

On the national educational landscape, Malaysia's Ministry of Education (MOEM) has issued several directives over the years to guide schools and teachers towards better ways of managing students' discipline. In one particular scenario, Professional Circular No. 7/1995 (MOEM, 1995) warned and prohibited teachers from using excessive force while disciplining their students. This professional circular was issued as a result from public reports due to real incidents that have occurred in other schools. The problem exists because teachers' aggressive behaviours had violated against *Teachers' Code of Ethics* (MOEM, 1994) and other discipline policies instrumented by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Undeniably, these documents serve to continually educate, warn and prevent unpleasant situations from reoccurring among schools.

In contrast to over punishment, unpleasant reports have also surfaced on teachers who habitually abdicate their responsibilities as disciplinarians and frequently transfer trivial discipline cases to other discipline teachers. Due to numerous and similar incidents that were reported to the MOEM, the Professional Circular No.10/2001 (MOEM, 2001) was subsequently sent to schools is to remind teachers that they must play their role as discipline teachers by intervening in all types of discipline cases. In addition, teachers are also reminded to be more competent and resourceful to use preventive, educative, corrective ways as primary considerations over punitive measures.

Inevitably, professional circulars are external forces that affect school leaders and teachers to adapt to the changing and challenging demands of discipline management. In many instances, teachers' coping with stress from classroom management have motivated researchers to evaluate on their classroom control strategies (Merç & Subaşı, 2015; Lewis, Romi, Qui, & Katz, 2005; Lewis, 1997), but rarely in the area of personal decision-making. Furthermore, local evidences have substantiated that teachers' involvement in organizational decision-making is low (Ngang & Sulermutyrean, 2015; Samad & Shoib, 2006). In essence, there is a need to focus on decision-making as it is vital for personal adaptations and change against environmental forces. Due to the nature of research that requires a contextualized environment to explain teachers' decision-making, a private school in Subang, Selangor is chosen as the researched organization. As the school's characteristics fulfil the criteria for selection for this case study, both classroom control strategies and personal decision-making are studied simultaneously among teachers. This new perspective is beneficial to create an alternative model to explain teachers' classroom control contextually. As a process, there is a need to first explore and identify teachers' common classroom strategies for understanding purposes, before the researcher can

proceed to identify their patterns and process of decision-making. Subsequently, teachers' suggestions for organizational improvements can be fitted into the model and highlighted for organizational change.

In the following section, the researcher will unfold the problem statements. Briefly, readers will also be updated with some recent developments from literature reviews pertaining to the theme and major concerns of this study.

### **Problem Statements**

The problem statements in this case study are divided into three major areas: (a) areas concerning teachers as decision-makers; (b) areas concerning teachers' process of decision-making; and (c) areas concerning teachers' obstacles to decision-making.

#### **Areas Concerning Teachers as Decision-makers**

Classroom discipline problems impact can teachers negatively on their emotional, stress level and social wellbeing (Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015; Lewis, 1999; Samad, Hashim, Moin, & Abdullah, 2011; Naicker, 2014). Yet, when confronted with discipline problems in classrooms, teachers have to discern and decide for the best disciplinary action in order to yield a positive outcome for students of the school (Lewis, 1999; Marzano & Pickering, 2003; Stefanou, DiCintio, & Turner, 2001; Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2014). Generally, there are many theoretical perceptions to describe teachers' behaviour when it comes to styles, models and strategies to manage discipline problems. As examples, Tomal (1998) coined the term *Discipline Styles* that categorized teachers' behaviours into five major leadership management styles such as *Enforcer, Abdicator, Supporter, Compromiser and Negotiator*. Each of these styles was categorized according to different degrees of enforcing and supporting to students. Meanwhile, Lewis (1997, 1999) offered three different types of discipline models.

*Model of control* is concerned with getting students to conform to teachers' expectations, *Group Management* is empowering students to make decisions, while *Model of Influence* is interested in allowing students to learn and modify their own behaviours with minimal control from the teacher. In chapter two, other effective strategies of classroom management will be described that include: (a) *Assertive discipline* (Canter, 1989); (b) *Discipline with dignity* (Curwin and Mendler, 1988); (c) *Reality Therapy* (Glasser, 1977); (d) *The 1-2-3 Magic Plan* (Phelan, 2010); (e) *Peer meditation* (Schmidt, 1992); (f) *Unified discipline approach* (Algonzzinee et al., 2001); (g) *Defensive teaching* (Mcneil, 1982); and other works of scholars from Emmer and Stough (2001), Moore (2014) and Merç & Subaşı (2015).

The researcher uncovered a need that led to an opportunity to study classroom control strategies with a different perspective. There is no knowledge to explain how teachers actually apply classroom control strategies through decision-making in their own contextual environments. In relating to this case study, teachers are prohibited from administering any physical punishments to students by the school management. Due to this limitation, what are teachers' classroom control strategies in the school where physical punishments are strictly prohibited?

According to Merç & Subaşı (2015), teachers often use more than one strategy in classroom control, and that ignoring pupil-based problems is the most frequent used strategies by pre-service teachers. If teachers used more than one strategy for classroom control, how can these strategies be differentiated? In addition to the different types, styles and models of classroom control, are teachers merely applying strategies on students during classroom control? What other areas of consideration do teachers apply their strategies?

Generally, studies pertaining to teachers' motivation to use different classroom management strategies continue to evolve (Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015; Cruz et. al., 2015; Geddes, Cannon, Cannon, Hale, & Provost, 2015). In addition, teachers apply different strategies of classroom control that are either learnt from teachers' training institution, or modelling of another competent and cooperating teacher (Merç & Subaşı, 2015; Lewis, 1999). Further literature reviews revealed that low self-efficacy is an internal factor that motivates teachers to transfer or use inappropriate classroom management strategies (Martin et. al, 1999; Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015). Conversely, teachers with a higher self-efficacy are more likely to deal with students' discipline problems personally (Zulkosky, 2009; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990). Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Woolfolk (1998) defined teachers' efficacy as "their belief in their capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context". In essence, they have incorporated Bandura's (1999) self-efficacy theory to the teacher efficacy construct.

In addition, scholars have also uncovered that pupil control ideology is another internal factor that is associated with teachers' classroom control strategies. Willower et al. (1973) defined pupil control ideology as "teachers' state of belief regarding control of students in classroom and schools". Hoy, Taylor, & Hoy (1967) conceptualized the pupil control ideology into a continuum from humanistic to custodial. Humanistic teachers view school as a community, while custodial teachers view school as rigid hierarchy. Interestingly, both self-efficacy and pupil control ideology are related when it comes to teachers' classroom management style. Hoy & Woolfolk (1990) mentioned that efficacious teachers are inclined to humanistic orientations, while Barfield and Burlingame (1974) proved that teachers with low sense of efficacy perceived control of pupils more custodial than teachers with high perceptions of efficacy. Hoy & Woolfolk (1993) and Khan, Fleva, & Qazi (2015) added that highly efficacious teachers have a

stronger academic orientation and morale to support classroom environment for their students. In addition, high efficacy beliefs among teachers were found to be related to the notion that all students can learn. Thus, they provided fair treatment, expected all students will behave in the appropriate manner; and maintained efforts to keep students engaged and interested in learning. Conversely, low efficacy beliefs were found to be related to use of embarrassment as a discipline strategy; mistrust and discomfort with students of low ability; and incapability to stimulate student interest in academics. Similar results have been found in studies concerning the efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers by Hoy & Woolfolk (1990). They found undergraduate student teachers with low teacher efficacy tend to have a control orientation, pessimistic view of student motivation, rely on strict classroom rules, extrinsic rewards, and punishments. In addition, they also suggested that a custodial pupil control ideology could indicate a stronger bureaucratic structure that often creates tensions in the organization. As this section merely highlights the problems concerning teachers as decision-makers, more information pertaining to teachers' sense of efficacy and pupil control ideology will be unveiled in chapter two.

### **Areas Concerning Teachers' Process of Decision-making**

For teachers in both public and private schools, the issuance and directives from professional circulars are meant to be heeded strictly without compromise. In all circumstances, teachers are expected to follow organizational processes that are generally outlined by the school's discipline board and standard operating procedures. Inevitably, teachers could be in the dilemma to decide when issues become unfamiliar, complicated or ambiguous within the instructions of SOPs. In some cases, managing discipline problems would require taking risks by deciding on strategies that are not endorsed in the organization (Merç & Subaşı, 2015; Naicker, 2014). Since decision-making is the vital link between the problem and the solution, it has to be the central

focus of this study. Consequently, teachers could risk public humiliation and termination as professionals if personal decisions backfire from parents and students. This could be due to the increasing attention paid to the rights of students' and parents in schooling (Lewis, 1999). In some predicaments, there were litigation cases pressed against teachers by parents due to discipline mismanagement (Tie, 2004).

To assist the researcher to explore on the process of decision-making, prior knowledge on the types and models of decision-making is crucial for this section. In essence, there are seven models of decision-making that are prominent among theorist of organizational management: (a) *Classical (or Traditional) model* (Li, 2008); (b) *Satisficing model* (Simon, 1972; 1978); (c) Incremental model (Lindblom, 1959); (d) Mixed-sacnning model (Etzioni, 1967, 1986, 1989); (e) Garbage Can model (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972); (f) Political model (McCabe, 2003); and (g) Ethical model (Dane & Sonenshein, 2014; O' Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Ford & Richardson, 1994).

As mentioned earlier, teachers have to follow a general process to handle discipline problems in their classrooms. However, when these processes cannot be followed rigidly due to prevailing circumstances and conditions, the alternate task is to identify teachers' personal patterns of decision-making. If teachers apply a myriad of strategies to manage students' behaviours in their classrooms, is there a pattern to explain how teachers decide on the choice of one strategy to another in relation to the seriousness of the problem? In essence, the researcher seeks to identify teachers' patterns of decision-making as an opportunity to explain what goes on within personal involvement prior to transfer. Local studies have indicated that teachers' extent of involvement in organizational decision-making is low (Ngang & Sulermutyrean, 2015). Therefore, what can be said about teachers' extent of personal involvement in classroom decision-making? Subsequently, what are their personal interventions in discipline matters prior to transfer? In another aspect, Tomlinson & Imbeau (2014) highlighted



the importance for teachers to differentiate and understand students' misbehaviours prior to decision-making. In addition, Hall (2002) mentioned that differentiated instructions are needed for teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching. On the basis of this importance, how teachers differentiate between the seriousness of discipline problems that could have determined their choice of strategies in classroom control?

Rationally, it would be difficult to improve on the processes organizational decision-making without identifying teachers' patterns in decision-making in the first place. Furthermore, knowing the types and models of decision-making are insufficient to describe the scenario contextually. Similar to the models and types of classroom control strategies, decision-making models merely provide a perspective for the researcher to identify, describe and support the actual practices of decision-making among teachers in the organization.

### **Areas Concerning Teachers' Unfavorable Conditions and Obstacles to Personal Decision-making**

Bandura (1996, 1999) and Elliott (1982) highlighted that both internal factors and external factors works to impact each other bi-directionally (or reciprocally) on a person's behaviour. Scholars have attributed teachers classroom control strategies to internal factors such as their sense of efficacy (Tschannen, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998), pupil control ideology (Kilinc, 2014), experience from previous mentor and teachers' education program (Haselkorn, 2014) and soft skills (Ngang & Sulermutyrean, 2015). As a problem statement, what can be said about the external factors that could possibly inhibit further involvement in decision-making? Interestingly, Oldenburg et al. (2015) and Wang, Hall, & Rahimi (2015) highlighted that when teachers do not feel that they have personal influence or control over a discipline situation, they are most likely to

attribute their failures to external factors. Therefore, the researcher anticipates highly on the opportunity to uncover the external obstacles to personal decision-making.

To further explain on how external factors effect on school communities, a good school climate (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Razak, 2006; Hashim & Daud, 2014) and a positive teacher-student relationship is important to change students' behaviour (Arbaa, Jamil, & Razak, 2010; Rufai, 2010; Ahmad & Sahak, 2009; Sava, 2002; Merç, & Subaşı, 2015). However, further literature reviews suggests that a strong bureaucratic structure could result in teachers being more custodial in their pupil control ideology (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1967). Conversely, Lunenberg (1990) concluded that schools that teachers could be more humanistic in a less bureaucratic school. Highly bureaucratic structures also inhibits teachers' further involvement in decision-making (Ngang & Sulermutyrean, 2015; Barman et al., 2014). Undeniably, numerous studies have concluded that principal's leadership style is a strong factor that determines the school climate and also the behaviours of teachers (Bakar, Mahmood, & Lucky, 2015; Hisham & Mahfar, 2015; Lai, Luen, Chye, & Ling, 2015; Ghani, 2013; Samad & Shoib, 2006; Dipaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Saad, 2008). Other than principal's leadership styles however, the focus on how bureaucracy limits decision-making of teachers needs to be explored further. The focus on teachers' education is urgently needed because principals often require the support and cooperation of teachers in every aspects of school management (Bity Salwana et al., 2010; Kareem & Bing, 2005). Therefore, there is a need to concentrate on teachers' extent of personal involvement in decision-making that could be inhibited by bureaucracy (Lewis, 1999).

In addition to bureaucracy, stringent SOPs within organizations could also inhibit teachers from further involvement in students' behavioural problems. During critical points of decision-making, teachers have to refer Teachers' Code of Conduct (Naicker, 2014) and comply to the organization's Standard Operating Procedures

(SOPs) in order to ascertain their roles, responsibilities and authority before deciding for an outcome (Bakar & Tawil, 2008). Morales (2015) mentioned that global changes in the recent decades have forced decision-makers to rethink the way organizations are structured and managed, and there is a need to change the bureaucratic system towards productivity and readiness for the future. He added that today's organization relies on systems that can express intelligence, judgment, collaboration and wide responsibilities. In schools, further problems exist when there is no distributed leadership from the principal that is vital to enhance commitment, collaboration and communication among teachers (Blandford, 2013; Hashim & Daud, 2014). A local study concluded teachers' collaboration and participation in organizational decision-making as low and unsatisfactory, in which the management of students' affair ranked the lowest compared to other categories (Samad & Shoib, 2006). For Merç & Subaşı (2015), they highlighted teachers' cooperation as an important factor for effective classroom management.

Apart from bureaucracy and SOPs, failure to understand the socio-cultural backgrounds of students is another obstacle that could possibly inhibit good decision-making. One unique feature of the researched private school is that it has many students that came from diverse backgrounds of nationalities and culture. If teachers as educational leaders in their classroom have a low socio-cultural consciousness, they could misinterpret communications and behaviours of students (Surface, Smith, Keiser, & Hayes, 2012). Furthermore, the implication of diversity has become a challenge for teachers in urban schools (Rufai, 2010).

If supposed (a) bureaucratic organization with strong SOPs; (b) negative teacher-student relationships; (c) negative working culture in areas of collegiality; and (d) failure to understand the socio-cultural aspects of students are not limited as external obstacles to teachers' involvement in decision-making, further efforts must be carried out to uncover and identify other obstacles together with suggestions for improvements

so that teachers can be better decision-makers. Unlike internal factors, external factors are uniquely diverse due to the different school climates, cultures and other inherent characteristics of the organization. Thus, the inadequacies from literature reviews to explain external obstacles can only be explored contextually through a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). For this case study is contextualized, the researcher would first gather and differentiate teachers' perceptions between the favourable and unfavourable conditions to personal involvement. Subsequently, unfavourable conditions will lead the researcher into classifying their external obstacles to personal decision-making.

In a nutshell, all problem statements must be answered by crafting and clarifying the research objectives and research questions in this case study. Ultimately, the researcher can then highlight and discuss on the areas to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making.

### **Purpose of Study**

In an overview, the purpose of this study is to explore, identify, explain and compare perspectives among selected respondents in order to understand teachers' classroom control strategies and personal involvement in decision-making. Reasonably, a private school was chosen as a sample that is characterized by a strong bureaucratic structure and numerous SOPs that teachers must adhere to. Further elaboration of the structure will be presented in Chapter 2 (see Figure 13 and 14). As far as the purpose of the study is concern, these features were ascertained and chosen from the researcher's prior efforts as a participant observer. Concurrently, the researcher would gather all related documents (particularly on SOPs on Discipline Management) to describe the context of the researched school prior to in-depths interviews.

For a study to be contextualized within a private school environment, both theories and respondents' suggestions would eventually be used to support and highlight areas for personal improvements in organizational decision-making. As this study does not generalize findings on the school's population sample, it is hoped that the findings could enlighten interested researchers to conduct similar studies with this methodology in order to uncover more patterns and diversity that teachers practice in the area of classroom control and personal decision-making.

While uncovering the various classroom control strategies and decisions that respondents make, it is also important to highlight that this case study is not advocating one strategy (or decision) is better than the other, but it is purely an exploration to look into three areas; (a) the perception of the decision-maker, (b) the process of decision-making and; (c) the issue (or obstacles) that surrounds the subject of classroom control. The focus on these three areas is meant to enhance the personal interest and uniqueness of this case study that is also parallel to Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework. In addition, external factors that surround the decision-maker in a private school are emphasized over internal (personal) factors because of the researcher's future intention to highlight the vital areas as suggestions for organizational change. Theoretically, external circumstances can be understood and improved to facilitate in the changing of internal factors such as perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and habits of individuals (Bandura, 1996; 1999).

To explain of the research design, more information will be presented in chapter three. As a preview, fifteen teachers are selected through purposive sampling in order to be studied individually and collectively. Sava (2002) mentioned that researching on negative teacher-student interactions is complicated and often considered a taboo. Realizing this challenge, the researcher had to identify teachers who are ready, willing and able to provide honest feedback on their discipline styles, even when these

behaviours are knowingly (or unknowingly) unacceptable within the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the school.

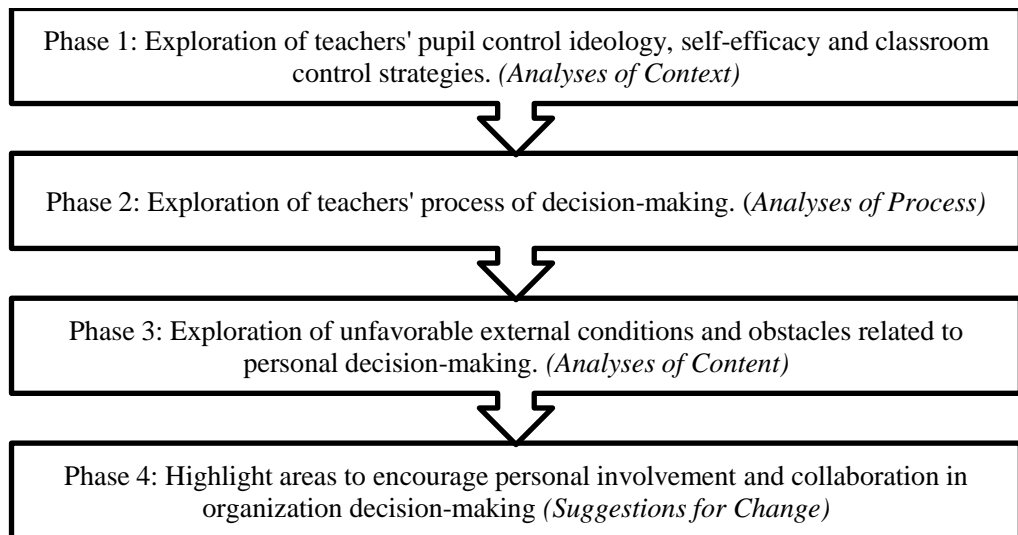
### **Objectives of Research**

To investigate on the problem statements and to achieve the purpose of the study, six objectives are listed out chronologically as the following:

1. To explore teachers' classroom control strategies in the organization.
2. To explore the patterns of teachers' decision-making when managing classroom discipline.
3. To explore respondents' extent of personal involvement in decision-making.
4. To identify the unfavorable conditions to personal decision-making.
5. To explain the teachers' obstacles when confronted with the need for personal decision-making.
6. To highlight areas to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making.

For this case study, teachers are selected through purposive sampling through the recommendations of the Head of Discipline (HOD), and a list of other criteria that is sought by the researcher. Through the roles that they play in school, the subjects of study involved the Head of Discipline (HOD), teachers in the discipline committee (also known as level coordinators) and common academic teachers.

In total, fifteen respondents (fourteen teachers and the HOD) participated in this study. As research methodology is to be elaborated in chapter three, Figure 2 is a summary to show the four phases that are involved throughout the process of this research.



*Figure 2. Four phases in this case study*

To explain briefly, the first phase of the research is to explore teachers as decision-makers. Within this process, the researcher will describe their perceptions on pupil control ideology, teachers' sense of efficacy and classroom control strategies. The second procedure investigates on their personal process of decision-making. Thereafter, the third phase involves the uncovering of unfavourable conditions and obstacles related to personal decision-making. Subsequently in phase four, the researcher will highlight the areas as suggested by the respondents to encourage personal involvement and organizational decision-making.

In the early years of research, the organizational problem was not ascertained beforehand, and the researcher had to be a participant observer for at least a year to lay out the foundations and contemplate the appropriateness to conduct the case study. As a result, the researcher can describe and relate to the history, the culture and the daily routines of the organization prior to data collection. For the research to be carried out ethically and progressively, the researcher has to constantly look for interactions and opportunities for thoughtful conversations to occur.

## **Research Questions and Speculations**

Parallel to the objectives of research, six research questions are crafted for this case study and they are listed as below:

- 1) What are the classroom control strategies that respondents practice in the organization?
- 2) What are the observable patterns of decision-making when respondents manage classroom discipline problems?
- 3) What is the extent of respondents' personal involvement in decision-making?
- 4) What are the unfavorable conditions to personal decision-making?
- 5) What obstacles would respondents perceive if they were confronted with the need for personal decision-making?
- 6) What areas can be highlighted to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making?

With these six research questions, the researcher speculates that teachers will report of different classroom control strategies and types of decision-making. These classroom control strategies will then be compared and categorized into themes that could only be unveiled after the process of data transcriptions and coding. As the research design is applied in this case study, the researcher will explore and identify teachers' patterns of decision-making, especially their personal extent of involvement. Additionally, the researcher intends to uncover the unfavourable conditions to decision-making and explain more of their obstacles in personal involvement in decision-making. Eventually, the researcher would highlight areas to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making.



## **Significance of Study**

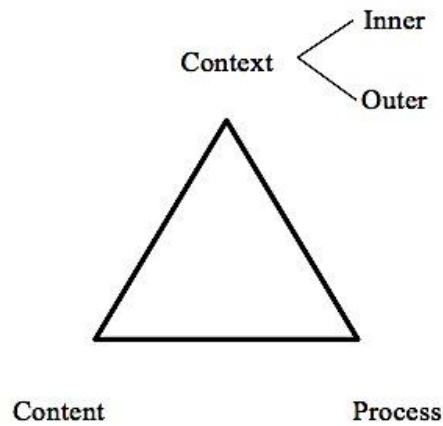
In the researcher's opinion, there ought to be some considerations on the nature, importance and acquisition of data towards answering the research questions. In addition, there was a lack of guidance from local evidence to explore the theme and issues of this study. Listed below are four significances from this case study that could potentially contribute to the researched organization in aspects of decision-making:

1. The study would explore teachers' perspectives and awareness as decision-makers, explain their decision-making process and uncover personal issues and obstacles related to decision-making. In essence, it looks into classroom control and decision-making simultaneously. Thus, it also presents data findings that are contextual for the Head of Discipline to manage his department effectively and efficiently.
2. This study would highlight shared experiences and strategies that could be useful for organization learning, and creating respondents' awareness on their pupil control ideology, self-efficacy and decision-making skills. When dealing with classroom discipline problems, teachers can improve on their coping strategies and collaborative support from school management (Naicker, 2014).
3. Even though the findings of this case study are not meant for generalization, it spearheads the way for future research.
4. Lastly, this study highlights potential areas for improvements in SOPs and shared decision-making while trying to narrow the gap between theories and practice of effective discipline management in the school.

## Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a structure that supports all the major and relevant theories as indicated in the literature review. It introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under this case study exists. For the researcher, the selection of theoretical backing depended on the appropriateness, the relevance, the feasibility of application and the explanatory power. In addition, it specifies the key areas (or variables) of the study and connects both the reader and researcher to existing knowledge (Frodeman, 2010).

Tuten (2006) conducted a qualitative research on school administrators' decision-making behaviours that was based on Pettigrew's (1987) framework of organizational change. This framework focuses on the study of organizational change processes with theoretical, methodological and practical grounds. Three primary elements of decision-making exist within Pettigrew's (1987) framework: (a) the individual(s) or people involved in the decision-making (known as the "context", or the *why* of change); (b) the methods used in the decision-making (known as "process" or *how* change takes place) and; (c) the issues of decision-making (known as the "content", or the '*what*' of change). Through case studies, this framework has been applied in other domains across industries to study organizational behaviour in both medium and longitudinal studies (Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001). Figure 3 is an illustration of Pettigrew's (1987) three key areas (also called dimensions). To explain briefly, inner context refers to the structure, corporate culture and political context, while the outer context refers to the social, economic, political and competitive environment that surrounds decision-makers as the context of this study.



*Figure 3.* Pettigrew's (1987) Conceptual Framework of Organizational Change

As this research intends to study teachers' classroom control through decision-making, the expansion of elements within each dimensions of Pettigrew's (1987) framework has been supported by literature reviews that were explained in the problem statements earlier. To recap briefly, teachers as decision-makers in the classroom practice different strategies of classroom controls that are also determined by; (a) the external factors (bureaucracy/SOPs, teacher-student relationship, socio-cultural difference and pre-existing work culture) and; (b) internal factors (such as personal abilities, experience, pupil control ideology and self-efficacy). Hence, the studying of personal decision-making is not merely concentrated on the process alone, but the context (the decision-maker) and content (obstacles of decision-making) as well. Clearly, the discussions throughout this chapter are mirrored perfectly by Pettigrew's framework. As an overview, Figure 4 illustrates the expanded theories and knowledge as explained in the section of problems statement. Other explanations on these elements will be substantiated in chapter two, as this figure only serves as an overview for the reader to grasp the theme and scope of this case study.

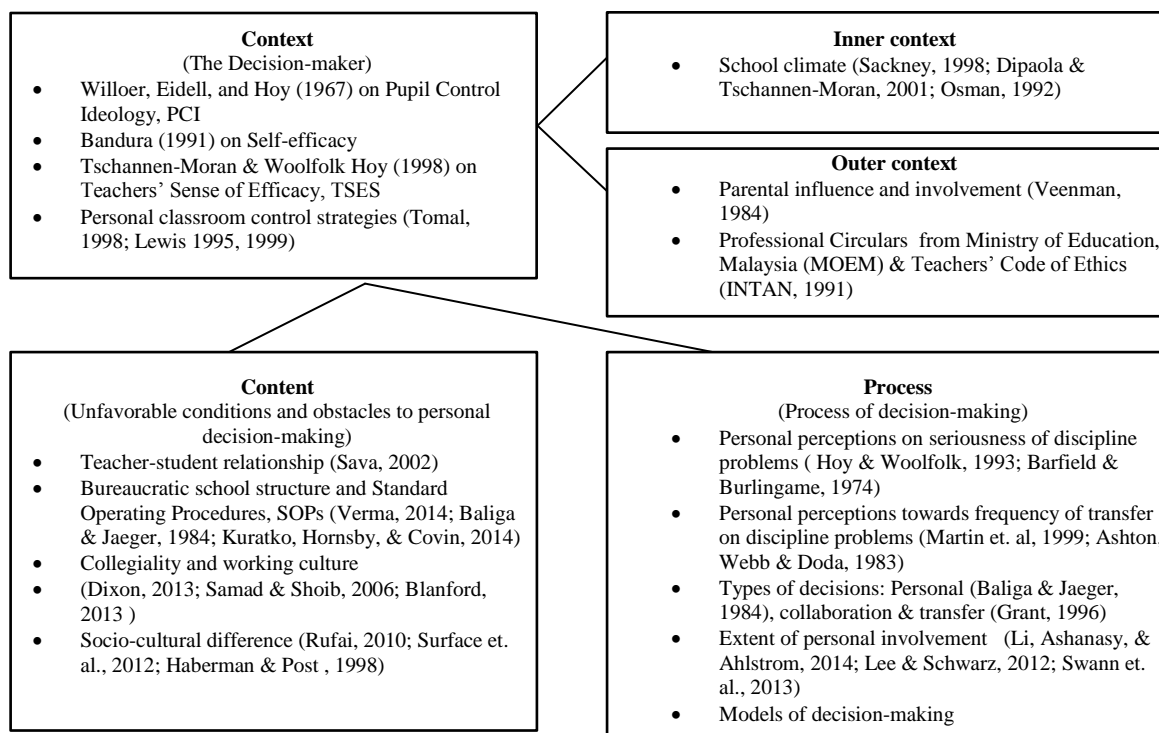


Figure 4. Theoretical Framework

### Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is used to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas into something comprehensible and for easy application. Furthermore, it deals with the issues, settings and the subject of study (Maxwell, 2009). Miles & Huberman (1994) mentioned that the conceptual framework serves several purposes: (a) identifying who will (or will not) be included in the study; (b) describing what relationships may be present based on logic, theory and/or experience; and (c) to gather general constructs into intellectual “bins” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). In addition, the conceptual framework serves as an anchor for the study and is referred to at the stage of data interpretation. As mentioned earlier in the theoretical framework, Pettigrew’s (1987) framework supported and enhanced the presence of relationships between each dimension of context, content and process of decision-making.

Figure 5 indicates the elements of research as outlined in the research objectives and will guide the researcher to carry out this research according to the phases and flow of the research questions.

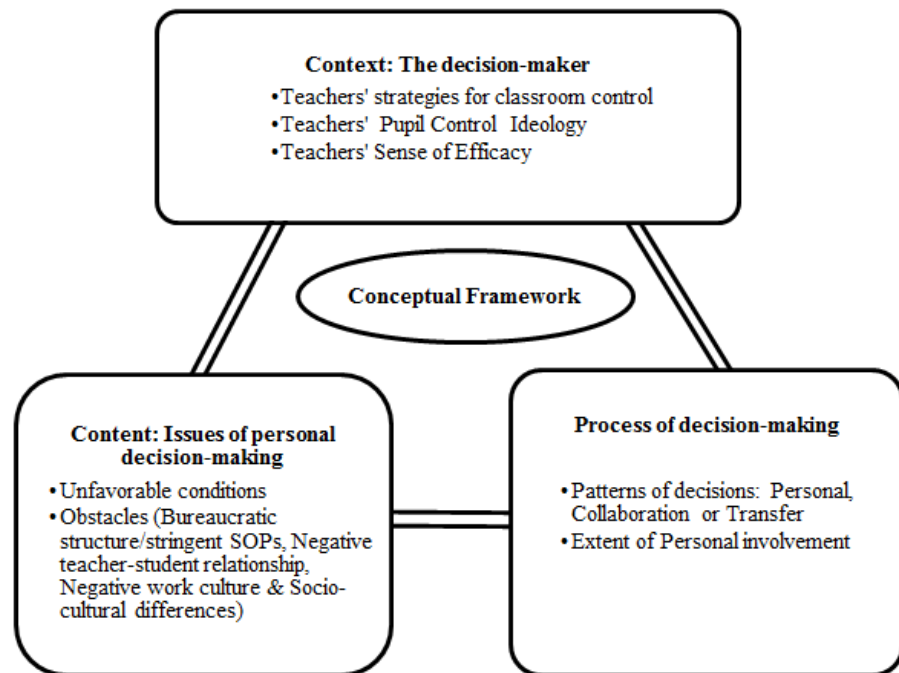


Figure 5. Conceptual framework

In chapter two, the researcher will elaborate further on Pettigrew’s (1987) framework and how it has been used to explore organizational decision-making across different industries through case studies. As mentioned earlier, Tuten (2006) used the same model to explore school administrators’ perceived decision-making practices and patterns that consist of: (a) the decision-maker; (b) the decision-making process; and (c) the obstacles associated with decision-making. To reiterate, this case study merely incorporates the use of pupil control ideology (PCI) form, teachers’ sense of efficacy scale (TSES) and their experiences to compare and support the profile of each respondent. Data from both PCI and TSES forms will eventually be used as suggestions

for organizational improvements in the final section of discussions and recommendations.

### **Preliminary Limitations of Research**

Referring to the purpose of research, it is insufficient to merely identify teachers' classroom control strategies and process of personal decision-making without exploring further on the obstacles that teachers encounter in their classrooms. Practically, the question of what, why and how personal decisions are made is best uncovered through a case study where thorough investigations that can be subsequently followed up through face-to-face interviews. Presented below are some important preliminary views of the researcher pertaining to the limitations of this research prior to data collection.

Firstly, researching on negative teacher-pupil interactions is often considered a taboo, which makes the study in this area more difficult (Sava, 2002; Naicker, 2014). Teachers would feel disdain if they were asked if they have mistreated students in the past before, or have totally ignored their responsibility to manage classroom discipline. In other words, teachers would be hesitant to acknowledge their own shortcomings when confronted with disciplinary issues (Naicker, 2014). In order to probe teachers on their extent of personal involvement, the researcher has to be tactful and diplomatic in asking personal and sensitive questions. In reality, it is also difficult to uncover on teachers' private practices in the classrooms by just the deployment of survey questionnaires in a large scale population without looking into their personal matters on decision-making (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Due to the Head of Discipline's (HOD) experience and encounters with teachers, he assisted the researcher preliminary to identify the right respondents based on a list of criteria. The purposive sampling exercise led the researcher to eventually conduct a voiced interview that is needful for the study. In

order to manage the same limitation, the researcher has to also become a participant observer in the organization for a year, to convince teachers to understand the objectives, and to have their responses recorded comfortably during data collection. As an ethical approach, participants were informed beforehand that they have the right to withdraw from the study anytime. Nevertheless, it was challenging for the researcher to persuade respondents to respond to the invitation for research due to: (a) various personal reasons and circumstances; (b) the aim of the research; and (c) the multiple processes taken to obtain the data for analyses. As a participant observer, the researcher had to first earn teachers' trust by assuring them that their information would be kept anonymous, private and confidential throughout the phase of this research. In addition, the researcher had to be accommodative in order to provide more opportunities for teachers to reflect and respond to the research questions.

Secondly, scoring of the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) form and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) questionnaires would only indicate and support the profile of the respondents, but not to describe or generalize their behaviours to the population of teachers in the school. In addition, a decision-making questionnaire was constructed to gain more information on teachers' perception in personal decision-making. In order to develop the decision-making questionnaire, the researcher has to gather experts' opinion on the relevance and appropriateness of the questions in order to explore the variables in the conceptual framework. Other than preparing the research instruments, the researcher has to attend seminars on qualitative approach to improve on his research skills, to be aware of possible biasness, and using corroboration or triangulation techniques to minimize personal error and misinterpretations.

Thirdly, a sample size of fifteen respondents could limit other possible conclusions from the case study. Nevertheless, the existing respondents paved a way for the researcher to concentrate, correct and refine on the research design and methodology so in order to apply to larger and diverse school populations.

### **Summary**

This chapter have discussed the major areas of concern that eventually led the researcher to conduct a case study in the private school environment. To reiterate, there are three major areas concerning the study of teachers' classroom control and decision-making: (a) areas concerning the decision-maker; (b) areas concerning the process of decision-making; and (c) areas concerning the obstacles that inhibited personal involvement in organizational decision-making. As a result from literature reviews, problems statements were uniquely highlighted within each of these major areas that subsequently led to the purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions and speculated outcomes of research. Parallel to Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework that contained the dimensions of context, content and process, the formation of the theoretical and conceptual framework were expanded to contextualize within the theme and scope of the study. Eventually, this chapter concluded with some initial limitations of research.



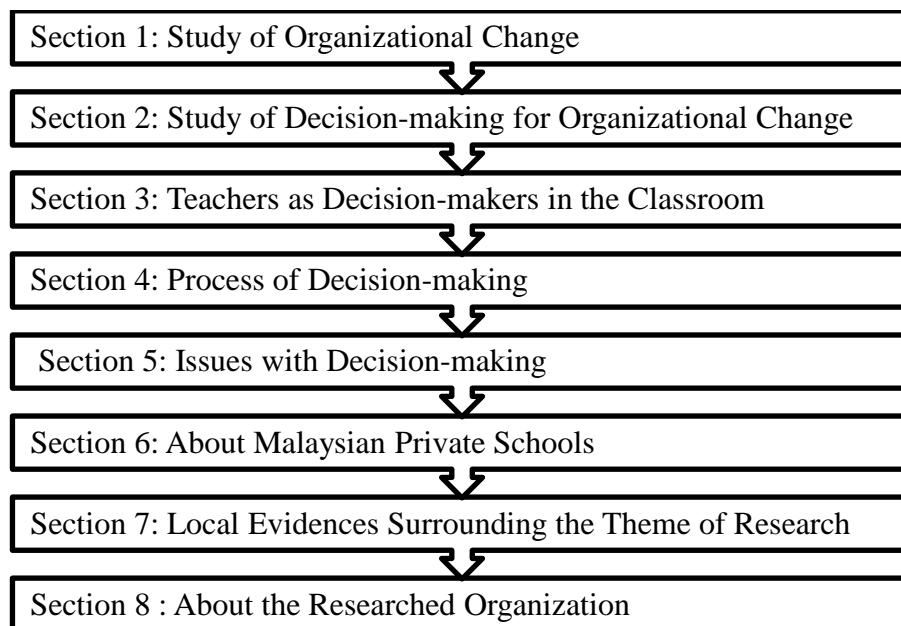
## **Operational Definition of Terms**

- (a) Pupil Control Ideology: The total score derived from the answering of PCI form that is used as a relative comparison from one respondent to another
- (b) Teacher's Sense of Efficacy: Teachers' individual belief and confidence on how much can be done. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) will portray personal scores of efficacy in three areas: (1) Student engagement; (2) Instructional strategy; and (3) Classroom management. Used as a relative comparison from one respondent to another.
- (c) Classroom control strategies: Teachers' personal and habitual use of strategies to manage students' discipline in their classrooms. Multiple tactics are uncovered, identified and classified under each respective strategy.
- (d) Process of decision-making: Personal patterns of decision-making that involves the mannerism of teachers to differentiate the seriousness of discipline problems and determine the extent of personal involvement prior to transfer to other personnel-in-charge.
- (e) Conditions to personal decision-making: Refers to external conditions which could be favorable or unfavorable towards the motivation for personal involvement in organizational decision-making.
- (f) Obstacles to personal decision-making: Refers to how unfavorable conditions are categorized into obstacles such as bureaucratic structure, Negative work culture, socio-cultural differences, negative teacher-student relationships and others to be uncovered in this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Literature

This chapter presents the literature reviews that were used to construct and support both theoretical and conceptual framework of this case study. In chapter one, the researcher highlighted three key areas of study that coincided with Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework. Therefore, it is necessary to first understand how scholars are using this framework to understand organizational behaviour that is constantly changing in today's globalized world. The researcher will then present literatures to support each of the major key areas in the study: (a) teachers as decision-makers; (b) the process of decision-making; and (c) the obstacles associated with personal decision-making. Thereafter, there will be a general description to highlight the nature of private schools in Malaysia, and subsequently leading to the description of the researched organization. It is hoped that readers would benefit from this chapter by understanding the context, process and content that surrounds teachers as disciplinarians and decision-makers in the organization.



*Figure 6.* Subjects of exploration for literature review

## Study of Organizational Behaviour

The study of organizational behaviour has been one of the great themes in social science. In terms of organizational change, many theoretical literatures and empirical findings have explored on the areas of birth, development, transformation, decay and decline in human natural systems as mentioned by Pettigrew, Woodman & Cameron (2001). In addition, this field has evolved in the last 30 years with other researchers tapping into the conceptual framework of Pettigrew (1987). He is one of the leading management scholars who proposed that change should not be considered in terms of process but from historical, cultural, and political features of the organization.

Today, Pettigrew (1987) framework is used extensively in studying organizational behaviour and change. As illustrated in Figure 7, there are three dimensions (or areas) that are in continuous interactions: (a) the content of the chosen strategy (or the *'what'* of change); (b) the process of change (or the *how* of change); (c) the context (or the *why* of change). Pettigrew (1987) referred inner context as the structure, corporate culture and political context of the organization, while the outer context refers to the social, economic, political and competitive environment.

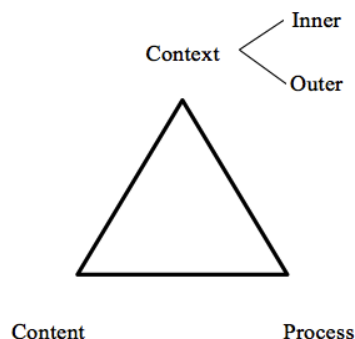


Figure 7. Pettigrew (1987) Conceptual Framework

Pettigrew's (1987) model is useful in case studies to understand how organizations device, develop and implement strategic initiatives. Moreover, it is useful for understanding the complexities of organizational change even for smaller or ordinary level of change. With this framework, researchers are able to understand how individuals within and organization interact with each other, and how information changes and influence strategic activity in the organization (Acumen Insights, 2009).

Pettigrew's (2012) article "*Context and action in organizational transformation*" have also tried to develop the link between leadership and organizational transformation. With reference to influence and power, this model is not only concerned with procedures, practices and activities for strategic change, but the political and the power behind the influence in the overall change process. Checkland (1999) agreed that the analyses of power and influence are problematic because they are beyond analysis. Nevertheless, Checkland (2000) argues that how people appreciate their situation is "a powerful tool to aid the analysis of what organizations do." Both Pettigrew and Fenton (2000) highlighted that information and how it flows around the organization is used by individuals to play their roles in organization.

They added, " Information makes participation possible within the company and ensures that the company is accurately represented to the outside world " (Pettigrew & Fenton, 2000).

### **Context, Process and Content of a Changing Organization**

In his pursuit to study organizational behaviour, Pettigrew (1985) critiqued most literature and empirical evidences as "being largely acontextual, ahistorical and approcessual." Particularly in the field of organization and management, he highlighted that there is a lack of emphasis to study a changing organization from temporal and contextual perspectives. In addition, Pettigrew, Woodman & Cameron (2001)

mentioned that the field of organizational change is far from mature in understanding the dynamics and effects of time, process, discontinuity and context. They added that generalizations “are hard to uphold across international, institutional and cultural borders.” Other scholars mentioned that the management principles that were studied were usually “sweeping generalization devoid of the context in which they are evolved.”

Single events or discreet episodes separated only gives a “snapshot view and fail to provide data on the mechanisms and processes through which changes are created.” At a glance, Figure 8 is a portrayal of elements within the context, content and process of Pettigrew’s (1987) conceptual framework.

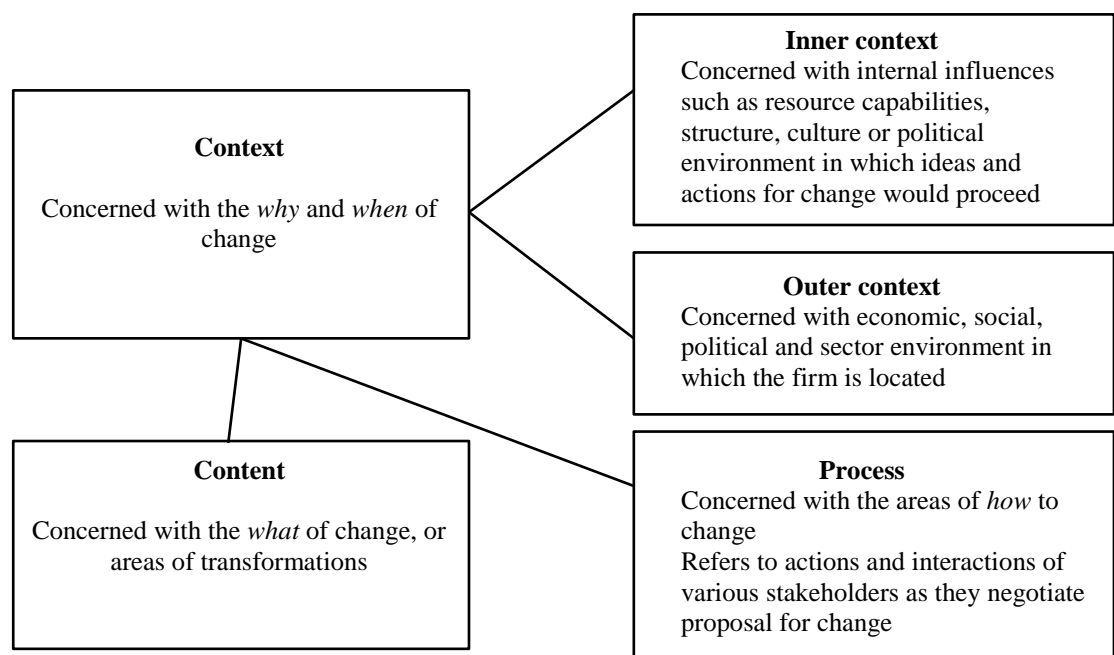
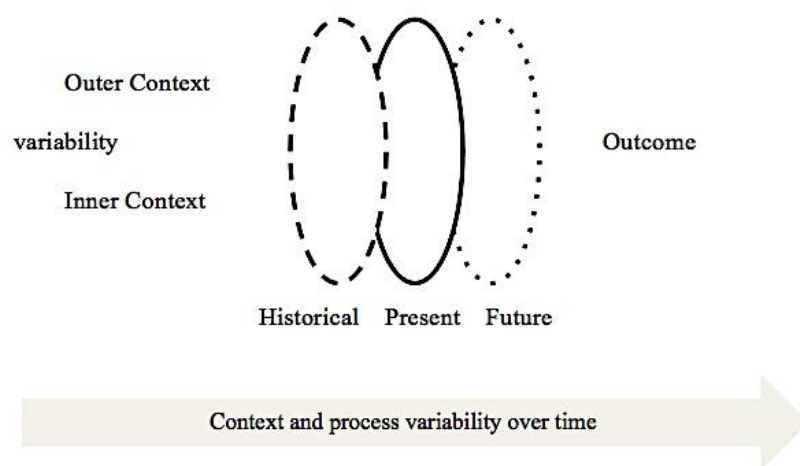


Figure 8. Elements within Pettigrew’s (1987) Conceptual Framework

As mentioned earlier, Pettigrew’s (1987) dimension of context contains two elements: the inner and the outer context. The outer context refers to social, political, economic, business, and competitive environment, while the inner context refers to the

structure, corporate culture and political context within the organization. Within the inner contexts, there are the tangibles (such as structures and resources of organization) and the intangibles (such as the organizational culture and politics). Notably, the intangibles governs and tangibles. As for the dimension of content, a changing organization is dependent on how the process and context is managed. In essence, content refers to the areas of transformation under examination: technology, manpower, products, geographical positioning or corporate culture.

Lastly, the dimension of process refers to the actions, reactions and the interactions from the various interested parties. It is dependent on change managers, models of change, formulation (or interpretation) process and patterns through time. In addition, processes could involve various formal and informal on-going organizational processes such as communication, decision-making, or objective controlling as mentioned by Pettigrew (1987). Notably, the dimension of process would also move the organization from its present to its future state as illustrated in Figure 9.



*Figure 9.* Pettigrew's (1985) Components of Analysis: Context and Process

In essence, Pettigrew's framework view firms as "interactive, multilevel process, with outcomes shaped by interests and commitment of individuals and groups, the force of bureaucratic momentum, gross change of the environment and the manipulation of structural context around decisions." (Pettigrew et al., 2001)

### **Dynamism in a Changing Organization**

As much as dynamism is complicated matter of research, social science have developed steadily and "comfortably as an exercise in comparative statistics" (Pettigrew et al., 2001). They added that "static states or cross sectional analyses are privileged over the complex processes that lead to understanding of the dynamics of change across time and space." In order to improve the undeveloped studies on the dynamics of a changing organization, they proposed to focus on six key issues: (a) the examination of multiple context and levels of analyses in organizational change, (b) the inclusion of time, history, process and action, (c) the link between change processes and organizational performance outcomes, (d) the investigation of international and cross-cultural comparisons in research for organization change, (e) the study of receptivity, customization, sequencing, pace and episodic versus continuous change processes; and (f) the partnership between scholars and practitioners in organizational change.

For the researcher, this case study moves away from the paradigm of studying variables and focus on the interactions to form a holistic explanation. Additionally, the researcher does not intend to study the causality between the independent and dependent variables but instead, focuses individuals as social actors as agents of change. Pettigrew (2001) supported the notion above by saying that,

"...change explanations are no longer paired down to relationships between independent and dependent variables, but instead viewed as an interaction between context and action. Context is used analytically as the stimulus

environment, but also as the nested arrangements of structures and processes in which the interpretation of actors perceiving, learning and remembering help shape process. “

### **Study of Decision-making in a Changing Organization**

In this section, the researcher will rationalize with theoretical support to emphasize on why decision-making is important for a changing organization. Here, Pettigrew's (1987) framework is assimilated with the main theme and scope of this study.

#### **About Decision-making**

Mintzberg and Westley (2001), Kahneman and Klein (2009) and Zeleny and Cochrane (1982) and D'Zurilla and Goldfried (1971) defined decision-making as a process which choices are made between alternatives to solve a given problem. According to Vroom and Yetton (1973), the study of decision-making is divided into two broad categorical models: (a) normative (or prescriptive) models; and (b) descriptive models. Normative or prescriptive models are aimed at providing a rational basis for selecting among alternative courses of actions. Descriptive models attempts to understand the decisions and choices that people make. March (1978) first suggests that understanding the decision-making process could be the central in understanding the behaviour of organizations.

Zeleny and Cochrane (1982) also highlighted the two basic approaches to decision-making: (a) the *outcome*-oriented approach; and (b) the *process*-oriented approach. For *outcome*-oriented approach, it is based on the view that “if one can correctly predict the outcome of the decision-process, then one obviously understands the decision-process.” The decision outcome and its correct predictions are at the centre of approach. Normative decision analysis, single and multi-attribute utility theories are



classified under this category. In essence, this type of decision-making asks *what* and *when*, rather than *how*. As for the *process*-oriented research, it is “based on the view that one understands the decision process and one can correctly predict the outcome. In essence, this approach is descriptive, but has prescriptive and normative features as well. However, it is concerned with the knowing of *how* decisions are made and thus, teach how they should be made.

However, both Zeleny and Cochrane (1982) disagrees the static view of decision-making where “it more than an act of selecting the most desirable alternative and treats it, instead, as a process: a dynamic and interrelated unity of pre-decision, decision and post decision stages.” For Vroom and Yetton (1973), they highlighted that “whether models are normative or descriptive, the common ingredient is a conception of decision-making as an information-processing activity, frequently which takes place in a single manager.” They added that both sides of the models focus on sets of alternative decisions or problem solutions from which choice is, or should be made. The normative models are based on the consequences of choices among these alternatives, while the descriptive models are concerned with the determinants of these choices.

In the aspect of organizational decision-making, it is viewed as a social process, with the elements of the process presented in terms of events between people, rather than events that occur within a person (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). In the context of this research, decision-making involves the people and the process to make decisions to solve student’s discipline problem. Decision-making reinforces norms and institute change within organizations as supported by Hoy & Tarter (2004) and Vroom & Yetton (1974). Tuten (2006) mentioned that schools “embody a dynamic, shifting and evolving environment that gives rise to an almost continuous stream of decision situations”. Therefore, education leaders must react to these circumstances in order to solve problems and continue effective organizational functioning.

## **The Emphasis of Decision-making in a Changing Organization**

According to Kirby, Paradise & Protti (1992) and Rice & Schneider (1994), decision-making pervades all areas of educational administration. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2011) highlighted that decision-making influence the “planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling” of organizations. Decision-making serves as a conflict resolution tool, and members work out their difference before educational process is hampered and student learning diminished (Nye, 2003). The general role of student discipline is to maintain order and provide a safe environment for teaching and learning to take place. Therefore, organizational leaders should be responsible for the quality and efficiency of the decision-making process among teachers (Bridges, 1967).

In essence, the cultivation of decision-making skill is essential in today’s globalization and challenging environment. Moreover as professionals, teachers are expected to take on the task of decision-making in all aspects concerning to both teaching and learning in the classrooms. Price (2008) mentioned that the process or “how” of teachers’ professional practice is as critical to improvement as the content and context. Price (2008) quoted the 10 standards for best practices for teachers’ professional development as he referred to the United States Department of Education in 1996.

Among the characteristics of a promising professional development are:

1. Focus on teacher as to central student-learning.
2. Focus on individual, collegial and organizational improvement.
3. Respect and nurture intellectual and leadership capacities of teachers, principals, and others in the school community.
4. Reflect on what is the best available research and practice in teaching, learning and leadership.
5. Enable teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards.
6. Promote continuous inquiry and improvement in daily life of schools.
7. Planned collaboratively by those who will to participate in and facilitate that development.
8. Require substantial time and other resources.
9. They are driven by coherent and long term plan.
10. They are evaluated ultimately on the basis of their impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning, and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

Considering all the objectives as stated above, it is notable that the study of teachers' decision-making skills is vital to the progress and intellectual development for teachers. As the study for organizational change focuses in the field of discipline management, the incorporation of Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework is best fitted as the conceptual framework to capture the data set out by the research questions.

## **Assimilating the Study of Decision-making with Pettigrew's (1987) Conceptual Framework**

Dean and Sharfman (1996), Eisenhardt and Bourgeois (1988), Papadakis, Lioukas, and Chambers (1998) and Tuten (2006) assimilated Pettigrew's (1987) framework in their study of organizational decision-making. In a study of educational institutions, Tuten (2006) referred the context, content and process of key areas within the framework to the decision-maker, the situation and process of decision-making respectively. For this case study, the following explanation will define further on the key areas of context, content and process in relation to Pettigrew's (1987) framework.

### ***Analyses of context: The dimension of the decision-maker in the decision-making process.***

According to Freire (1970) and Weber (1949), context is not a concrete reality as in the physical structure of the class or school but instead, it is a person's perception of reality. Bettman and Park (1980), Wood and Bandura (1989) and Stuart and Thurlow (2000) mentioned that teachers as decision-makers would construct his or her view of a situation based upon a myriad of beliefs, experiences and prior knowledge that arise from a multitude of social, cultural, economic and political variables.

### ***Analyses of Process: The dimension that describes the process of decision-making.***

The researcher pondered if teachers' behaviors in decision-making in classrooms can be explained into any of the patterns among the groups of decision-making models. Depending on how teachers experience and describe their decision-making process, their collective perceptions serve as valuable insights for this research. With comparative analysis, the similarities or dissimilarities of teachers' decision-making process would lead to a greater understanding on the organizational behavior of

decision-making. Other investigation involves the attempt to understand how teachers differentiate between a serious/less serious discipline problem, and to what extent are they willing to participate in organizational decision-making. More explanations will be furnished in the section of 'The Process of Decision-making.' As this chapter unfolds Pettigrew's (1987) framework sequentially, the following discussion will concentrate on the context (teachers as decision-makers), before proceeding into the process and issues associated with decision-making.

***Analyses of Content: The dimension of conditions and obstacles associated with personal decision-making.***

Undeniably, organizations are not shielded from internal problems and challenges. In this case study, favorable and unfavorable conditions during teachers' decision-making process will be explored. In other words, it focuses on issues associated with decision-making, rather than the issues of discipline itself. The researcher will not attempt to elaborate lengthily on the types or causes of discipline issues that happened in the school, although they are references for historical events. As the primary aim of this study is on decision-making, issues must be kept within the scope that is related to the decision-maker and the process of decision-making. Moreover, issues of discipline problems are situational, disparate and episodic events that are not continuous features as indicated by Pettigrew et al. (2001) when studying organizational change. More of issues of decision-making will be discussed in the later section of this chapter.

## **Teachers as Decision-makers in the Classroom**

As decision-makers in the classroom, teachers are concerned about the choice of strategies to control students' misbehaviours, their personal beliefs and personal abilities pertaining to student management. The development of classroom control strategies in the last 30 years are summarized in the following section to provide some theoretical views on effective strategies of classroom control. While doing so, the researcher would embed the subject of Pupil Control Ideology and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy as two elements within the context of Pettigrew's (1987) framework. For this case study, these two subjects are used to evaluate and support teachers' profiles as decision-makers.

### **Teachers' Strategies for Classroom Control**

In practice, teachers need to have strategies in order to be prepared to deal with students' misbehaviours in the classroom. Merrett, & Wheldall, (1984) defined students' misbehaviour as any behaviour "that significantly interferes with the child's own learning, other children's learning and responses, or teacher's ability to operate effectively". Consequently, dealing with students' misbehaviour is an interruption for teachers to deliver the objectives of both teaching tasks and learning outcomes, and that disproportionate amount of time dealing with them should be reduced as compared to the time spent on instructions and academic activities. They added that training could reduce the stress among teachers when dealing with classroom behaviour management (Merrett & Wheldall, 1993). Subsequently, they conducted a study on classroom behavioural problems which secondary school teachers find most troublesome. From a questionnaire survey of 251 British secondary school teachers, they found that 55% teachers claimed that they spent too much time on problems of order and control.

In addition, the two major problems among students of secondary school are “talking out of turn” and “hindering other children”.

A high percentage of time spent on classroom control could drain a lot of energy and cause health complications on teachers. As for example, past researchers such as Kyriacou (1987), Capel (1992) and De Heus and Diekstra (1999) have indicated that classroom behaviour problems are the principle source of stress and burnout for both new and experience teachers, and that the problem is now a major international concern. Consequences of burnout included heart symptoms and depressive mood (Burke, Greenglass, & Schwarzer, 1996). Additionally, Martin, Linfoot, & Stephenson (1999) mentioned that teachers who are feeling poorly equipped to deal with misbehaviour often relate to their lack of experience and preparation, and that concern about students’ misbehaviours was negatively associated with teachers’ confidence.

In another area, the term ‘classroom control’ is an early definition mirroring the common thinking at the time when the role of the teacher was to maintain order and control against students’ misbehaviours. Due to the evolution of trends in ideology and theory, the term has also been defined as classroom management. The latter term is used in “a much broader, encompassing multiple aspects of the complex nature of teaching” (Oliver & Reschly, 2014).

Nie and Lau (2009) highlighted the intense debate on classroom control towards the effectiveness of classroom management. As cited by them, teacher control could reduce misbehaviour and increase desirable behaviour (Nicholls & Houghton, 1995), whereas other findings showed that controlling contexts undermined intrinsic motivation and produced passivity (Lewis, Romi, Katz, & Qui, 2008; McCaslin & Thoma, 1992).

Both Nie and Lau (2009) referred external control as “the use of salient rewards and deadlines to coerce or pressure individuals to think, behave or feel in certain ways”. External control is expected to undermine students’ sense of autonomy and intrinsic motivation. As the opposite to external control, autonomy support is used and defined as “conditions that facilitates the experience of volition, choice and freedom.” (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006). For this research, classroom control is defined as teachers’ attempt to stop, reduce and correct misbehaviour and maintain desirable behaviour of students in the classroom. With reference to the word “control”, it does not limit to strategies of external control alone, but encompass autonomy support with the ultimate aim of behaviour control. Thus, the researcher will uncover strategies that may encompass the elements of external control and autonomy support in this case study.

What are the strategies in which educationist all over the world are practicing to control students’ misbehaviours in the classroom? No research can claim to have found best method when it comes to the task of disciplining and classroom control. In reality, there are many techniques that teachers use as strategies to control students’ psychological behaviour in the classroom. Oliver and Reschly (2014) highlighted that there is “ an extensive research base exists for individual classroom management practices used to modify students’ behaviour; however research on classroom management as a comprehensive system is less defined. “ Their statement shows that while classroom management strategies remain an important subject of research, much focus is needed to explore the application of discipline management with other forms approach, such as decision-making.

From literature reviews, the researcher synthesized that scholars would occasionally try to: (a) propose; (b) critique; (c) innovate; (d) evaluate and (e) categorized strategies of classroom control in different contexts, timing and issues that were in accordance to their purpose of research. Where there are aspects of



comparisons, theories in classroom management could either be differentiated or overlapping. As a guide for readers, seven differentiable theories will be presented in the next few paragraphs. As a preliminary exploration, this knowledge would help the researcher to identify codes and patterns for interpretation during the stage of data analyses.

The first classroom management theory is known as Assertive Discipline. Canter (1989) demonstrated to teachers on how to communicate their expectations assertively to students. This comprehensive, systematic method of classroom management focuses on four concepts: (a) that “behaviour is a choice; (b) every student has the right to learn in an environment that is free from disruption; (c) every teacher has the right to teach without disruptions from their students; and (d) no child should engage in behaviour that is not in the child’s best interest.” As discipline plan supports the positive or negative consequences in the classroom, student would begin each day on the same level and only loses privileges when rules are broken.

The second theory is defined as “discipline with dignity”. It was developed by Curwin and Mendler (1988) to help teachers “develop a repertoire of practical consequences to use when students forget or do not know how to perform the behaviours agreed upon their social contracts.” He includes a list of strategies for creating additional consequences and encouraging treating students in “fair dignified and individual ways.” In essence, while the theory respects students’ individuality and notes the differences between consequences and punishment, its purpose is to enhance students’ self-esteem, to invest in social problem-solving and self-regulation as part of the curriculum and instructions and “cast teachers as professional educators (mediators of learning) rather than policemen.” Nevertheless, some scholars criticized this method as giving students more control while limits the teachers to only consequences.

The third theory of classroom management was initiated by Glasser (1977). Known as “Reality Therapy”, its emphasis is to help students connect behaviour with consequences that is done through class meetings, clear rules and contracts. Glasser’s (1977) Reality Theory stress on choice as the cause of behaviour, good or bad, and thus instructed teachers to direct students towards making value judgments about their behaviour. With value judgments, students come to realize the good choices in behaviour and continue to repeat them in the future. As students were taught to differentiate between good and bad judgments, the purpose of this method is to instil this value at an early age.

The fourth theory involves the work by Phelan (2010) called 1-2-3 magic plan. It was first designed as a parenting tool help parents to manage their children at home. Then, it infiltrates into schools where teachers, counsellors and psychologists used this method to start or stop behaviour. When the number three is counted, the desired behaviour should have started or ended. Otherwise, a consequence would usually follow. This method has been known to be effective for small children, but not for students of high school level.

The fifth theory is referred to as “Peer Meditation” by Schmidt (1992). The use of meditation techniques helps people across sectors including schools to solve problems. Students are trained to meditate to be led to a proactive behaviour as a classroom control strategy. Schmidt (1992) and Aitken (1995) used meditation as a way to solve conflicts among school children. As a process, students learn the skills of listening, compromising and taking responsibilities for their actions. Thus, it encourages students to take ownership of their own behaviours.

On the sixth theory, Algonzinee et al., (2001) introduced the “Unified Discipline approach.” The idea was to carefully structure a school wide behaviour

management program. It was developed to ensure consistency among teachers and administrators when implementing school rules and regulations. While doing so, students are aware of the consequences of breaking school rules. In addition, it encourages clear communication among school communities and not missed any signs of ambiguity when punishments are administered. A unified discipline system creates an atmosphere too ensure all students are treated fairly.

For the seventh theory, McNeil (1982) coined the term ‘defensive teaching’ where the method used involves simplifying the content of a subject’s syllabus, and reducing the demands made on students. In her study involving the subject of economics, she highlighted that teachers use teaching techniques such as fragmentation, mystification, omission, or simplification of knowledge to control the knowledge, and thereby control the students.

Beyond the seven theories as mentioned above, other scholars have also evaluated and proposed good strategies of classroom control. Oliver and Reschly (2014), Moore (2014), Merç & Subaşı (2015) and Emmer and Stough (2001) highlighted several key effective classroom management practices. In general, these practices include:

1. Structuring the physical environment to accommodate traffic patterns and minimize distractions as well as structuring instructional time and transitions.
2. Establishing a few positively stated behavioral expectations.
3. Identifying rules that provide behavioral examples of the expectations.
4. Establishing routines for classroom tasks such as turning in homework.
5. Actively teaching the rules and routines.
6. Establishing procedures to reinforce appropriate behaviors.
7. Utilizing effective procedures to reduce and respond to inappropriate behavior.

8. Collecting data to monitor student behavior and modify the classroom management plan as needed.

For Emmer and Stough (2001), they highlighted that effectively managed classrooms focus on prevention rather than reactive approaches, and that teachers “teach students desirable behaviours rather than expecting those behaviours to occur naturally” (as cited in Oliver et al., 2011).

In another study, Tomal (1998) evaluated, categorized and introduced the concept of Discipline Style. His study was focused on types of discipline problems, ways of handling them, typical discipline situations, students response to discipline and teachers’ style with students. As a result, he formulated the Five-Styles Teacher Discipline Model that is based on teachers’ degree of enforcing rules and supporting of students. From data, he also concluded that teachers used all of the five discipline styles (enforcer, abdicator, supporter, compromiser and negotiator) when disciplining their students according to situations and types of discipline problems.

For Lewis (1999, 2006), he mentioned that a more democratic values of approach have begun to replace authoritarian values in the classrooms. He offered three discipline styles that provide guidance in classroom management; (a) the model of influence; (b) model of control and; (c) model of management. The model of influence describes “student-owned and teacher-owned problems with a student oriented approach to problem solving. The model of control describes “a teacher-oriented approach and discusses steps on deciding behavioural consequences. Lastly, the model of management describes “a group-oriented approach’. To elaborate further, it discusses on inappropriate behaviours, intervention and observation on Glasser’s (1977) 10-step approach to student behaviour.

As a summary, it is evident that classroom control strategies are too numerous to mention and included in this section. Nevertheless, the information presented here served as a preliminary support to enhance the theoretical perspective of the researcher.

### **Beyond Classroom Control Strategies**

Alvarez (2007) conducted an empirical study on teachers' preparation on classroom aggression and concluded the importance of prior training in supporting classroom management. It is not sufficient for teachers to merely use the coercive approach to classroom control. Whenever teachers are seen by students to react to classroom misbehaviour by increasing their use of coercive discipline, which inhibits the development of responsibility in students and distract them from their schoolwork. On the contrary, teachers may fail to increase their use of more productive techniques, such as discussions, as rewards for good behaviour and involvement for decision-making (Lewis, 2001).

Pertaining to choices of strategies in classroom control, Lewis (1999) mentioned,

Teachers select from a range of models and techniques while exercising discipline in school. Factors influencing their choice are associated with the assumptions of underlying competing techniques, the impact of different models on students' attitudes, behaviour and achievement, and the relative extent to which the aim of the disciplinary interaction is to establish order or to teach values. (Lewis, 1999)

However, Lewis (1999) highlighted that when teachers decide on the approach to classroom discipline, they may experience tension and while trying to maintain order. This is due to the perceived institutional pressure that may inhibit teachers from their attempts to implement their ideas of best practice. During and beyond the stage of control strategies, it is notable that teachers undergo two phases of decision-making

when confronted with discipline problems in the classroom. These phases are: (a) the decision related to choice of classroom control strategies; (b) the decision needed when teachers are limited by the choice of strategies. For the latter, teachers have to rely on other factors such as cognitive abilities, experience and environmental factors in order to discern for their next actions. Thus, this investigation looks into the “juncture of decision-making” because it uncovers the critical point where teachers have to choose between transfer and involving further in decision-making.

In the field of organizational management, Busenitz and Barney (1997) mentioned that entrepreneurs differed in terms of biases and heuristics as compared to managers in large organizations. The use of biases and heuristics among entrepreneurs have been found to be associated with innovativeness, and that it is an effective and efficient guide to decision-making under conditions of environmental uncertainty and complexity. They added that without the use of biases and heuristics, many entrepreneurs’ decisions would never be made. However, they described leaders as bad managers, because the extensive use of cognitive biases may be beneficial in some circumstances, but it can lead to major errors in others. In a context of schools, do teachers rely on biases and heuristics when they are at a point of uncertainties for decision-making? Although this is not the research question that forms the central part of the case study, it leads the way to explore beyond classroom control strategies of teachers, such as the cognitive and environmental aspects of decision-making.

To describe teachers’ intrinsic factors as decision-makers, theories of Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) and Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy (TSES) will be explored. For this case study, they are merely used to indicate teachers’ beliefs and perception towards classroom management. To emphasize on the subject of decision-making, another *Decision-making Questionnaire* is designed to more data from teachers. More

information will be described in the following chapter under the subject 'Instrument Design'.

## **Study of Pupil Control Ideology and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy**

### ***Pupil Control Ideology.***

Willower, Eidell & Hoy (1967) defined Pupil Control Ideology as "teacher's state of belief regarding control of students in classrooms and schools", and conceptualized the pupil control ideology along a continuum range of custodial at one end to humanistic at the other. This ideology is operationalized by the Pupil-Control Ideology (PCI) form on a scale that ranges from a custodial to a humanistic perspective. In other words, an individual teachers' pupil control ideology may be located at any point on the continuum between the two extremes.

Teachers portray their pupil control ideology in response to their perceptions on students. Studies have shown that the perception of teachers on students' personalities and abilities of students determines the level of classroom control and outcome of interactions with students. Cooper et.al (1979) examined teachers' cognitive processes concerning personal control in the classroom. His study revealed that high-ability students were perceived as more controllable than low-ability students while teacher-initiated interactions are perceived as providing more control than student-initiated interactions. In addition, both scenarios have effects on perceived control of interaction duration; and the interaction with high ability students are seen more likely to lead to successful outcomes than interactions with low-ability students.

Over time, various numbers of educators have identified personal beliefs or philosophy of education as the foundation of one's action, for what intends to do and how, in relation to teaching and learning (Galbraith, 2000). Teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate or promote learning affect the types of learning

environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve (Bandura, 1993).

Gilbert (2012) mentioned that classroom teachers regularly present aspects of their intellect, emotions and beliefs to their students. Therefore, the inter-response between students and teachers' stimuli would create a process where ideologies are formed and reflected in teachers' behaviour.

Comparatively between the two ideologies, the humanistic pupil control ideology focuses on making difference in the lives and performance of students, and educational communities learn through interactions and experience as mentioned by Willower et al., (1967). Humanistic teachers view the school as a community, while custodial teachers view the school as rigid hierarchy.

Hoy (1972) and Denig (1996) added that student alienation is greater in schools where teachers are more custodial, and that male in high school teachers had significant relationships to high pupil control ideology or custodial control. This notion is supported by Lunenburg (1990) who mentioned that custodial orientation is often associated with students having negative feelings towards teachers, and negative reactions to the quality of school life. In the proceeding paragraphs, teachers' sense of efficacy will be explored. In addition, examples will be given on the implications of pupil control ideology on students and teachers' professional practice.

### ***Teachers' Sense of Efficacy.***

A growing body of research evidences by Pajares (1992) and Martin et al. (1999) suggest that teachers' self-efficacy is an important mediator in determining how teachers interact with difficult students and manage students' misbehaviour. Over the past quarter of century, studies on teachers' efficacy have been conducted in both



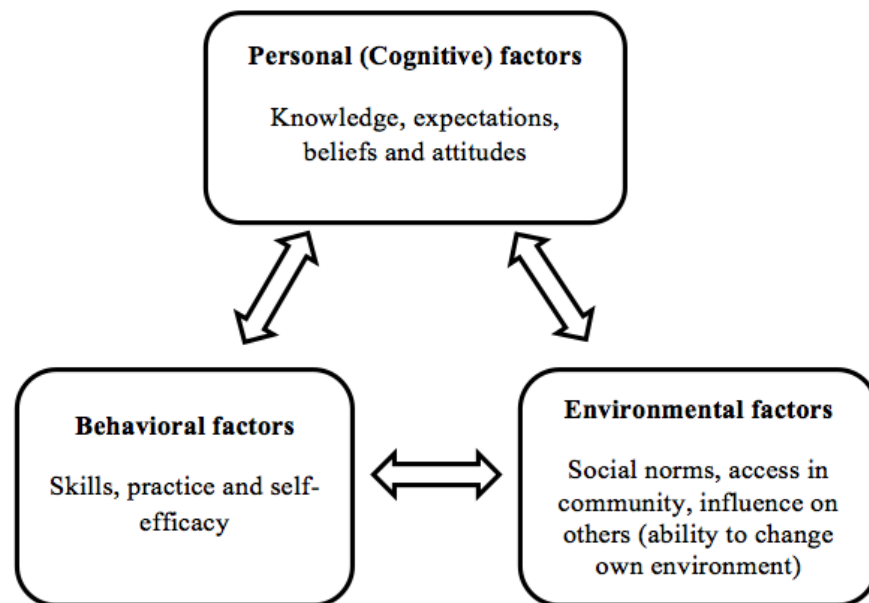
qualitative and quantitative methods, across participants of pre-service teachers, novice teachers and experienced teachers (Knoblauch, 2004).

Tschannen-Moran (1998) defined teachers' sense of efficacy as "the teachers' belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context". As cited from Zimmerman (2000), self-efficacy is also defined as a "personal judgments of one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attained designated goals" (Bandura, 1977; Frank Pajares, 1997). Emmer and Hickman (1991) mentioned that teachers' classroom management and discipline efficacy beliefs predict preference for certain strategies to deal with problems.

Historically, the theoretical origin of teachers' efficacy was first conceptualized in 1976 by RAND researchers as cited in Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk (2001), where since then, many other researchers such as Gibson & Dembo (1984) and Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Woolfolk (1998) have incorporated Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) to the teacher efficacy construct. Guskey (1998) defined teachers' efficacy as "teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn".

Bandura's (1977) research pertaining to self-efficacy facilitates educators to understand how a child's beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and academic attainments. In turn, it contributed to scholastic achievement independently, promote high academic aspirations and prosocial behavior, and reducing vulnerability to feelings of futility and depression (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996). Figure 10 illustrates that the triadic reciprocity according to Bandura (1999; 1996) that conceptualized personal factors (such as cognitive, affective and biological events); behavior factors; and environmental factors. In this model of reciprocal causality, internal personal factors in the form of cognitive, affective and biological

events; behavioral patterns, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants that influence one another bi-directionally.



*Figure 10.* Triadic reciprocity according to Bandura (1996, 1999)

As mentioned by Bandura (1999),

Cognitive processes are not only emergent brain activities; they also exert determinative influence. The human mind is generative, creative, proactive and self-reflective not just reactive. People operate as thinkers of the thoughts that serve determinative functions. They construct thoughts about future courses of actions to suit their ever-changing situations, assess their likely functional value, organize and deploy strategically the selected option, evaluate the adequacy of their thinking based on the effects which their actions produce and make whatever changes may be necessary (Bandura, 1999).

In simple terms, individuals are considered both as products and producers of their own environment and of their social systems (Pajares, 1997, p. 3). Bandura (1997, p. 3) conceptualized that self-efficacy beliefs are “one’s capabilities to organized and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments”.

This belief has been postulated to powerfully influence the choices people make, the amount of effort they expend, and their level of persistence as explained by Bandura (1986; 1997). Conceptually, Bandura (1986) and Coladarci (1992) mentioned that self-efficacy has two constructs despite being viewed as a multi-dimensional construct, and they are outcome expectations and efficacy expectations. In referring to teachers, other scholars such as Hoy and Woolfolk (1990) defined outcome expectations as general teaching efficacy, while efficacy expectations were augmented as general personal teaching efficacy. Below are the explanations on outcome expectations and efficacy expectations.

#### ***Outcome expectations.***

Outcome expectations are beliefs that certain behaviors would produce certain outcome; such a way that certain action could produce better results in students’ academic achievement.

#### ***Efficacy expectations.***

Efficacy expectations are beliefs that one can perform the behaviors to produce the outcome; such a way that it can be exemplified by the degree in which the teacher can emulate to perform in a certain way to produce better results in students’ academic achievement. To explain further on both outcome expectations and efficacy expectations, behaviour is thought to be influenced not only by the belief that a particular action will lead to desirable outcomes, but also by the belief that one has the

ability to perform the action. If an individual does not believe he/she is able to perform any particular task, he/she will not initiate or engage in relevant behaviours in difficult situations as asserted by Bandura(1986).

Hoy& Woolfolk (1990) added, “an outcome expectation is a judgment of likely consequences of an action, whereas an efficacy expectation is a judgment about the ability to perform an action”. For Knoblauch (2004), a person may believe that an action will lead to a certain outcome expectations, but may not believe that he or she can perform up to that action in efficacy expectations. Individuals with high self-efficacy would tend to view tasks challenges, commitment to goals and efforts positively and conversely to individuals with low self-efficacy.

Pajares (1996) mentioned that efficacy beliefs are powerful determinants and predictors to level of success that individuals can attain. In addition, much research has shown that self-efficacy influences academic motivation, learning and achievement. Bandura (1977) and Pajares (1996) added that individuals can select and assign differing weights to information to gauge their personal capability to perform a task, and there are four sources in which self-efficacy beliefs can be constructed to overcome low levels of self-efficacy:

***Performance accomplishments.***

Also known as enactive mastery experience or real experience, it provides the most influential source of efficacy information because it is based on experience of personal mastery. Successes raise mastery expectations, repeated failures lowers them. Enactive attainments on perceived self-efficacy will depend on cognitive appraisal of number of informative factors, including the difficulty of task, the amount of effort needed, the number of situational supports and the pattern or rate of success.

### ***Vicarious experience.***

It is defined as an experience where efficacy is attained through seeing others cope with threats and eventually succeed. This creates some expectations in observers that they too should be able to achieve more improvements in performance if they intensify and persist in their efforts. In relation however, self-efficacy theory states that enactive mastery experiences are more effective than vicarious experience in building a realistic sense of self-efficacy.

### ***Verbal or social persuasion.***

Self-efficacy is constructed in the form of feedback or exhortation, or trying to influence people into believing that they are capable of attaining a goal. Through persuasive suggestions, people can be led through into believing that they can cope successfully with that has overwhelmed them in the past.

### ***Emotional arousal.***

Also known to as physiological states, self-efficacy is explained by referring to emotional and affective states (e.g., individuals who feel anxious to give a speech before a wide audience could not expect a successful outcome). People rely on their state of physiological arousal in judging their anxiety and vulnerability to stress. Notably, many methods used to eliminate defensive behaviors are principally aimed at diminishing emotional arousal.

### *Implications of self-efficacy and pupil control ideology on teachers.*

According to Bandura (1997), researchers have concentrated on the development of teacher efficacy in novice teachers because they are the most receptive to change in the learning process, as compared to experienced teachers in the later years. Teacher efficacy beliefs in the later years became stabilized and more resistant to change (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Studies from Hoy and Woolfolk (1990), and Fortman and Pontius(2000) have also concluded of teachers' sense of efficacy change after their student teaching experience, and there were no differences between elementary and secondary pre-service teachers. However, Yılmaz and Çavaş (2008) mentioned that pre-service elementary school teachers' classroom management beliefs tend to change with teaching practice, and that people management beliefs increases with teaching practice. For Hong (2010), pre-service teachers tended to have naive and idealistic perceptions of teaching. Cole and Knowles (1993) explored the phenomenon of "shattered images" in the learning to teach process of pre-service teachers, and they highlighted the discrepancies between pre-service teachers' expectations and experiences. For student teachers, the reality of classroom is usually different than their expectations and presumptions.

Teachers' responses to students' misbehaviour is found to be mediated by their ability to deal with behaviour, as well as their beliefs to the causes of students' misbehaviours as mentioned by Martin et al., (1999). It was found from Safran (1989) and Hoy & Woolfolk (1990) that there is a negative correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their use of effective management techniques. Martin et al. (1999) and Dodge, Bates, & Pettit (1992) mentioned that teachers with a lower self-efficacy are more prone to use inappropriate management, while Dembo & Gibson (1984) added that they become more angered and threatened by students' misbehaviours. In addition, Martin et al. (1999) mentioned that teachers who felt less efficacious would be

frequently referring students to other responsible school personnel, and that “concern about students’ misbehaviour was strongly associated with the need for specific information to deal with the misbehaviour.” In contrast, Zulkosky (2009) mentioned that high efficacious teachers are more likely to believe that difficult students are teachable, offer more support, and use more proactive approaches to discipline issues.

According to Giallo and Little (2003), students’ misbehavior in the classrooms may be classified as personally intolerable but manageable, or unmanageable and severe. Teachers who perceived themselves as dealing with severe and unmanageable behavioral issues tend to have a lower sense of self-efficacy. Conversely, teachers who perceive themselves as able to deal with behaviors that are manageable and less severe are usually more efficacious. Thus, while perception on the issues or problems differed among individuals; it contributes to the difference in formation of teachers’ attitude and their ability to solve problems in the classrooms.

Hoy & Woolfolk (1990) also substantiated and concluded that teachers’ efficacy beliefs affect their classroom management style. Efficacious teachers perceive difficult students as “reachable and teachable” and that difficulties can be overcome with the right effort and strategy. They mentioned that with regards between teachers’ efficacy and pupil control ideology, high efficacy tends to be related to a more humanistic orientation, where low efficacy tend to be associated with a more custodial orientation. Barfield and Burlingame (1974) proved that teachers with low sense of efficacy perceived control of pupils more custodial than teachers with average or high perceptions of efficacy.

Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) supported the same fact that teachers’ with high self-efficacy provided more positive impact to their student’s motivation and achievement. In addition, Woolfolk, Rosoff, and Hoy (1990) mentioned that “the

greater the teachers' sense of efficacy, the more humanistic the teachers' pupil control orientation. The stronger the teachers' belief that teaching can be successful, the more humanistic is the teachers' pupil control orientation, and the more teacher supported student autonomy in solving classroom problems. “

On a contrary, a teacher would be devoid of the confidence to lead the classroom if he or she is low in self-efficacy (Gilbert, 2012). In addition, Bandura (1996) wrote that people have little incentive to act if they have low efficacies, and do not believe that they can produce the desired effects. However, he suggests that educators should not be impeded by this circumstance, but rather, self-efficacy should be important incentives for teachers to change. This information is important to emphasize that educators needs to believe that their actions can produce the desired results, and increasing their self-efficacy should be one aspect to begin with.

With reference to this research, how can teachers' self-efficacy and their pupil control ideology improve in the aspect of personal decision-making? In one study, Wood and Bandura (1989) mentioned that “perceived self-efficacy, which was affected by prior accomplishments, influenced subsequent organizational performance through its effects on analytic strategies.” While understanding organizational behavior, relationships between their belief system, their experiences and how they view education especially in students' learning can be crucial for education leaders to understand and manage change. School leaders can encourage teachers to adopt the right pupil control ideology that is appropriate to students' unique circumstances. To promote good teaching and effective classroom control, teachers need to have the acumen to identify problems and ways to establish a healthy environment. In Gardner's (2005) *Theory of Multiple Intelligence*, he believes that student can learn in their own specific and unique manner.



By teachers knowing a child's mind and blending their own belief and self-efficacy, it may eventually bring the teacher closer to effective teaching. In addition, knowing such relationships may aid in identifying the characteristics of an effective teacher. Furthermore, such studies may be appropriate for the organization to hire, mentor and cultivate successful professional practice in the private school.

The following paragraphs will highlight other external and internal factors that are associated with teachers' pupil control ideology besides teachers' self-efficacy. These factors are not directly involved to the dimension, scope and theme in this study, and only served as additional knowledge for the reader. Pajares (1992) cautioned that the inclusion of a model with too many variables could be too complex to measure and interpret when evaluating cognitive processes and belief systems in behavioral studies. At the foundation of this study, when both pupil control ideology and self-efficacy are understood in the context of teachers as decision-makers, perceptions will then be studied on how they analyzed the process of decision-making and the issues associated with them.

The first external factor involves the interaction between teachers and students. When teachers utilize numerous strategies for classroom control, the interactions between teachers' discipline styles and students' response will determine the classroom climate and the discipline style of teachers. Notably, Sackney (1988) encourages the use of the PCI form as an instrument to measure school climate. In addition, Anderson (1982) highlighted another benefit of the PCI form to allow another view of the school climate; one that focuses on the teacher-student relations rather than principal-teacher relations.”

Historically, Hoy (1967) reported that many teachers became more custodial in their interactions with students within the bureaucratic context of the school. This is consistent with the social development and social impact theories of Vygotsky and Latane (1981). According to their theory, changes in teachers' feelings, thoughts and behaviour are most accurately caused by external contextual and programs factors. In the context of this study, external environment such as the bureaucratic and sociological influences could be influencing teachers' classroom interactions with students, particularly in aspects of pupil control ideology. Social impact theory is now widely cited in textbooks and in research literatures in social psychology. "It provides a useful framework for understanding how a person is affected by his or her social environment" (Nowak, Szamrej, & Latané, 1990).

In addition, Willower, Eidell, & Hoy (1967) concluded that teachers PCI were more custodial in schools that are more bureaucratic, and vice versa, they are more humanistic in less bureaucratic school. Lunenburg (1990) reinforces the same findings when concluded that teachers in the researched catholic school were found to be more humanistic as compared to teachers in public schools. He described the sample of teachers in the catholic school perceiving themselves as "stressing cooperative interactions and experience in learning, high supportive behaviour, less close supervision, close personal relationships between teachers and pupils and positive attitudes towards pupils." In contrast, he mentioned that "the situation in public school stresses on order, impersonality, unilateral/downward communication, distrust of students and a punitive, moralistic stance towards deviance".

In another study, Lunenburg & Schmidt (1989) mentioned that urban schools are generally more bureaucratic and custodial as compared to suburban and rural schools in USA. In such circumstance, teachers tend to be influence by external demands, and end up becoming more custodial in their pupil control ideology. On a

contrary, Gökhan (2012) conducted another study in Turkey and found that teachers in the city were more humanistic as compared to teachers in the countryside.

In another area, Gilbert (2012) mentioned in his study that humanistic pupil control ideology tend to be found in among teachers teaching in the elementary level, while the custodial pupil control ideology is more related to teachers teaching in the secondary level. This is similar to Lunenburg (1986) findings that indicated that the rigidity and desired order in the secondary school promotes the more custodial ideology of student control. He added that instruction and management practices are more structured in the secondary school.

Contrary to the external factors as highlighted above, there are some internal factors that determine teachers' pupil control ideology. Gokhan's (2012) study concluded that there is no significance difference in terms of gender, but however, there was significant differences in terms of occupational seniority, educational level and settlement place of school. Teachers' pupil control ideology is very much consistent with their beliefs on education as typified by Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) in cognitive dissonance theory. According the theory, one would experience cognitive dissonance theory and be motivated to change their behaviour to eliminate the dissonance. This is explained by the consistency of what one does, even if there is awareness that the actions may not be the right thing to do. He added, "If a person is induced to do or say something which is contrary to his private opinion, there will be a tendency for him to change his opinion so as to bring into correspondence with what he has done or said."

In comparisons between internal and external factors for pre-service teachers, Rideout and Morton (2010) reported that teachers' pupil control ideology is more custodial due to external socialization factors and less with internal factors such as their beliefs on in education. This was shown in the multivariate analyses of variances (ANOVAs) that revealed that pre-service teachers were more likely to become custodial in their PCI when they observed teacher-centred (custodial) role models. Conversely, pre-service teachers tended to be less custodial when they observe student-centred or collaborative teachers. Rideout and Morton (2010) have also stated that regardless of teachers' beliefs about education, pre-service teachers tended to conform to the style of their associate teacher during the pre-service teacher education program.

Merrett and Wheldall (1992) conducted a study of 32 primary and 38 secondary teachers to observe how teachers differentiated in their responses between boys and female pupils. Findings from his analyses showed that boys would receive more positive and negative responses as compared to girls. In addition, he mentioned that female teachers "used significantly more negative responses to boys' social behaviour whereas male teachers used significantly more positive responses to boys' academic behaviours. The differences in teacher-student relationships with gender were astonishing, even though the study did not focus on pupil control ideology. However, if there are differences in how teachers treat students, there has to be implications of reactions from students in terms of how they are perceived and treated.

Generally, Hoy (1967) considered a custodial pupil control ideology as unfavourable for teachers' professional practice, there are some positive outcomes associated to it. Gilbert (2012) mentioned that students growing up without boundaries and sense of order might respond favourably to a custodial pupil control ideology because they interpret teachers' actions as true and caring.

Conversely, “students of abused, emotionally unstable dynamics, financial difficulties, medical problems, and a students’ demanding schedule” may necessitate a more humanistic pupil control ideology from teachers. Using Gardner’s (2005) multiple intelligences, teachers should accommodate the nature of the learner with the type of pupil control ideology they can portray. In other words, professional teachers should know their students and facilitate toward behaviour change and academic success.

As much as custodial approach lacks the flexibility, it also creates a structure of non-distracting classroom climate for the students. Stricter approach to teacher control may be present in a new teacher as a survival skill. Nevertheless, if this method is applied beyond the tolerance limit of the students, it may work against relationship building in the classroom. Teachers’ coercive behaviours do not necessarily increase the level of their influence in the classroom (Mainhard, Brekelmans, & Wubbels, 2011).

In addition to the objectives of the study, education leaders need to understand the considerations taken by a custodial teacher in the area of decision-making, and match them with the situation and complexity that they perceived to encounter. On the other hand, humanistic teachers may develop students who understand that the environment is safe for honest expression, conducive to empathetic discourse, and free of authoritarian control (Gilbert, 2012).

In essence, the knowledge of how a custodial or humanistic’ pupil control ideology affects students is useful to help school leaders to be a catalyst to establish situational-appropriate levels of control in their schools. Willard (1972) mentioned that pupil control ideology informs and guides teachers’ understanding about appropriate and desirable instructional practices, teacher-student interactions and classroom dynamics.

In addition, Wiseman & Hunt (2008) highlighted that pupil control ideology constitutes a critical intermediary between teacher and their strategies they adopt to maintain an orderly classroom environment. Thus, the knowledge of pupil control ideology is necessary to also enable teachers to use them as a risk management tool when confronted with a conflict with their students (Adwere-Boamah, 2010).

***Exploring teachers' pupil control ideology and self-efficacy for organizational improvements.***

Researchers often tend to overlook teachers as a potential source of problems in the classroom. Gilbert (2012) highlighted that fewer studies have been done on negative teacher communication behaviours as compared to the large body of literature that focuses on positive teacher communication behaviours. As a consequence, teachers and school administrators could be educating students without knowing how their pupil control ideology may affect academic optimism.

Numerous research have also found that not all teachers followed the custodial approach, but instead have moved towards a more humanistic pupil control ideology as reported by Willower, Eidell, & Hoy (1967). Schmidt (1992) found that the quality of school life is more positively related to teachers who were more humanistic in pupil control ideology, and school leaders should seek for themselves a positive relationship between the quality of school life and other variables in addition to pupil control ideology.

In reality, school administrators may not know the relationship between pupil control ideology and teachers' self-efficacy. As a consequence, the lack of awareness could impede the development of important positive constructs found within the self-efficacy concept, while possibly cultivating pupil control ideologies that are not suited for students.

Thus, the challenge to determine the right ideology to promote is important to change students' behaviour and academic achievement. Interestingly, teachers perceive internal factor to become more influential during the beginning years. However, Rideout (2010) highlighted that influences of mentorship, induction programs and school leadership factors have "become internalized over time" from playing their initial role as external influences.

Rosenfeld and Rosenfeld (2008) suggested the idea that teachers must be self-aware and open to questioning their beliefs because variables such as life experience, value systems and practices are difficult to measure. Although these variables are abstract in nature, nevertheless, they are an integral part of human experience that forms the belief systems on people. The researcher feels that how these variables affect a teachers' particular belief, their ability to change it and the respond through teachers' decision-making can only be studied through a qualitative analysis and through their honest responses over time.

As supported by opinions of both researchers, when school administrators try to change their beliefs, the process would usually take more time for school leaders to understand teachers' learning style and capacity to function as learners. Their conclusion was that teachers who learned about themselves were better to apply learning-style theory in their teaching once they had ownership of their beliefs. Therefore, change can occur within teachers that are the result of reflection, self-discovery and accumulated experience without the intervention of the leader.

As a summary to this point of writing, the researcher has elaborated on several important aspects of teachers being decision-makers in the classroom. Subjects that were discussed include classroom control strategies, pupil control ideology and teachers' sense of efficacy.

Both pupil control ideology and teachers' sense of efficacy are vital to be considered in this research due to the appropriateness and relevance to this research. Most scientific evidences suggest to a developmental and self-directed change in teachers' pupil control ideology and self-efficacy, and that a humanistic pupil control ideology and a high sense of efficacy is highly preferred over the other. Nevertheless, it is important for teachers to be flexible, because a custodial pupil control ideology may be tolerated in some circumstances. Fundamentally, they have to learn to distinguish students' personalities and create the right style of interactions.

In addition, there are also many internal and external factors that relates to one's pupil control ideology and their self-efficacy beliefs. As supported by Bandura (1991), teachers as decision-makers are aware of the situations that they faced, and decide on solutions based on their beliefs, knowledge and skills they possess. In some cases, teachers' choice of classroom control strategies may not necessarily be in consistent with their personal beliefs in Pupil Control Ideology or sense of efficacy as theorized by Festinger's (1959) cognitive dissonance. Thus, a dilemma in decision-making occurs.

### **The Process of Decision-making**

Tuten (2006) mentioned that while researchers emphasize on idealized versions of decision-making, they failed to focus on the development of understanding of actual decision-making in practice. In addition, Evers (1992) quoted,

The exercise of leadership in most contexts involves the scope of decision-making and influential action, either directly or indirectly through the initiation of acts and events by others...Decision-making that affects how and what people learn very a long term consequences, for they shape not only the choice of solutions a community may adopt to solve its problems, but the very formulation of those problems and the way in which a community



conceptualises its needs, including what it needs to learn to solve its problems (Evers, 1992).

Huber (2004) mentioned that a model or theory that has meaning and purpose should be grounded contextually in the real world setting and “adjusted to the core purpose of the school.” Cottone (2001) mentioned that there are no absolute truths about decision-making, and that reality is contextually bound and socially constructed.

From a pragmatic perspective of Trevino (1986) and Redelmeier and Shafir (1995) decision-making practices are informed by situations. Whitney, McGuire, and McCullough (2004) highlighted that shared decision-making is appropriate during risky and uncertain situations. In addition, Snowden and Boone (2007) mentioned that while a decision-making model may be used to address an issue, the leader’s course of action may be determined by the circumstances surrounding the situation. Situations change over time and leaders must learn to shift their decision-making style to match the changing business environment.

In the context of a school, teachers as leaders in the classroom should not limit their roles to just classroom managers. Zaleznik (1977) differentiated between managers and leaders lies in the conceptions they hold, deep in their psyches, of chaos and order. Managers embrace process, seek sustainability and control, and instinctively try to resolve problems quickly-sometimes before they fully understand the problem’s significance. Leaders in contrast, tolerate chaos and lack of structure and are willing to delay closure in order to understand the issues more fully. However, he highlighted that organizations need both managers and leaders to succeed, and developing both requires a reduced focus on logic and strategic exercises in favour of an environment where creativity and imagination are permitted to flourish.

Besides creativity and imagination, intuition is needed as much expertise in decision-making. Kahneman and Klein (2009) explored the difference between two approaches to intuition and expertise that are often viewed conflicting: Heuristics decision-making and naturalistic decision-making. By highlighting that professional intuition is sometimes marvellous and sometimes flawed, they tried to map the boundary conditions that separate true intuitive skill from overconfident and biased impressions. As a result, they conclude that evaluating the likely quantity of intuitive judgment requires “an assessment of the predictability of the environment in which judgment is made and of the individual’s opportunity to learn the regularities and environment.”

Tuten (2006) described the “context” in Pettigrew’s (1985) framework as individual(s) who are participating in the decision-making process. Many decision-making functions will fail without staff involvement and participation as mentioned by Klein, (1998) and Vroom & Yetton (1973). Involvement in decision-making should exist in a continuum, with different degrees of shareholder participation dependent on personal empowerment (Wall & Rinehart, 1997).

In this case study, the researcher intends to uncover the obstacles that teachers faced in order to identify more opportunities for personal decision-making in the classrooms. Ingram, Seashore Louis, and Schroeder (2004) mentioned that most teachers are willing to have direct involvement in the school’s process of decision-making, but highlighted that “teachers have significant concerns about the kind of information that is available and how it is used to judge their own and colleagues “performance.” As a result, teachers could not play more roles as decision-makers when situations are ambiguous and discipline problems are complicated.

For Bridges (1967), he suggested that teachers' participation in decision-making has desirable consequences and should be encouraged. He mentioned that teachers are interested in participating "if the decision is relevant to them and if they are capable of contributing to the decision." He suggested that "a principal can decide on the constitutional arrangements of the group be it participant-determining, parliamentary, or democratic-centralist. Decisions that have high relevance to teachers should be considered participant-determining, while parliamentary style of consensus should be considered for if there are conflicts." The democratic-centralist style is most appropriate when teachers' view and principals' final judgment is required. Nevertheless, Imber and Duke (1984) mentioned that there is no strong empirical confirmation for theoretical claims that high levels of teacher participation in school decision-making would improve schools. The inconsistency between theories and observation "impedes the formation of well-justified policies concerning role of teachers in school governance." In order to resolve this inconsistency, researchers will require a common framework for their efforts, such as formulating a decision-making guide and assessing its effectiveness towards problem solving and teachers' commitment to organizational decision-making.

In another area, scholars like Vroom-Yetton (1973), Heller (1992), Snowden and Boone (2007) synonymously refer decision-making to leadership. In almost every situation, a school leader must make decisions that shape the school climate and also reflect organizational goals and objectives. Hallinger (2003) mentioned that school leaders make decisions on a continual basis due to their role within the organization. However, the problem lies in where principal is too preoccupied to make all decisions within the school. Barth (1987) argues that teachers can take effective school wide leadership roles if principals encourage them to take responsibility for an aspect where the individual teacher cares strongly about.

He studied the motivation behind teachers to engage in school leadership and concluded on four factors: (a) opportunity to improve teaching conditions; (b) opportunity to replace the solidarity authority of the principal with collective authority; (c) opportunity to provide a constructive format in which school adults can interact and overcome their daily classroom isolation; (d) opportunity to help transform schools into learning contexts for adults as well as for children; and (e) opportunity to make teachers feel and become more important and professional in the eyes of students, other teachers, parents, administrators and themselves.

In addition, Muijs and Harris (2003) promoted the idea of ‘teacher leadership’, characterized by “a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively.” They concluded that while teacher leadership could have beneficial effects on school improvements, the right conditions need to be in place in order for teachers to flourish as leaders. The understanding of school environment or organizational climate can assist decision-makers to make better decisions if they have awareness in its operating systems, norms and culture. Knowing the right conditions and information for decision-making are important aspects that form the purpose of this study.

Lashway (2003) mentioned that school-reform efforts in recent years have stressed and expanded the leadership roles of principals. The task of transforming a school “is too complex for one person to accomplish alone.” Thus, the term “Distributed Leadership” became a new model of leadership. It is a belief that leadership should be distributed throughout the school, rather than be vested in one position.

Following efforts to make teachers to take on leadership roles, Barth (1987) advised principals to: (a) make it clear that they want community leaders to develop; (b) relinquish some power; (c) support the teacher to whom responsibility has been delegated; (d) involve teachers in decision-making; (e) give responsibility not to teachers who already proven responsible, but to teachers interested in the issue concerned; (f) accept a share of the responsibility for failures while allowing teacher credit for success; (g) admit their needs for help; and (h) seek ways to enhance teachers' confidence.

As an additional attempt to relate with previous participative decision-making models, Vroom and Yetton (1973) provided an examination of both normative and descriptive models of decision-making, through "an examination of one dimension of decision-making-the extent to which the leader encourages the participation of his subordinates in decision-making." Both of them are concerned with problems and decisions to be made by managers with subordinates reporting to them. In each problem, managers "have some area of freedom or discretion in determining the solution adopted, and the solution must affect at least one of manager's associate."

Hoy & Tarter (1993) agreed that involving subordinates in decisions may also improve the quality and acceptance of decisions when participation fits the constraints of the situation. In the education field, they developed the theory of participative decision-making (PDM) to suggest under what conditions subordinates should be involved in decision-making. The normative theory describes not only when teachers should be involved, but also the appropriate role of the administrator which depends on the situation.

The following sections will present seven decision-making models for the reader to understand decision-making in organizations. In general, these models are normative models, where they outline processes used by organizations to make decisions. Four of the seven models are “heuristic” where school leaders can self-learn and utilize, step by step, for the assistance in decision-making. Simon (1972) referred heuristic as trial-and-error methods used to aid the search for plausible alternatives. As decision-making concerns around the process, context and content, an understanding of these models will aid the researcher and the reader to explain the behaviours of teachers in their decision-making in the later chapters.

### **The Classical or Traditional Model**

According to Li (2008), the *Classical or Traditional Model* is grounded in the concept of scientific rationality and decisions within the whole process of discussions and prescriptions. This model involves the following of sequential process: (a) seeking the right questions; (b) discovering creative answers; and (c) making sure the chosen solution is valuable and useful. The advantage of the classical model is to indicate a rational approach that can be applied to the business of reaching decisions in organizations.

Simon (1978) and Hoy & Tarter (2004) highlighted that clear steps are outlined and completed before the decision-maker decides on one best solution. Tuten (2006) mentioned that there are many “classical” or “traditional” decision-making models that remain similar throughout most texts even though there are variants among them. Scholars like Hoy & Tarter (2004) and Lunenburg & Ornstein (2011) explained this model by describing steps that decision-makers can follow.

Similarly, these steps consists of identifying the problem, generating alternatives, evaluating alternatives, choosing an appropriate solution and converting the choice into effective action as highlighted by Li (2008).

For Hoy and Tarter (2004), they added that problems and discrepancies are actual and desired outcome, and that school leaders must monitor school operations to determine when performance falls short of expectations. It is also noteworthy to know that decision-making do not just end with a solution, but needs to be evaluated if it ever achieved its objectives. Simon (1978) mentioned that if objectives were not achieved, the whole process would be recycled until a new solution to the problem is found. However, the feasibility of this model seems to be questioned by scholars and practitioners. Cohen, March, & Olsen (1972) together with Vroom & Yetton (1973) concluded that it is flawed because it assumes decision-makers always have a clear goal for the organization, and it is difficult to impute a set of preferences to the decision situation that satisfies the standard consistency requirement for the theory of choice. Also, Hoy & Tarter (2004) mentioned that these assumptions are unrealistic, as it anticipates that information and cognitive abilities of decision-makers are available and competent to analyse a problem.

### **The *Satisficing* Model**

Simon (1947) was the first scholar who coined the term *satisficing* in his influential book, *Administrative Behaviour*. He acknowledged that human decision-making must reconcile the ideal of rationality with the fallibility of the decision-maker. He also coined the phrase “bounded rationality” to express the idea that human decision-making is limited by available information, available time and the mind’s information-processing ability.

As “bounded rationality”, he pointed out that human beings lack the cognitive resources to optimize and rarely evaluate all outcomes from sufficient precision, do not know the relevant probability of outcomes, and poses only limited memories. Other scholars such as Eisenhardt (1992) elaborated,

The existence of cognitive limits to the rational model, and that decision-makers satisfies instead of optimize, rarely engaged in comprehensive research, and discover their goals in the process of searching... many decisions follow the basic phases of problems identification, development and selection, but that they cycle through the various stages, frequently repeating, often going deeper, and always following different parts in fits and starts. Furthermore, the complexity of the problem and the conflict among decision-makers often influence the shape of the decision path.

In essence, the word *satisficing* is used to explain how leaders make decisions in a world of uncertainties, conscious biases, and limited knowledge of any given situation. As highlighted by Bendor (2003), decision-makers may reach a “crossing point” where cognitive capacities ceased to affect decision-making. In other words, it is almost impossible to make a complete rational decision in a complex situation. Simon (1947, 1964) was interested in knowing how individuals work around their cognitive limitations and decision-making as means-end chain. As a result, he defined two cognitive styles: *maximizers* who try to make optimal decisions, whereas *satisficers* who try to find a solution that is “good enough”.



Under circumstances in which an optimal solution cannot be determined, Parker, Bruine de Bruin and Fischhoff (2007) highlighted that self-reported maximizers “are more likely to show problematic decision-making styles, as evidenced by self-reports of less behavioural coping, greater dependence on others when making decisions, more avoidance of decision-making and greater tendency to experience regret.”

Hoy and Tarter (2004) stated that principals are likely to observe a simplified version of reality. Due to the limited time constraints and inability to rationally understand every complex problem, school leaders would normally be satisfied to explore more options to problems situations. However, some scholars like Bendor (2003) and Rainey (2001) criticized Simon’s over reliance on empirical evidence and his insistence upon complicated cognitive models. March (1978) mentioned that some organizations may not work well with the satisficing and bounded rationality because the consequences of actions are unclear while alternative solutions cannot be adequately identified.

### **The *Incremental Model***

The *Incremental Model* of decision-making attempts to correct the deficiencies of the rational model and to better describe how decision-makers actually behave in reality. It is a method of working by adding to a project using small, unplanned and incremental changes instead of a few and extensive large steps. First coined by Lindblom (1959), the incremental model was developed from a theoretical construct to aid decision-making in business and political organizations.

Also known as “the science of muddling through”, Lindblom (1959) noted that decision-makers do not always see a clear goal when solving a problem, and that one type of decision-making is unlikely to work best in all situations.

While leaders seek to grasp the appropriate context to address the problems, they could be also be lacking in confidence to state a clear objective. Drawing a conclusion from a study of 10 major corporations, Quinn (1980) mentioned that “top managements typically forged their strategies for change only gradually as events unfold, keeping their options open and steering their organizations incrementally towards a consensus view of the most important corporate goal to be attained.”

In the context of schools, principals are required to continuously exercise their discretion on a variety of matters that affects school communities (Heilmann, 2006). As stated by Damghani, Taghavifard, and Moghaddam (2009), the decision-maker would normally compare the status quo with new alternative and chooses the decision that is more superior as compared to the other. While working towards larger organizational goals, monitoring the results of small decisions in schools allow principals to avoid negative outcomes and achieve the overall mission of the organization.

Nevertheless, some scholars consider the incremental model as more difficult to comprehend and adapt in practice because there are assumptions and characteristics that are needed to be outlined.

Etzioni (1967) highlighted six primary requirements in this model from Lindblom (1965):

1. The decision-maker focuses only on those policies that differ incrementally from existing policies.
2. Only a relatively small number of policy alternatives are considered.
3. For each policy alternative, only a restricted number of important consequences are evaluated.

4. The problem confronting the decision-maker is continually redefined: *Incrementalism* allows for countless ends-means and means-end adjustments that in effect make the problem more manageable.
5. There is one decision or “right” decision.

Etzioni (1967) criticized this model and argued that it may neglect social innovations and demands of the underprivileged. It focuses on short-run and seeks no more than limited variations from past policies. This cautious approach may be less innovative in producing alternatives. In addition, there is nothing to guide the accumulation of small steps that may be circular and ending up nowhere. Lastly, he mentioned that *incrementalists* tend to “underestimate their impact on decision-makers.”

Nevertheless, the incremental model provides an efficient decision-making heuristic because multiple decision-makers are involved and thus increasing the number of solutions. In this fashion, all individuals involved in the decision-making are assumed to share the same objective according to Kollman, Miller & Page (1992) “Muddling through” offers an alternative when problems become more complex and theories becomes inadequate to explain (Lindblom, 1959). It offers an alternative that provides a way despite the complex decision-making in the setting of the practitioner as mentioned by Cohen, March, & Olsen (1972).

### **The Mixed-Scanning Model**

In a pragmatic attempt to blend the best aspects of classical and incremental decision-making models, Etzioni (1967) proposed the *Mixed-Scanning* model. It involves two set of judgments: (a) broad, fundamental choices about the organization’s basic policy and direction; and (b) incremental decisions that “prepare the way for new, basic judgments and that implement and particularize them once they have been made.”

Therefore, the decision-maker can broadly scan the field of interest and identify which decisions ought to be taken incrementally or rationally. This model provides the leader with the benefits of incremental model's flexibility and satisficing model of rationality. It reduces the effects of particular shortcomings of the other. Etzioni (1967) reiterated that "this model is much less detailed and demanding than rationalistic decision-making, but still broader and more comprehensive than *incrementalism* and less likely to be limited to familiar alternatives."

However, it is impossible to gather all information necessary before making any decision if situations are pressing or urgent. Etzioni (1968, 1988) mentioned that within this circumstance, the decision-maker use the incremental model to approximate an answer while remaining confident to policies and philosophies from being compromised. Tuten (2006) highlighted seven principles of this model as found in Etzioni (1989):

1. Decision-makers should continually search for alternatives and check outcomes of decisions for changes while in action.
2. Decisions should be made slowly with adjustments in strategy.
3. Decision-makers should delay decisions if the situation is complex and objectives are uncertain, in order to buy more time to look at information (data) and analyzing for alternatives.
4. Leaders should commit to decisions in stages and assess prior outcomes before beginning the next phase of action.
5. Decision-makers should test their decision in stages prior to fully committing resources.
6. Decision-makers should consider implementing competing alternatives towards desired outcome.
7. Leaders are to be prepared to reverse a decision that they made.

Etzioni (1967) mentioned that mixed-scanning has two further advantages over *incrementalism*: (a) it provides a strategy for evaluation; and (b) it does not include hidden structural assumptions. The flexibility of different scanning levels makes it a useful strategy for decision-making in an environment of varying stability, having actors with varying control and capacities for consensus.

### **The Garbage Can Model**

The *Garbage Can Model* was coined by Cohen, March and Olsen (1972). It is based on the assumption that decision is sloppy, haphazard and simply a label for confusion. In essence, it operates at two levels: (a) that choice is fundamentally ambiguous; and (b) the effort to describe the way in which organizations deal with flow of problems, solutions, and decision-makers in a “garbage can” situation. It is more of a descriptive tool than a paradigm of decision-making. While time can be scarce for decision-makers, choice depends on the ways which decision-makers allocate time and energy to choice opportunities. Thus, choice opportunities attract all sorts of unrelated but simultaneously available problems, solutions, goals, interests and concerns. The link between a problem and solution depends heavily on the simultaneity of their arrivals.

In addition, Starbuck (1983) mentioned that when a choice opportunity arises, participants bring out pet problems and propose actions unrelated to any visible problems, thus creating a choice opportunity that resembles a garbage can filled with unrelated problems and potential actions. He added,

Participants may perceive a decision: (a) when an action is taken, even if this action solves no problems in the garbage can; (b) when the problem is removed from the garbage can, even if no action has been taken to cause its removal; or (c) when an action is mated with problem and called a solution (Starbuck, 1983).

Bellman and Zadeh (1970) highlighted that much of the decision-making in the real world takes place in an environment which the goals, the constraints and the consequences of possible actions are not known precisely. Therefore, Cohen, March, & Olsen (1972) mentioned that this model applies the “ad hoc” process, when “gut instinct” and “emotions” guide decision-makers more often than “rationality” and “theory”. According to this theory, there are four streams of independent organizational events that interact to form decisions. These interactions are structured and they are random (Lindblom, 1965). The four streams consist of:

1. Problems
2. Solutions
3. Participants
4. Choice opportunities

Cohen, March and Olsen (1972) described it as “ a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which there may be answers, and decision-makers looking for work” (p.2). The same opinion is also substantiated by Pinfield (1986) that when a problem and solution appears to match, a decision then occurs.

Nevertheless, Pinfield (1986) cautioned that even though it describes the way organization makes decisions, it fails to specify how participation and contextual dependence influence strategic decision-processes. Padgett (1980) mentioned that garbage can issues are “explicitly embedded within a differentiated chain-of-command hierarchy, and are affected by centralization and personnel policies.”

He mentioned that garbage can processes “seem curiously divorced from the familiar structural phenomena of organization differentiation, centralization policy, and standard operating procedures of traditional concern to classical organization theorists.”

Starbuck (1983) added that garbage can model understates cause-effect attributions, de-emphasizes the activities preceding decisions, and ignores the activities following decisions. He claimed that decisions infrequently mate problems with solutions, and participants were judging if their actions do solve problems, rather than if any decisions occur. For scholars like Tarter & Hoy (1998), they initiated and developed the contingency model of decision-making, a framework and prepositions to match strategies with circumstances.

In general, organizations that function with inherent ambiguities within their process of decision-making will observe the garbage can model in operation as mentioned by Cohen et al.(1972). They mentioned that this model does “enable choices to be made and problems resolved even of organizations are plagued with goal ambiguity and conflict, with poorly understood problems that wander in and out of the system, with various environments, and with decision-makers who may have other things in their mind.”

### **The *Political Model***

Hoy and Miskel (2013) highlighted that politics is an inevitable part of organizational life. They mentioned that “ there are always those who want to seize power for their own personal ends...Power relations get played out in a variety of ways: political tactics and games, bargaining, and conflict resolution.”

They added that to understand organizational life or social systems, one must observe both the formal and informal, legitimate and illegitimate forms of power, and that behaviour is a function of the interaction between organizational structure, individual, culture and politics at work.

According to Verma (2014), the political model of decision-making does not assume that decisions result from applying existing standard operating procedures, programs and routine, but instead, from bargaining among coalitions or different groups. It emphasizes on natural multiplicity of goals, values, and interests in a complex environment of decentralized power.

In essence, the political model views decision-making as a process of conflict resolution, consensus building and outcome of decision as the products of compromise. When problems occur, decisions tend to be incremental instead of working out a clear set of plans and comprehensive program. In other words, the *incrementalist* tends to be seen as the simplest or most extreme form of satisficing. This model allows decision-makers to reduce the time spent on searching for information and defining stages of problems, and addresses shortcomings in present policies. Because stakeholders have different perceptions, priorities and solutions on the problem, no particular decision can be made if posing harm to the stakeholder, even though it is the best and optimum solution.

Thomas (1992) mentioned that when the goals of the organization and the individuals may be dissimilar, conflicts would then occur at the workplace. He defined conflict as “the process which begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated, or is about to frustrate...” He mentioned that decision-making or discussion could switch into conflict as the beginning point for the conflict process.

The political forces, or the pull between individual desires and organizational ideologies may cause goal and aspirations become secondary as compared to by organizational welfare.



However, Bolman and Deal (1991) mentioned that even though primarily driven by personal needs and wants, political decision-making may be legitimate and beneficial in a sense that it may chart a new path for unpopular decisions that may work for organizations. Kahneman and Tversky (1982) highlighted that most decision-making is vulnerable to outside forces that shape the decisions, and that poor decision outcome is the result of uncertainty. Pfeffer (1981) highlighted that while power plays a major role in decision-making, understanding it may help leaders to make the right decision in a specific situation and meeting the ultimate goals of those involved.

### **The *Ethical Model***

Forester et al., (1995) mentioned that the *Ethical Model* of decision-making has gained a great interest in the literature of business ethics. A number of scholars have proposed a variety of theoretical models in efforts to explain and predict the process by which a manager makes a decision that is considered ethical. According to Ford and Richardson (1994), the ethical decision-making model divides the postulated influences on an individual's decision behaviour into two broad categories. The first group of decision is dealing moral temptations, or variables associated with the individual decision-maker. They are situations of right and wrongs, and the decision-maker has to resist moral temptations because of personal preferences or weaknesses. The second category is concerned with the variables that form and define situations in which the individual makes decisions. Corey, Corey, and Callanan (2005) highlighted eight steps in making ethical decisions:

1. Identify the problem or dilemma.
2. Identify the potential issues involved.
3. Review the relevant ethical codes.
4. Know the applicable laws and regulations.
5. Obtain consultation.

6. Consider possible and probable courses of action.
7. Enumerate the consequences of various decisions.
8. Decide on what appears to be the best course of action.

Cranston, Ehrich, and Kimber (2006) highlighted the term ethical dilemma as “when people find themselves perplexing situations that necessitate them choosing among competing sets of principles, values, beliefs or ideal. “ In his context when referring to schools, the most frequently occurring student-based dilemmas were situations when students harassed, intimidated or bullied others.

Other issues related to ethical dilemmas were dealing with students with disturbed behaviors; conflicts between values of the school and the values at home; suspending students; and child abuse/child custody arrangements. In another study, Day, Hadfield, and Harris (1999) revealed that principals often felt ethical tension when required to choose between developing or dismissing an underperforming staff member. Other dilemmas include circumstances that present school leaders with situations that are not manageable by normal means, or that could challenge their authority as leaders and required one of the tough decisions that define their leadership. An ethical dilemma is not a choice between wrong or right. In most circumstance, it is a choice between two rights as mentioned by Kidder (1995).

Tuten (2006) added that simultaneously, the leader’s decision often illustrates his or her leadership style and situational efficacy. Kocabaş and Karaköse (2009) mentioned that “the causes of poor ethical decisions are often the same as the causes of poor decisions generally. “ They added that the code of ethics itself “cannot guarantee ethical practice or be cure-all for other problems in the education profession. “ Thus, school leaders’ ethical behaviours and decisions affects school climate directly. Nevertheless, Tuten (2006) added, “with proper administrative training, beginning and

practicing leaders can feel comfortable relying on their skills and ethical methodology to make decisions that benefits all members of the educational community. “

As a summary from all the seven models of decision-making, it is important to note that there are no perfect decision-making models to follow. While scholars are trying to close the gap between theory and practice, each model portrays itself with its strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats to organizational decision-making.

Hammond, Keeney, and Raiffa (1998) highlighted that people make bad decisions that is usually caused by distortions, biases or other mental flaws that could be “sabotaging our reasoning”. As a general rule, he suggested a few ideas to avoid the trap of making wrong decisions, such as: (a) seek information from a variety of people and sources after thinking through the problems; (b) get views of people who *weren't* involved in the original decisions; (c) remember that even the best managers make mistakes; and (d) do not encourage failure-fearing. For the next section, the researcher will discuss on several issues of decision-making while relating to local evidences and the context of this study.

### **Unfavourable Conditions and Obstacles to Personal Decision-making**

When considering the obstacles to personal decision-making, it is important to recognize that the structure of organization has a strong influence on how and when information is communicated, and the personnel who is involved in the decision (Verma, 2014). The organization institutionalize the procedures used to solve the problem into a standard operating procedure (SOP) when a decision has been reached and the solution to a problem is found to be acceptable. Generally, SOPs are rules, programs and routines that are invoked by the organizational leaders to gain time and avoid the task of solving problems repeatedly if they appear in a similar fashion. Sometimes managers invoke SOPs when organization is facing similar but not identical

problems to the one that the SOP originally solved. Nevertheless, it is not necessarily a time saver as people within the organization may not know why or whether it is the best way to solve the original problem in the first place (Verma, 2014).

Hoy and Miskel (1991) highlighted that bureaucratic expectations are prevalent among schools, and that obligations are set by the organization as building blocks of organizational structure. The bureaucratic expectations specify the appropriate behaviour for a specific role and position. While some formal expectations are critical and mandatory to follow, others are flexible. However, the expectations associated with most positions are wide ranging as many roles are not precisely described.

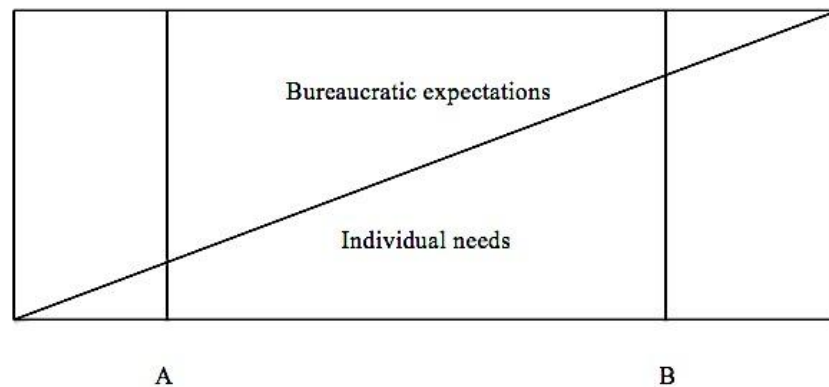
Hoy and Miskel (1991) highlighted,

Is it difficult, if not impossible to define either the role of the student or that of a teacher in the school without specifying the relationship of teacher with the student. Likewise, the role of principal is dependent of its relationship to the roles of teachers and students (Hoy and Miskel, 1991).

Both scholars mentioned that schools as formal organizations have structures composed of bureaucratic expectations and roles, a hierarchy of offices and positions, rules and regulations and specializations. With these characteristics, bureaucratic expectations would define roles that would be combined to form positions, offices and eventually into formal hierarchy of authority according to their relative power and status. In addition, rules and regulations “provide the guide for decision-making and enhance organizational rationality, and labour is divided as individuals specialize in tasks”. In short, behaviours in schools are determined in part by their organizational structure that facilitates and others hinder school functioning. While structure represents the formal dimension of the school social system, the personal aspect of the system is represented

in an individual. In explaining further on bureaucratic expectations, Hoy and Miskel (2013) added,

The ratio of bureaucratic expectations to individual work needs, which at least partly determines behaviour, will vary with the specific type of organizations, the specific job and the specific person involved... As depicted as a general nature of interaction, vertical line A (such as a military organization) represents a hypothetical situation in which the proportion of behaviour controlled by the bureaucratic structure is largely large; line B (such as research organizations) represents the situation in which behaviour is primarily controlled by individual needs. Most schools probably fall between the two extremes. (Hoy & Miskel, 2013)



*Figure 11.* Illustration showing the interaction of bureaucratic and individual elements affecting behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2013)

In a situation where the organizational atmosphere is very bureaucratic, there could be lack of openness, proactive decision-making and collegiality to bring matters to rest. These may lead to other issues concerning teachers themselves, such as in areas of teacher-student relationships. The quality of relationship is generally considered to be impersonal in urban schools. Veenman (1984) highlighted eight perceived problems of beginning teachers from different countries: (a) classroom discipline; (b) motivating

students; (c) dealing with individual differences; (d) assessing students' work; (e) relationships with parents; (f) organization of classwork; (g) insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies; and (h) dealing with problems of individual students. It is notable that most of his findings are related to issues of teacher-student relationships. For teachers, they are subjected to large class sizes, discipline problems, and lack of time for personal interaction with students (Sanders, 1997; Ingersoll, 2013). Moreover, this would result in teachers meeting multiple job demands (Ngang, 2014), and discouraging one-to-one mentoring between teachers and students.

Without the openness of communication, discipline problems could not be traced to the roots as teachers may find it hard to change their approach to fit the students' learning style or behaviour (Carlson, 2005). Subsequently, decision-making becomes harder due to lack of understanding, knowledge and pressing demands for solutions.

Yilmaz (2009) found that teachers who are affected by the environment and behaved custodial in their pupil control ideology have qualities of strict control, enforcement of orders, one-way downward communication, distrusts towards pupils, cruel punishments and taking undisciplined behaviour as personal offences. In his study, he concluded that the more custodial is the pupil control ideology, the more authoritative classroom management styles are observed. Meanwhile, Jong et al. (2014) conducted a study to identify the predictors to pre-service secondary teachers' relationship with their students. Results indicate that while two personality traits such as gender and age are not related to teacher-student relationship in terms of affiliation and influence, significant relationships were found between the different discipline strategies and the teacher-student relationship in terms of influence and affiliation. Thus, teachers-student relationships determine the outcome teachers' influence on students' behaviour and the success of their classroom control strategies.

In another issue, Haberman & Post (1998, p. 96) described urban schools as multi-cultural systems. Urban schools are known as “the battleground of a culture war”, and that traditional societal values are “pitted against street values.” They highlighted schools being multi-cultural systems, and that urban schools must first be effective in resisting street values that portends a life of poverty, poor health and anti-social behaviour.

They mentioned that student’s control the urban school’s agenda by making educators spend most of their time and energy reacting to street value rather than proactively implementing the stated curriculum. As all negative personal and interpersonal behaviours are categorized under the same term, responding to street values is the school’s primary business to maintain a safe environment as a prerequisite for learning.

Other scholars described schools in urban settings as having issues of overcrowding, unsatisfactory facilities and resources, and increasing social alienation (Kelly, 1978). Similarly, urban schools in Malaysia are the melting pot for different traditions, races, religion and culture to interact and integrate within the complex system of society. Teachers are faced with students who came from different backgrounds and the assimilation into the school climate and culture may present teachers with unacceptable behaviours, conflicts and miscommunication between teachers and students. Furthermore, the physical structures of urban schools are prone to wear and tear, vandalism and misuse by students due to acclimatization, conflict of use and increased school population.

In many examples, teaching in an urban school is generally more demanding as compared to rural schools. Abel & Sewell (1999) conducted a study on stress and burnout of teachers in rural and urban secondary school teachers. The results in the study highlighted teachers in urban schools experience significantly more stress than

poor working conditions and poor staff relations than did rural school teachers. In comparisons of similarity, stress from pupil misbehaviour and time pressure was significantly greater than stress from poor working conditions and poor staff relations for both rural and urban school teachers. For differences, poor working conditions and time pressures predicted burnout for rural school teachers while pupil misbehaviour and poor working conditions predicted burnout for urban school teachers.

In addition, classroom management would sometimes require teachers to use personal strategies that have yet to be endorsed in the organization. If situations are stressful or pressing, teachers have to rely on their discernment for decision-making as the link between the problem and solution. Unfortunately, a wrong decision could backfire and jeopardized teachers' professional image. In the past, there were many cases where teachers were confronted with litigation suits from parents due to mismanagement (Tie, 2004). On the other hand, Professional Circular No. 10/2001 (MOEM, 2001c) have directed all teachers to act as disciplinarians, and indirectly as problem solvers and decision-makers. Consequently, drawing the boundary of roles and responsibilities between teachers and other personnel in charge of discipline could be an organizational issue when discipline matters that are complicated and unfamiliar. While different teachers have different coping levels of risk, decision-making process could be inconsistent due to the problem that may be inherent within the decision-maker him/herself. Therefore, the study of personal decision-making is the central focus of the study in to further understand how teachers within a bureaucratic organization (such as the researched private school) behave when confronted with matters of ambiguity and urgency.

In another area, Abel & Sewell (1999) highlighted the problem of poor staff relations in urban schools. Therefore, it is necessary to include this factor as another issue or obstacles in decision-making. Knowingly or unknowingly, a lack of trust and



collegiality can jeopardize the process of decision-making in organizations. Consequently, decision-making takes a costlier process to undergo especially for urgent and important matters. Some teachers may be burdened by lack of experience, resources and skills to handle discipline problems unexpectedly. Without other people's assistance, they may not be aware of the repercussion of their decisions if they are taking matters personally and emotionally.

As this section of writing is concluded, it is necessary to summarize on the issues that concern teachers as decision-makers and the process of decision-making. The factors of bureaucratic structure, standard operational procedures (SOPs) and other environmental aspects of the organization tend to create an impact on teachers perceptions, beliefs and behaviours. Organizational procedures would usually highlight the process of problem solving and dictates the manner in which teachers manage students in their classrooms. The segregation and distribution of tasks and responsibilities serve as an organizational tool to provide the guide for decision-making and enhance organizational rationality as mentioned by Hoy and Miskel (2013). Nevertheless, conflicts between individual needs and bureaucratic expectations could occur in situations where problems are complicated and that demand the satisficing, incremental, garbage can or ethical models of decision-making. This could be added by the political system that exists within the organization to influence and determine the choice of strategies in order to produce the desired outcome.

In aspects of classroom control, teachers are subjected to stress and burnout due to higher teacher-student ratio, multi-cultural student communities and multiple demands on their profession. The consequences of burnout and stress would be compounded if the organization does not have a collegial working environment due to the lack of trust. Above all, all these factors have an influence on the teacher-student relationship that will eventually determine the success of students' academic

achievement and positive reinforcement in their behaviours. Thus, any issues as mentioned above could influence or hamper the quality of decision that teachers make in their process and personal capability as a decision-maker.

## **About Malaysian Private Schools**

### **Background**

At this juncture, the researcher has described and discussed the elements found within the three dimensions pertaining to: (a) the decision-maker; (b) the process of decision-making; and (c) issues related to decision-making. At the juncture, it is a necessary to explore the background and nature of private schools as the larger context of the study. This would enable the reader to gain a better sense of the how private schools operate in Malaysia.

As its name suggests, all private schools are privately funded and controlled by individuals, firms and large corporations rather than by the government. Nevertheless, their license for establishments, operationalization and standardizations are compliant to the Private Education Department (PDE) in the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The PED plays an important role under the Government Transformational Program (GTP 2.0) and the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) - for Education. Within the GTP and NKEA, the PED is responsible for the registration of new private schools and aims to increase the participation of private sectors to provide equity, access and quality to education. Ultimately, the goal of PED is to make Malaysia the centre of educational excellence that offers quality education from pre-schools to post-secondary levels, inclusive of private educational institutions (PEIs) that cover language centres, tuition centres, computer training centres, skills training centres and other enrichment centres.

It is also interesting to take note that international and expatriate schools are placed under the PED.

Historically, private schools have started in the early 1950s to provide an alternative entry for students who were unqualified (or disqualified) from entering public schools due to personal obstacles and reasons. As indicated from the Private Education Department's website (PED, 2014), there are 122 private secondary schools in Malaysia and this figure is charted for a positive growth. Driven by strong economic demands, premium private and higher education providers have invested heavily in setting up luxurious primary, secondary and international schools, with regular participations in the private and international school fairs (PISF, 2014). This is to seize the opportunity to provide better quality of education to premium paying customers, where populations with higher socio-economic status are known to reside in large cities like Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya and Subang Jaya.

In terms of accreditation and quality, each of these schools must undergo inspections and assessments in order to maintain the standard of excellence as private education providers. The renewal of licenses for operators is also subjected to compliance to existing education policies and national education agenda, such as the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB, 2012). Any failure to comply with educational policies would result in penalties, or having their licences (or operating permit) revoked. For Ghani (2014), he described the other features of private schools.

When a school operates a policy of open doors, the achievement of reputation will start when they first opened the doors to the public. Reputation will be identified through the observation and perception of wider stakeholders in education such as students, parents and the community. They want schools to produce successful students who have characteristics of human capital.

Hence, efforts to develop reputed schools become increasingly important and challenging and schools try to develop reputation for excellence to ensure their actions coincide with the requirements of constantly changing environment and such action should be guided through brilliant scientific research (Ghani, 2014, p. 1334).

Generally, private schools can operate on its own organization standard operating procedures (SOPs) in order fulfil both the academic and business objectives. In academic objectives, private schools are expected to deliver better facilities and raising quality of academic results year on year. As with any other business objectives, they must fulfill stakeholders' expectations, parental satisfaction and overall academic optimism among the school communities.

## General Guidelines on Discipline Management

Similar to public schools, private schools have to comply with the discipline guidelines and policies as set out by Private Education Department (PED) under the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. In addition, the book *School Discipline Guide for Headmasters and Teachers* (MOEM, 1988) is used as a general reference for schools to manage discipline related problems. Fundamentally, many of these procedures and guidelines were derived from Malaysia's Education Act 1996 (Malaysia, 1996), Education Act 1961 (Malaysia, 1961) and Education Ordinance 1957 (Malaysia, 1957). In addition, schools are allowed to publish their personalized version of rules and regulations to strengthen and compliment on these existing policies.

In terms of bureaucratic structure, students' discipline management are classified under the section of students' affairs management. Figure 12 is a model that depicts discipline as one of the elements within students' affair management as mentioned by Mok (2008).

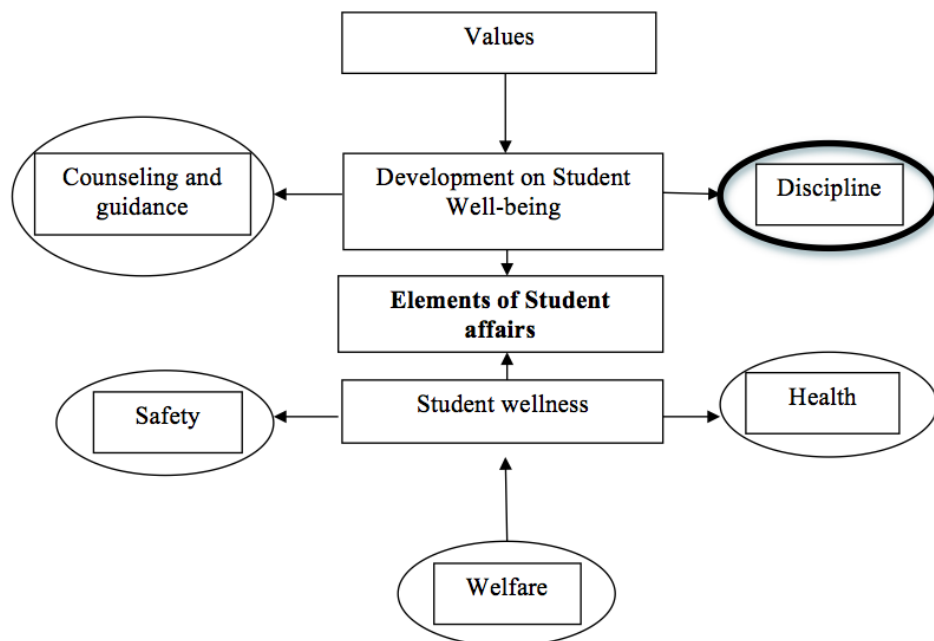


Figure 12. Elements within Students' affair management (Mok, 2008)

In practice, discipline management usually encompass the whole school and its vicinities. Discipline in the classroom usually falls under the responsibility of class or subject teachers, while discipline problem that occur out of the classroom becomes the responsibilities of all teachers in the school. Nevertheless, the Head of Students' Affair and the Head of Discipline are the main personnel in-charge of every matter concerning students' management. In addition, school counsellors are also included in the team to support the psychological and emotional needs of every student.

According to Tie (2008), the Director General of Education usually signs the Professional Circular to carry out directives from the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia. Each circular contain regulations governing public (including private) school management and students' affairs. From time to time, professional circulars reinforce guidelines that "may be broad in scope and comprehensive in nature and are legally binding on all public (including private) schools. However, he mentioned that the MOE provides headmasters some discretionary power to establish their own set of school rules and regulations that are supplementary to the MOE's issued regulations as they "seek to cover situations that MOE has overlooked. "

In the year 1995, a Professional Circular No. 7/1995 (MOEM, 1995) was issued by the MOE to advise teachers to manage discipline problems without mistreating or abusing students unjustly. Six years later, another Professional Circular No. 8/2001 highlighted the increase of serious discipline cases and urged schools to enforce school discipline thoroughly (MOEM, 2001a). Within the same year, Professional Circular No. 10/2001 (MOEM, 2001b) was issued out to instruct teachers to handle classroom discipline problems and to not abdicate their roles by transferring all matters to the Head of Discipline or other teachers-in-charge. As these changing issues unveiled themselves historically, it is noticeable that these directives are concerned with the

increasing trend of serious discipline cases, and that teachers were warned of abdicating their responsibilities and on the other extreme, abusing students inappropriately.

Judging from the two extreme scenarios above, how would teachers improve on their classroom control strategies and discern for a good decision if they were to strike a balance between the two circumstances? As an implication, the three Professional Circulars could end up motivating, confusing or inhibiting teachers for further involvement in solving discipline issues. As parents are stakeholders of schools, the HOD reported that some parents were critical on how teachers disciplined their children, and they were capable to sue the private school for teachers' misconduct or mismanagement. Therefore, it is vital to consider how these scenarios shaped and influenced the behaviors of teachers' involvement in decision-making as stated in the objectives of the study.

In considering who should be the beneficiary of classroom management, teachers' decision-making should foremost benefit the students, followed by the organization and finally the teacher. Hoy and Miskel (2013) have highlighted that conflicts would always persist between individual needs and organizational bureaucratic expectations. For a private education entities, teachers as professionals are working under the bureaucratic structure, while trying to satisfy both educational policies and organizational mission to serve students and parents as their clients. In addition, despite the many strategies of classroom control and methods of decision-making, it is important to be updated with how educators around the world influence and lead students towards better behaviours in the classrooms.

The next section is written to explore on local evidences pertaining to themes and scope related to this study. Similarly for this section, a brief and condensed summary would also be written to highlight on the past researches concerning the

teachers as decision-makers, the process of decision-making and the issues surrounding decision-making.

### **Local Evidences Surrounding the Theme of Research**

The exploration for local evidence were concentrated on keywords such as “discipline management”, “strategies of classroom control”, “classroom control” and “teachers’ decision-making” in Malaysia. As a result, all periodical writings, books and local dissertations in both languages (Malay and English) were organized accordingly to the theme of discussion.

This last section is dedicated to describe the local evidences that are found in the subject of discipline management and decision-making. As a result from synthesis, local evidences are generally divided into four themes as follows:

1. Local evidences concerning students’ discipline problems.
2. Local evidences concerning teachers as decision-makers.
3. Local evidences concerning school climates and leadership on discipline management.
4. Local evidences concerning policies and systems of discipline management.

### **Local evidences concerning students’ discipline problems**

Reports from the Ministry of Education’s Professional Circular have indicated the rise of discipline problems among schools (MOEM, 2001, 2011). Matters pertaining to students’ negative behaviours in schools consist of discipline issues, among few: smoking (Anthony, 2007; Ahmad & Mustafa, 2006), truancy (Rahman, 2004; Yahaya, Hashim, How & Boon, 2007), bullying (Yahya & Ahmad, 2005; Azizi, Halimah & Faizah, 2011), gangsterism (Yahaya, Boon & Buang, 2008) and antisocial behaviours (Rahman, Anuar & Abdul Hamid, 2011; Taat, 2010). The study of cause and effects is



prevalent among local researchers and numerous factors have been linked to these negative behaviours according to Gaik, Abdullah, Elias, and Uli (2010).

In tandem with the rise of juvenile cases, the Ministry of Education have issued stricter guidelines and interceptive programs to curb the problems from escalating. As the threats remain serious, many questions were asked surrounding the issues of how and why juveniles became involved in delinquencies and serious crimes. As a result of numerous references on studies across the nation, it is concluded that negative and aggressive behaviours are linked to personal (Ahmad, Saleha, Jelas, & Seman, 2010) and environmental factors such as peer pressure (Keng et al., 2004), parenting factors, socio-economic constraints (Hanafi, 2008) and deterioration of teacher-student relationships. Consequently, school leaders continue to take discipline matters seriously by encouraging more participation from teachers, parents and counsellors (Ahmad, 2006; Abu, Mahmud, & Ahmad, 2008) in order to rectify the issues from different perspectives.

Studies pertaining to students' negative behaviours may need further revamps in aspects of intervention (Radzi, Salma, Hamzah & Uin, 2011) and evaluation of programs in schools all over Malaysia (Ahmad et al., 2010). By merely uncovering the factors and relationships between cause and effects could perhaps provide more opportunity for education policymakers to suggest and implement more guidelines for change, but may not be strategic enough to treat discipline problems that are unique, specific and inherent within any organization. In the field of education, Hayes (2006) mentioned that case studies are useful to communicate directly with the implementers and initiators of education. Therefore, a case study or action research is needed for further attention by researchers. A case study is the foundational effort to uncover and ascertain problems within the organization exists, where action research works well as the follow up for continuous improvement from individuals within the organization.

## **Local evidences concerning teachers as decision-makers**

As mentioned by Kearney, Plax, Hays, & Ivey (1991), teachers are seldom viewed as the problem as much as they are considered the point of intervention. Ghani and Williams (2014) highlighted that “students expected an effective teaching process involving the following aspects: quality of teaching, teaching methods based on students' level of ability, incentive and teachers' time management.”

The implication from their study is that all types of students crave success and the teacher is one of the factors contributing to this success.

When instituting discipline management programs, teachers must be evaluated and guided as the personnel in charge of ensuring the success of the intervention. Through the review of literatures, there were many studies pertaining to teachers' learning and behaviours in Malaysia. Most of these studies ranged in aspects of teachers' evaluation to supervision and suggestions for improvements (Harun, 2006). Evaluative studies on teachers have concentrated on major issues such as self-efficacy (Murshidi, 2005; Saw, 2007), teacher leadership (Noor& Audryanah, 2007), motivation (Osman, 2009), conflict management (Quah, 2009; Ibrahim et al., 2007) and stress (Cheng, 2002; Samad, Hashim, Moin & Abdullah, 2010). Only a handful of educational studies are concerning personal and organizational decision-making (Buang & Yap, 2012), while pupil control ideology is non-existent.

In addition, many local studies have emerged as a result of generalization on population samples or the preference on the positivist form of research. Such studies involved the deployment of questionnaires across large samples of respondents and analysed inferentially to reveal relationships and differences between the variables concerned. Nevertheless, most of these studies have also called for a contextualized

study and action research in order to look into the depth, applications and detail of the issues concerning personal decision-making (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

In addition, there are calls for action research (Seng, 2005) in schools to serve as an important tool for teachers' reflection, self-improvements and continuous learning as practicing professionals. Chi (2013) mentioned that "critical reflection enhanced teachers' understanding and brought about changes in their awareness of instructional effectiveness and teaching beliefs in their practice."

Nevertheless, there is no case for action research if organizational problems are not ascertain and identified within the individual teacher.

Hayes (2006) highlighted the difference between case studies and actions research,

Case study is often investigating on "someone else" situation whereas action research is about an event or situation which has been established by the researcher for the purpose of enhancing an existing situation. (Hayes, 2006)

In social studies, human behaviour is usually unpredictable, and can only be described in reference to the context and time surrounding them (Flyvbjerg, 2006). A glimpse of reality can serve as a puzzle to contribute to a larger picture, and thus becomes the stepping stones for future related studies. As mentioned by Pettigrew and Woodman (2001), organizational change should be viewed as a continuous process and not as episodic events.

For the researcher, the study of teachers' classroom strategies would be much rewarding if coupled with the knowledge of how they actually apply in their contextualized environments. Preliminary, it would be beneficial to first uncover teachers' patterns of decision-making in a contextualized environment and followed by their extent of personal involvement in decision-making. To uncover teachers' extent of personal involvement requires the researcher to investigate on: (a) their frequency of

transferring discipline cases to other persons-in-charge; (b) internal factors (such as their PCI/TSES scores, experience or roles); (c) how they differentiate between a serious and less serious discipline problems; and (d) what they do in their intervention prior to transfer. These vital questions allow the research to explore classroom control strategies simultaneously with decision-making. In addition, it will explain what and how teachers actually behave in these two areas in a context of a private school.

While studies pertaining to classroom strategies continue to evolve (Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015), much more empirical evidences is needed to explain their extent of personal involvement in decision-making.

### **Local evidences concerning school climates and school leadership**

Numerous studies have also concentrated on assessing school climates (Razak, 2006) and its effectiveness to students' behavioural management (Ali et al., 2009). In essence, the cultivation of a positive school climate is related to principals' leadership styles (Johar, 2011), principal-teacher relationships (Abdullah, Aziz, & Ngang, 2008; Ramli & Hamid, 2006), teacher-student relationships (Arbaa & Razak, 2010; Rufai, 2010) and other socio-demographic factors (Ahmad et al., 2010; Ahmad & Weerakkody, 2011). Other local studies have also incorporated the aspects of instructional and transformational leadership as mentioned by Ghani (2014) and effective leadership communication practices in organizations (Hassan & Ai, 2008).

In Malaysia, principals' perceptions on the quality of discipline management remains positive (Bity Salwana et al., 2010). However, principals need to promote lifelong learning in schools (Ishak, Ghani, & Siraj, 2014), and getting the support from internal and external school communities in order to manage school effectively. (Ibrahim, 2004).

However, there are not enough of studies on teachers' leadership in the classrooms. In essence, there is a lack of understanding on how they rationalize for solution during classroom management. According to Ngang and Sulermutyrean (2015), teachers' extent of involvement in organizational decision-making is low. As a prerequisite of this research, the researcher seeks to identify teachers' patterns of decision-making as an opportunity to explain what goes on within personal involvement prior to transfer.

### **Local evidences concerning policies and systems of discipline management**

Local research have indicated that there is no significant difference in the system of discipline management between rural and urban schools (Ghani, Radzi, Ghavifekr, Kenayatullah, & Muhamad, 2014). The evaluations of teachers and Head of Discipline have also yielded satisfactory results in terms of their teaching competencies and knowledge in discipline management procedures. It is common for most schools adopt the merit-demerit pointing system as a form to reward or penalize students' behaviours (Zainal, Ibrahim, Kasa & Ibrahim, 2007). However, no studies have ever been attempted to explore how other external factors like Standard Operating Procedures and bureaucratic expectations affects teachers' choice of classroom-control strategies. In addition, there are no references of local research to highlight other favourable and unfavourable factors that affect teachers' decision-making. While all schools are supposed to comply with policies, guidelines and procedures by the Ministry of Education, no research has ever been carried out investigate the impact of professional circulars on teachers' behaviours.

As a conclusion on local evidences, the researcher's exploration had outlined some important conclusions as described in all the four types of research findings. First, it is undeniably important to evaluate teachers' state of beliefs and personal practices in classroom decision-making. While teachers' pupil control ideology and self-efficacy

remain the integral part of the dimension of the decision-maker, this case study is carried out to understand the external factors that surround teachers as decision-makers such as the bureaucratic structures, SOPs, parental involvement and policies of discipline management. Wang, Hall & Rahimi (2015) highlighted that when teachers do not feel that they have influence over a discipline situation, they are most likely to contribute the reasons to external factors.

Secondly, issues of decision-making could only be highlighted if teachers are honest about the conditions that are unfavourable to personal decision-making. While many local evidences have indicated positive responses on the current systems of discipline management, there are not many studies pertaining to teachers' concerns and obstacles while implementing the programs, policies and directives from the Ministry of Education. In reality, assessing the level of knowledge and perception do not indicate the actual practice of teachers in the classrooms.

Thirdly, a good school climate and positive teacher-student relationship is vital for changing students' behaviour (Arbaa & Razak, 2010; Rufai, 2010). The influence of principals' leadership style in shaping the school climate has been proven numerous times as having a direct influence on teachers and students. In addition, research evidences have suggested that teachers' are actually ready to involve themselves in school-wide decision-making if encouraged by the principal (Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011). However, the question lies in exploring the extent of teachers' personal involvement in decision-making when confronted with serious discipline problems, or surrounded by unfavourable conditions in the organization.

Another question lies in knowing if teachers are collaborative when it comes to decision-making in a bureaucratic structure. Samad & Shoib (2006) found that secondary school teachers in Kuala Lumpur will be more eager to involve themselves in

collaborative decision-making when principals are seen to be more democratic. According to them, principal's leadership style is seen to be the most important factor that determines teachers' collaborative involvement in school-wide decision-making as compared to other factors such as teacher's own motivation, open communication, personal empowerment from the principal, sense of belonging, teachers' commitment, teachers' trust and school climate.

Saad & Sankaran (2014) and Tang (2003) have also found that principal's factor of encouragement is seen to be the most important factor that determines teachers' collaborative involvement in decision-making. Nevertheless, the focus on teachers' education is urgently needed because principals often require the support and cooperation of teachers in every aspect of school management (Bity Salwana et al., 2010).

### **About the Researched School**

As this juncture, it is notable that this is the first case study in Malaysia that investigates on teachers' classroom control strategies and personal decision-making simultaneously. With the theoretical and conceptual framework, the major task is to investigate on the three key areas of decision-making: (a) decision-maker; (b) process of decision-making; and (c) issues related to decision-making. While studying teachers as decision-makers, the Pupil Control Ideology and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy are incorporated to support the personal profiles of each respondent. Subsequently, the study of the process and issues associated to decision-making would enhance the understanding of how decision-making is applied and practised by teachers in the researched organization. This last section will present the general information about the researched organization in aspects of: (a) Standard Operating Procedures (especially in

areas discipline management); (b) personnel involved in discipline management; (c) inner and outer context of the organization and; (d) their discipline management system.

### **Matters Pertaining to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

The operations and organizational structure of the private school is different as compared to public schools. Such in as case of employment, teachers are viewed as employees of the organization and not considered to as civil servants as in the public schools. Upon entry as a workforce, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are stated together within the employment contract for new teachers to acknowledge and comply with the bureaucratic expectations. Nevertheless, not all SOPs are stated in a detailed nature, for the organization reserves its own discretion to add, delete and modify the contents within as issues and organizational challenges change over time.

In addition to its own SOPs, all teachers must be registered with the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, and be bounded by Teachers' Code of Ethics (INTAN, 1991). According to Tie (2004), Teachers' Code of Ethics outlines teachers' code for conduct in relation to four aspects of relationships: (a) between teachers and students; (b) between teachers; (c) between teachers and parents; and (d) between teachers and societies and nation. Generally, the purpose is to guide teachers towards proper conduct and safeguarding the professional image as educators.

Generally, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of this school were established to operationalize organizational objectives through processes, regulations and even educational policies. As a participant observer, the researcher is aware that the organizational SOPs exist within the employment contract, minutes of meetings, or any other official instructions signed by the management. In practice, emails can also serve as official instructions for teachers to comply. To produce SOPs, the school administrators would usually look at organizational problems first. Thereafter,



procedures are designed and endorsed through top-down consensus before they eventually be converted into standard organizational policies. Standards can be described as “benchmark of performance” while procedures suggests that these performance, approaches or solutions should be consistent and predictable as situations or problems re-occur in the future.

### ***Purpose of SOPs in Discipline Management.***

As the child spends most of his days in school, teachers as professionals cannot avoid being the “parent to the child” or *in loco parentis* (Tie, 2002). Therefore, classroom management is important to ensure that teaching and learning can be carried out smoothly and students’ behaviour can change as result of positive intervention from teachers. Lewis (1999) mentioned that while classroom management is concerned with the provision of quality instruction, discipline management is generally represented as what teachers do in response to students’ behaviours.

In managing discipline problems, SOPs ensure the objectives and implementation of classroom discipline is met in a series of ethical processes and best practices for the organization. Over time, information on these processes and practices are embedded into the school culture to pass on to novice teachers or new staffs as they enter into the organization. In addition, teachers rely on SOPs for decision-making if similar problems repeat and they do not have to work on the problem from scratch (Verma, 2014). Just like the garbage can model of decision-making, SOPs attempts to match problems with solutions in an ambiguous and challenging environment. Through time and changing events, SOPs continue to be improved while some have to be discarded.

There are many other aspects and purposes of implementing Standard Operating Procedures to guide teachers’ behaviour in the organization. In essence, SOPs for

teachers are vital for communication purposes and promote consistency in personal behaviour. As for the subject of discipline management, the significance of implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) is largely contributed to the benefits of having a proper guide and clearer management system in the school and protecting the organization's interest from *vicarious liabilities*.

Tie (2002) explained the term *vicarious liability* as to refer to a situation when the organization is liable on the negligence of its employee when carrying out their professional duties. As consequence, litigation suits can potentially occur between parents and the school, particularly if teachers have failed to discipline students appropriately. The following reasons support the purpose of SOPs in discipline management:

1. To improve efficiency towards a clever use of the school's economical and physical resources
2. To maintain consistency and reliability in the service rendered to stakeholders of the organization; particularly for shareholders, communities, parents and students.
3. To minimize errors in areas of teaching, learning and other forms of students' activities that includes co-curricular activities and school-wide events.
4. As a decision-making and conflict management tool towards a healthy and safe environment for all school communities. To some extent, SOPs are impersonal (or unemotional) and rational-focused.
5. As a protection of teachers and the organization in areas of potential liability and personnel errors.

6. As the first reference point to any investigation on disputes, conflicts and confusion. Corrections and personal changes are necessary for personnel who had failed to comply with SOPs, being naive or ignorant about the latest organizational development.

Inevitably, the threats of litigation from parents (or guardians) remains real in areas where SOPs have failed to protect the interests of shareholders, school leaders and teachers.

### ***Personnel in Discipline Management.***

Similar to public schools, there is an appointment of the Head of Discipline (HOD) in the researched private school. He is given extra duties apart of their normal teaching periods to concentrate on student supervision and problem solving. In addition, he/she is empowered by the principal to execute punishments on students such as caning, suspension or expulsion. The HOD is responsible in leading, coordinating and supervising all teachers with regards to discipline management in the school. Two most important roles are to remain answerable on discipline cases by communicating with principal and parents, and ensuring school environment is always conducive for teaching, learning and safety of school communities.

### **Inner and Outer Context of the Researched Organization**

As research procedures are carried out in the private secondary school, the exploration, analyses and description of an organization must be contextualized to the issues, process and context that formed the integral part of this research. To reiterate, a private school has the characteristics of a corporate entity, but functions like a public school to achieve the national education agenda like to the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2015 (MEP, 2012).

To achieve the overall purpose and objectives of this study, seven research questions were formulated to uncover all the key elements that are parallel to Pettigrew (1999) conceptual framework. Historically, this school has been established since year 2006 and several excellence awards and accreditation above industry average. It is beneficial for the reader to familiarize and relate with the setting of the school as this case study uncovers more its own unique and cultural features.

### ***Inner Context.***

#### ***Vision and mission of the researched school.***

Since establishment, the school envisioned itself to be a role model among private schools to use technologies mainly for teaching and learning. As the name of ‘smart school’ suggests, its mission is to adopt technology and apply innovative teaching-learning practices to nurture students in an enriched learning environment. Its establishment and philosophy assumes that students will learn at their best through problem solving, collaboration and seeking for answers, and eventually come to understand their world around them. Thus, the school recognizes the need to build on students’ abilities, interests, experiences and background knowledge. In addition, they believe that their children must be equipped with relevant knowledge and positive attitudes for life in the global community.

#### ***Organizational Structure.***

By comparison, Malaysian school’s bureaucratic organization is centralized with its administrative structures divided into four hierarchy levels; The Ministry of Education (MOE), the State Education Department (SED), the District Education Office (DEO) and schools. A typical organization chart among Malaysian schools is shown in Figure 13.

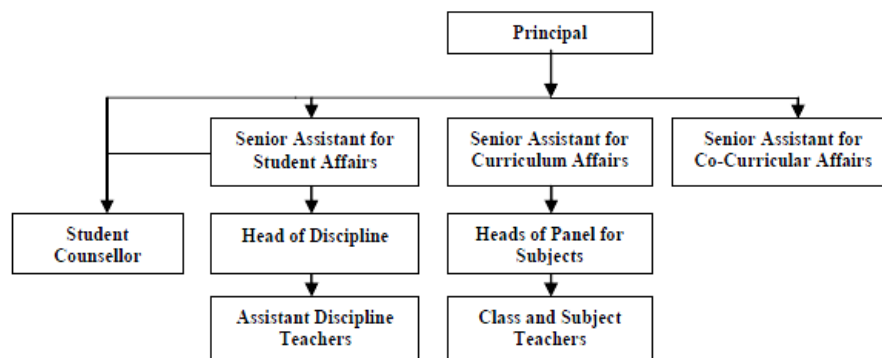


Figure 12. General organization chart for public schools in Malaysia

Uniquely, the organizational chart for the researched school does not name any Senior Assistants of Student Affairs, Curriculum Affairs and Co-Curricular Affairs. Instead, they are referred as Heads of Department. Figure 14 shows the school's organizational structure as compared to Figure 13. Due to the nature of a private school, the organization chart shows the inclusion of the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, the Human Resource Department and the Finance Department that operates like a private corporation. Another unique aspect includes a team of licensed counsellors who are outsourced as vendors and contracted to counsel both students and employees.

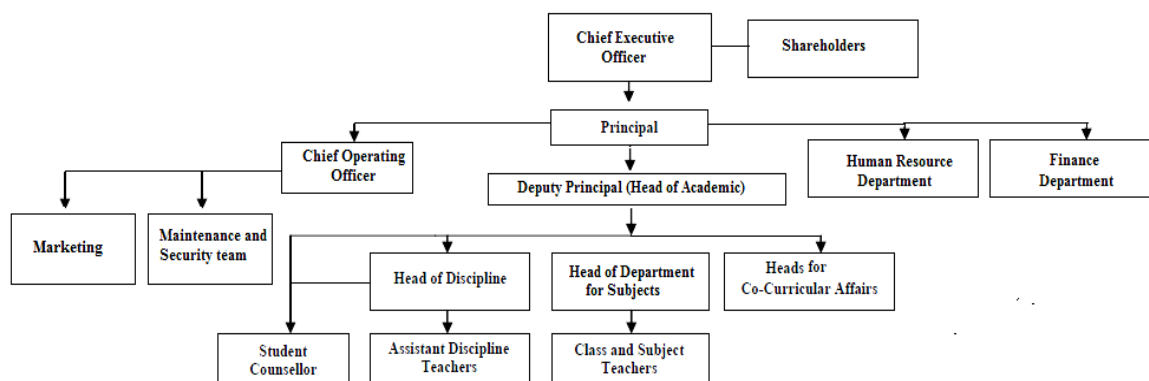


Figure 14. The organization chart of the researched school

### ***School Leadership.***

In managing the school's daily affair, the principal is assisted by the school's management team. It is comprised of the Deputy Principal (also plays the role as the Head of Academic), the operations manager, the marketing and human resource team and the rest of the heads within the academic team. For non-academic staffs, they consist of a team that oversees finance, building facilities, human resource, marketing and operations. In general, they support the school in achieving the operational and business objectives of the school.

### ***Teachers.***

At the time of research, there were 60 teachers in the secondary school alone. New teachers must initially be contracted for six months before conversion to permanent staff. Every teacher is evaluated regularly through direct supervision, peer observations, performance appraisals and other significant contributions beyond their teaching roles. Because the school promotes intellectual and professional development of teachers, education fee discounts are granted to teachers who opt to take up postgraduate studies at the university level within the education group.

### ***Physical structures and a changing school.***

At the time of research, the school consists of the international school block and the national school block. For the national school block alone, it housed the primary and secondary school. Historically, the school was established in 2006 with each block housing the primary and secondary independently. The top floors of the primary and secondary blocks were left unoccupied for many years because students' enrolment was low during the initial years. For the secondary school alone, only two out of the four floors were occupied with students. Because of the extra empty floors, it became a favourite hideout for students to involve with discipline problems such as smoking, loitering and class truancy at the hidden and unsupervised corners of the school.

The international school started in September 2012 by occupying the primary school block and resulted in a change of school climate. It was during the time of research that the top two floors in the secondary school were renovated to accommodate the migration of secondary students, while the primary students replaced the first two lower floors. Other than the spacious floors and classrooms, the school boasts of its Olympic-sized swimming pool, a large field for all athletics events that bears the contemporary concept of a futuristic school.

In terms of the use of technologies, the school installed electronic smart boards and classroom projectors in each classroom. In addition, high-end computers were provided for teachers to carry out tasks conveniently, and for students to learn in the computer labs. Technologically, teaching and learning are supported with Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). In aspects of surveillance, there are not many surveillance cameras around the school. Certain hidden corridors and ramps remained blocked from regular supervision and monitoring. To overcome the problem, the school employs security guards who regularly walk around to monitor the school premise. To a certain extent, their role is to ensure that students safe and secure within the school compound. Occasionally, they would be asked to provide proofs of any discipline problems from the close circuit camera video (CCTV) recording if requested by the Discipline Board.

### ***School Climate and Culture.***

In aspects of school culture, the school is described to be multicultural and highly populated since the combination and inclusion of the international school. On racial diversity, the school consists of a mixed population of Malays, followed by Chinese, Indians and other nationalities. For integration and assimilation purposes, the school emphasizes on respecting and appreciating other races, cultures and nationalities.

Ultimately, the school must comply with the governance of the MOE to play its part in contributing to nation building. During major festival celebrations in Malaysia, all school communities are encouraged to wear cultural outfits and showcase elements that would reflect on their identities and culture.

Officially, the use of English language is encouraged in the school for all official events. In addition, there are plenty of co-curricular activities throughout the year. Students performed excellently in areas of shooting, bowling, netball and athletics. Interestingly, the number of students' involvement in co-curricular activities (CCA) is high due to the inclusion of the session into the class timetable. To explain further, private schools are usually longer than public schools due to the incorporation of other subjects such as music, swimming and CCA. Therefore, students are deliberately kept in school to attend CCA. In terms of benefits, the exposure to different CCA programs and activities creates more opportunities for students to explore and sharpen their own talents. Eventually, students would develop their personalities holistically.

#### ***Students and class compositions.***

At the time of research, there are approximately 520 students in the academic year of 2011. Due to numerous open days, the number of students' enrolment increased in the following years of 2012 and 2013. Most of the students came from affluent families or high socio-economic backgrounds. There are five classes of lower secondary (Form 1-3) with each class accommodating an average of 26 students. A classroom can basically fit a maximum of 29 students, while banding system is practiced for bright students for only lower secondary levels. As a result, the first two classes of each level are also known as accelerated class. For the remaining classes, teachers would have to be more flexible and resourceful to modify their pedagogy skills to suit different learning abilities of students.



In other words, banding for lower secondary is catered strategically to assist students to overcome their learning obstacles. Interestingly, teachers who are assigned to teach in these classes are usually experienced as they are expected to deal with more classroom behavioural problems as compared to the accelerated classes. On the other hand, higher secondary school (Form 4 and 5) is divided into the Science streams and Arts streams. Each class can accommodate up to 25 students and there is no banding into any accelerated class. However, most students have been segregated based on their past performance in *Penilaian Menengah Rendah* (PMR) assessments.

### ***Outer Context.***

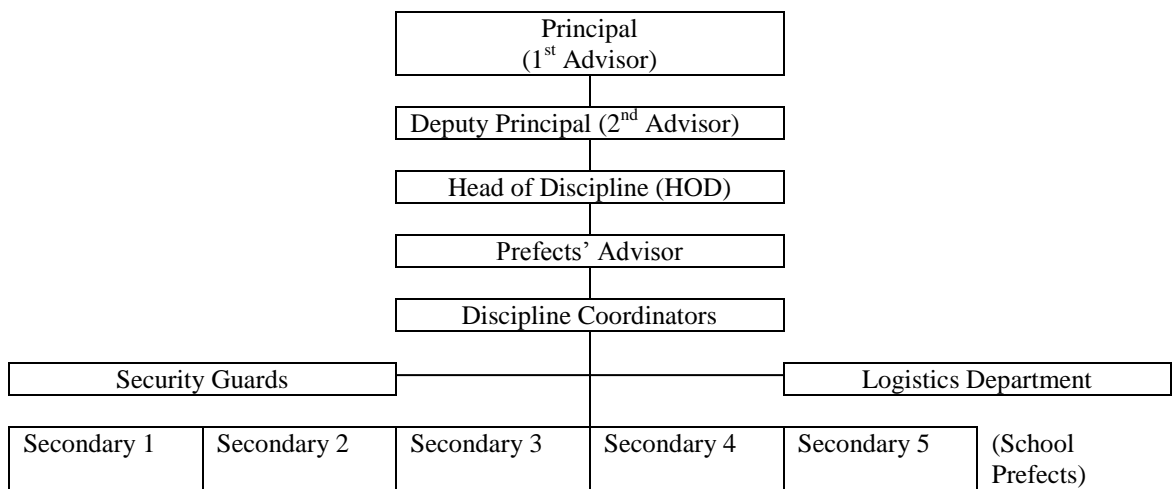
#### ***Parental involvement.***

The school has its own Parents Teachers Association (PTA) that is actively concerned with the development of the organization. As mentioned earlier, most of the parents are affluent and highly educated. For any school-wide events that require fundraising or sponsorships, there is never short of monetary contributions or physical volunteerism. Basically, the PTA becomes the platform for parents to highlight their concerns towards school-related issues, including complains and issues on school policies and management. In addition, the 'meet the parents' day on students' report card are carried out twice a year. As a corporate etiquette, both the principal and teachers are expected to attend professionally to their questions, requests and suggestions. As parents are also clients of the organization, all inputs regardless of positive or negative communicated has to be dealt with fairness and tactfulness. In aspects of discipline management, the HOD reported of seeing parents having critical views on how their children were disciplined by teachers, inclusive of conflicts with parents when he had to execute corporal punishments on. Clearly, such scenario

describes the extent of parental involvement in the researched private school as a premium paying customer.

### **Discipline Management System in the Researched Organization**

In the school, the Head of Discipline (HOD) is the main personnel to oversee all matters pertaining to discipline. Figure 15 is the sample of the organization chart under discipline management.



*Figure 15. Organization chart for discipline management*

As shown in the figure above, the Prefect’s Advisor and Discipline Coordinators would have to assist the HOD in his daily tasks of overseeing the school. These personnel are also referred to as discipline committees. In addition, each level in the secondary school has two Discipline Coordinators. For minor discipline problems, the HOD is empowered by the principal to take actions personally and immediately. On a weekly basis, he needs to report to the principal or consult her for advice on the discipline cases that occur in the school. For serious discipline problems, decision-making would usually be handed over to the principal, but the HOD must first investigate thoroughly in order to produce facts and evidences to the principal. Overall, the HOD has to be accountable to whatever circumstance that occurs in discipline management. These

circumstances include all other decisions and actions taken by him and other teachers when confronted with discipline problems. Table 1 is a depicted directly from the school's SOP on the roles and responsibilities of discipline teachers.

Table 1  
*Roles and Responsibilities of Discipline Teachers*

Role of Discipline Teachers	Ability to remain calm at all situations Be firm and fair Well respected by school community Able to lead students No physical contact with students Adopt positive approach at all times Perform duties to the fullest Able to advise students and colleagues Control and maintain good discipline throughout Ability to remain calm at all situations
Duties	Code of conduct-To be read and fully understood Patrolling-Before, during and after school-contact time/lunch/break time Discipline briefing-rules and regulations-when needed Spot checks-once a month

Fundamentally, the school's model of discipline management is mirrored from the Ministry of Education's discipline guidebooks (MOEM, 1988) and Teachers' Code of Ethics (INTAN, 1991). Preferentially, the school adopts the Merit-Demerit System (MDS) to reward and penalize students' behaviours. As highlighted in the literature review, many schools have adopted this system due to its effectiveness to emphasize on positive behaviour. MDS is used to quantify behaviour on personal score so that students would learn to express positive behaviour while simultaneously suppressing their intentions to misbehave. For the school, there are four objectives in which MDS is trying to achieve: (a) to nurture good ethics among the students; (b) to create conducive and effective learning environment; and (c) as a model to teach positive behaviours to students. Good behaviours are rewarded with positive grades, while bad behaviours are rewarded with a negative grade. In essence, all students' conduct are supervised and directed towards complying with the school's rule and regulations. As a result, the more

serious or the higher is the frequency of the delinquency, the lesser points the students would end up with by the end of the school term. Table 2 and Table 3 depict two sections in the SOPs where quality of behaviour is appraised and demeaned for all students (inclusive of those who held positions in the school) as they are measured by points.

Table 2  
*Merit Points for Positive Behaviours in the Classroom*

	Criteria	Merit Points
✓ For Students	Homework/Projects/Assignments	+4 (Maximum merit points)
✓ For Class monitors		
✓ Assistance Class monitors	-All completed homework submitted on time	
✓ Library Prefects	-Handwriting	
✓ School Prefects	-Highest mark or score	
	-Good work	
	-Participation	
	Discussion/Presentation/Debate	+4 (Maximum merit points)
	-Taking part in discussion/presentation/debate during lessons in the classroom	
	Attitude	+4 (Maximum merit points)
	-Responsible	
	-Show initiative	
	-Caring	
	-Serious	
	-Punctual	
	-Good-manners	
	-Smart Attire	
	Contribution to the class/Prefects' Board/School	+4 (Maximum merit points)
	-Prepared by duty roster	
	-Clean the classroom	
	-Carry out duties	

In terms of decision-making, discipline teachers, subject teachers or school staffs are reminded to refer to the SOPs on how much merit or demerit points should be given to students. If a discipline problem is not found in list of discipline problems, teachers are to discern and decide on the best outcome on the students.

Nevertheless, they are not advised to act personally on serious discipline problems if they do not know their rights and professional code of conduct. Table 3 shows the demerit points from the less serious to the most serious discipline problems respectively. The classification of items between a serious discipline problem as compared to a less discipline problem are listed accordingly by the school management as an important guide for teachers to learn to distinguish in aspects of preparation (or even confrontation). Interestingly, the researcher would be exploring on how respondents' characterize serious/less serious discipline problems by features and circumstances, rather than the types of discipline problems.

**Table 3**  
*Demerit Points for Negative Behaviours in the Classroom*

Part A-Behavior in Classroom		
No.	Classification	Demerit Points
1.	Disrespectful to teacher	-4
2.	Disturb and interrupt teacher's lesson intentionally	-4
3.	Not completing homework/assignments	-2
4.	Repeat minor offences	-4
5.	Using foul language	-2
6.	Eat/Drink	-2
7.	Use mobile phone	-4 & confiscation
8.	Leave class without permission	-2
9.	Late for lesson without valid reason	-2
10.	Stayed in class during breaks/lunch	-1
11.	Play truant	-3
12.	Litter	-2
13.	Not switching off lights/air-conditioning when leaving the classroom	-1
14.	Use laptop without permissions/valid reasons	-4 & confiscation
15.	Bringing inappropriate items (electronic games/sharp objects)	-4 & confiscation
16.	Play electronic games or hand phones without permission	-4 & confiscation
17.	Indecent	-3
18.	Not carrying out classroom duties	-3
19.	Late for class	-2
20.	Rowdy	-2
21.	Insubordination	-2
22.	Talk during teachers' lessons	-2
23.	Vandalize class property	-2
24.	Not observing dress code during CCA/Sports practice	-2
25.	Defiant	-2
Part B-Misconduct outside classroom		
1.	Rude and disrespectful to school teachers/prefects	-4
2.	Use foul/obscene language	-4
3.	Use mobile phones within school premise	-4 & confiscation
4.	Play electronic games or communication devices	-4 & confiscation
5.	Eat and drink out of the school designated place	-4
6.	Leave class without permission	-4
7.	Late to school assembly without valid reason	-4
8.	Play truant during assembly	-4
9.	Stayed in class during breaks/lunch time without prior permission	-4
10.	Absent from lesson of class without valid reasons	-4
11.	Use laptop without permission	-4 & confiscation
12.	Littering	-4
13.	Loiter during classroom lessons	-4
14.	Absent from class without valid reasons/Class truancy	-4
15.	Use personal vehicle out of permissible zone	-4
16.	Not wearing school uniform properly	-4
17.	Harsh and rough to others	-4

18.	Wear jewelry /accessories that are not permissible	-4 & confiscation
19.	Waste water and electricity intentionally	-4
20.	Play games during IT lessons	-4
21.	Use school computer without permission	-4
22.	Imitate certain groups through unacceptable fashion (long hair/uniform alterations etc.)	-4
23.	Unkempt (beard, moustache)	-4
24.	Dye hair/streaking	-4 & sent home
25.	Long fingernails	-4
26.	Colorful nail polish	-4
27.	Wear colored contact lenses	-4
28.	Trespass forbidden areas: staffroom, unauthorized place	-4
29.	Other offence similar under this category	-4
Part C-Misconduct		
1.	Repeat misconduct from Part B	-8
2.	Leave school without permission	-8
3.	Cheat, lie, copy in exams and tests	-8
4.	Copy texts, exercise, coursework, assignments or projects of other students.	-8
5.	Forge parents' signature in report cards/reply slips/etc.	-8
6.	Play truant during school's event/function/ceremony	-8
7.	Disrespect towards school flag/official emblem	-8
8.	Portray unacceptable fashion (punk/Mohawk/skinhead/bald)	-8
9.	Vandalizing school property	-8
10.	Removed school property/equipment without valid reason	-8
11.	Invite visitors to classroom/school premise without permission	-8
12.	Brought 'Non-halal' food to school	-8
13.	Recording others without permission	-8
14.	Play card games without permission	-8
15.	Use correction liquid	-8
16.	Other offence similar under this category	-8
Part D-Misconduct		
1.	Repeat misconduct from Part C	-16
2.	Steal/rob valuables from others	-16
3.	Access unpleasant websites	-16
4.	Gamble or betting	-16
5.	Damage school property of the school or other people's belonging	-16
6.	Trespass into restricted areas	-16
7.	Absent without reason for three consecutive days	-16
8.	Writing and drawing obscene symbols	-16
9.	Other offence similar under this category	-16
Part E-Misconduct		
1.	Repeat misconduct from Part D	-32
2.	Possess, abuse or distribute drugs	-32
3.	Possess, use or distribute alcohol	-32
4.	Possess, use or distribute fire-crackers/flammable materials	-32
5.	Possess, drink or distribute intoxicating/hallucinating substances	-32
6.	Cause/involved in gang fights	-32
7.	Violent	-32
8.	Indecent and lewd acts	-32
9.	Bully, abuse and intimidate others	-32
10.	Fight, threaten, challenge, hit, extort or injure others	-32
11.	Peep on others indecently	-32
12.	Possess explosive materials	-32
13.	Possess and smoke cigarettes	-32
14.	Possess dangerous weapons/sharp objects	-32
15.	Involve in secret societies/triads/illegal organizations	-32
16.	Involve in illegal gatherings	-32
17.	Indecent physical contact with others (hug/kiss/embrace etc.)	-32
18.	Print, display, publish, distribute and possess pornographic materials	-32
19.	Other offence similar under this category	-32

In terms of practice of MDS, every student is given 100 marks as the ceiling at the start of the year's term. Each class is given a record book with specific columns for subject teachers to identify, evaluate and decide on the points should students misbehaved in the classrooms. In terms of implementation, some teachers were not familiar with the MDS initially. However, they were occasionally briefed during teachers' meetings on how to apply the system effectively.

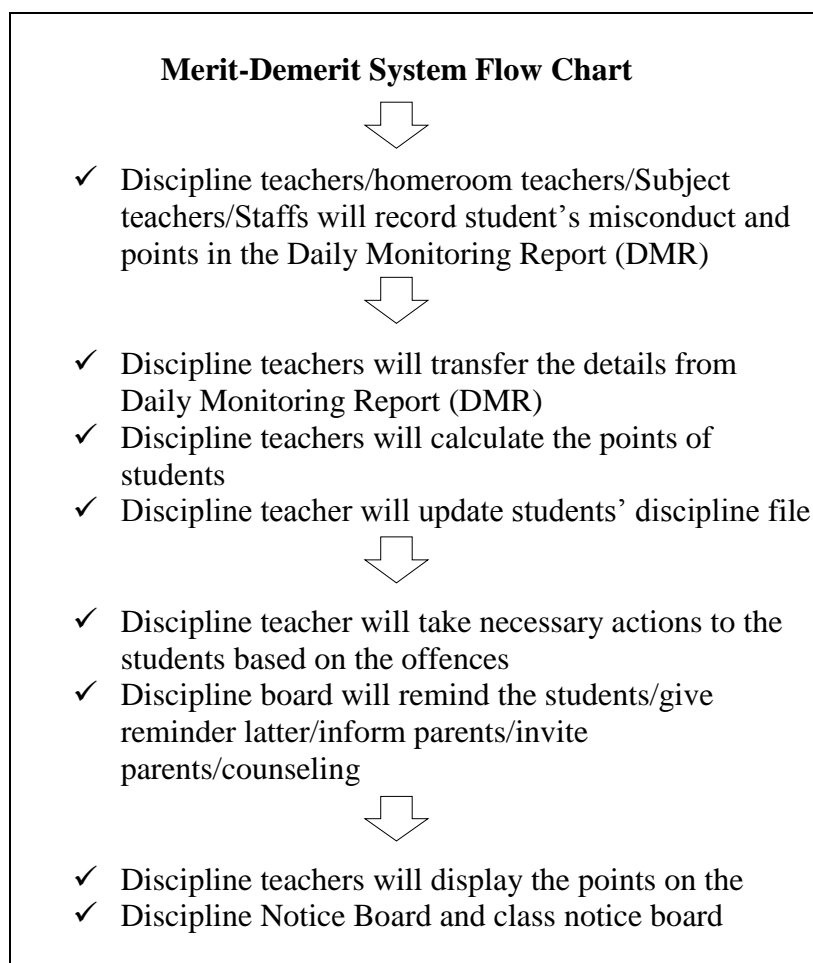
In essence, the HOD wanted teachers to be committed in ensuring the success resulting from the implementation of the MDS. Nevertheless, there is no method to indicate teachers' personal strategies and level of commitment. Obviously, the school's discipline report only denotes the nature of discipline cases that have already occurred in the classrooms and how many points were added or subtracted on students. From this case study, respondents highlighted pre-existing work culture as an obstacle to decision-making. As reported, some teachers were reluctant to involve themselves in achieving organizational tasks that are not directly related to their roles.

On the contrary, teachers who are highly compliant and afraid of management pressures are prone to transfer all kinds of discipline problems to the HOD, regardless if the cases are minor and already been listed in the demerit table for guidance.

According to the HOD, the problem persisted because there were no institutional programs to guide teachers towards competency in personal decision-making due to the intensity of academic schedule of teaching and managing students' activities. For organizational learning, this case study is a preliminary effort to understand the problem thoroughly and ultimately train, manage and reduce the frequency transfer of trivial discipline cases unnecessarily.

Although SOPs are standards and impersonal, it is best be accompanied with organizational learning so that teachers can understand the rationale and be committed

towards their implementations. Figure 16 is a summary of the SOPs outlined when implementing the MDS in the school.



*Figure 16. Standard Operating Procedures for MDS*

On a daily basis, the class monitor would keep the book (known as the Daily Monitoring Report, DMR) and return it to the Homeroom Teachers (HRTs) as a summary for the day. At the end of every month, the HRTs would summarize and inform the discipline coordinators on the state of students in their classrooms. Thus, the Head of Discipline (HOD) would eventually compile a general report to the principal to inform, improve or transfer the student for further counselling or to meet the principal directly. Furthermore, the points obtained by the students will be displayed on the class notice board on the first week of the month to motivate students toward continuous self-improvements. For serious discipline matters that demand urgency, the HOD would



take charge on the investigations with the help of teachers and subsequently inform the principal for further actions or decision-making. Nevertheless, the Discipline Board would have to give initial warnings to students who have collected 10 demerit points and above. Table 4 is a sample of a page found in the DMR book to highlight the areas of concern for teachers to control students in their classrooms.

Table 4  
*Sample Page Taken from the Daily Monitoring Report (DMR) Book*

Daily monitoring								
Class :			Homeroom teacher:		Date:	Day:		Remarks
Period	Name of teacher	Subject	Attendance	Absentee(s)	Latecomer (s)	Classroom		
						CL	FC	
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								
10.								
11.								
12.								

CL=Classroom/FC=Facility room

As mentioned earlier in the problem statement, it was not known on the extent of teachers' personal involvement and commitment in decision-making. Most of the content from the DMR only indicated the name of students, the types of discipline problem caused by them and the marks to be deducted. How teachers in the classroom evaluate the cause of the problem, looked for evidences to support their justification and also differentiating the severity of the problem were not investigated either. Expectedly, discipline management lies in the responsibilities of the few even though all teachers are supposed to be disciplinarians. Thus, SOPs were tailored to provide specific guidelines for discipline committees but not in detail for general teachers in the classrooms. Figure 17 is a section in the SOPs that highlights the disciplinary actions to be taken by the discipline committees in terms of the result of demerit points and the

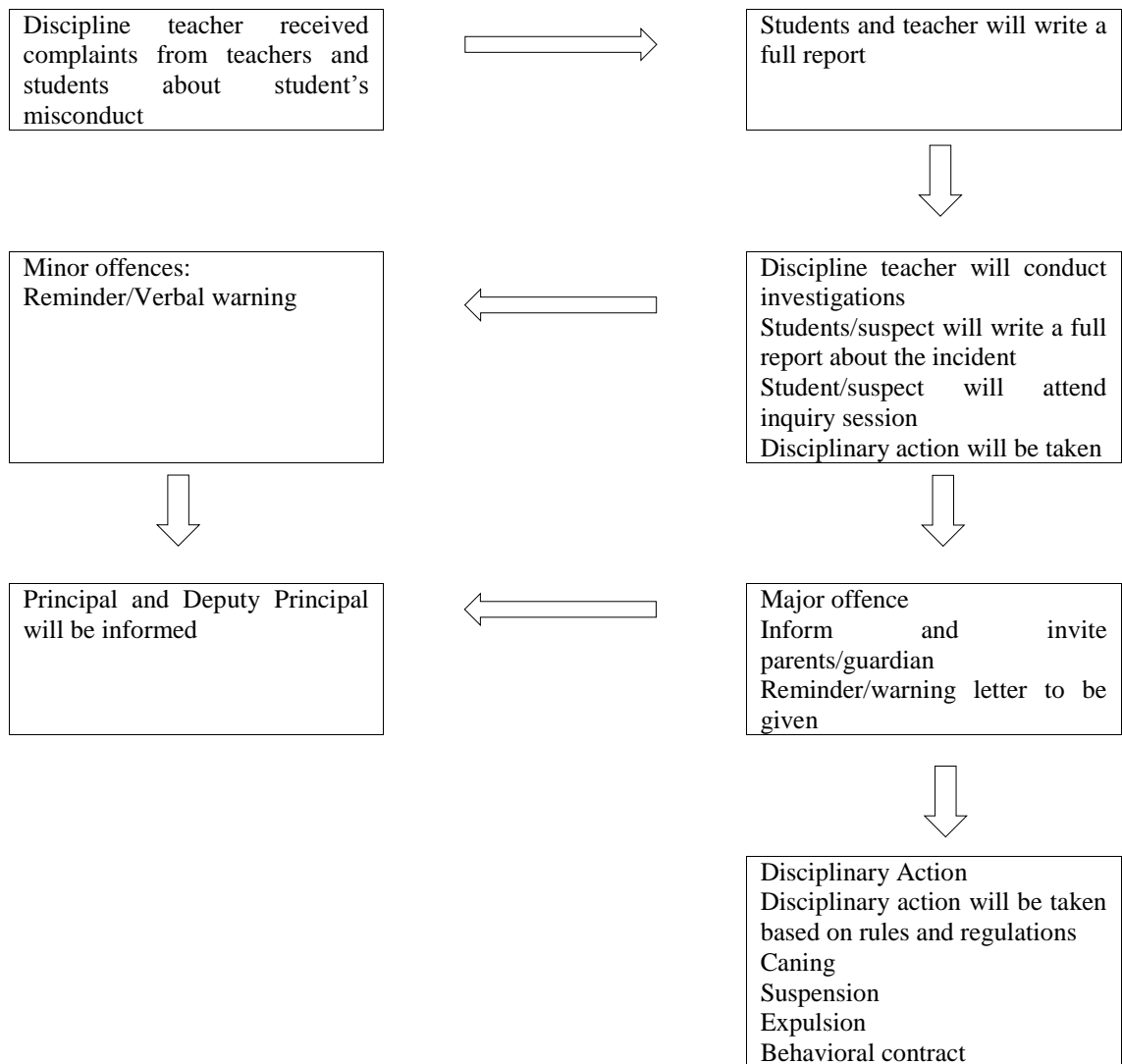
type of actions. When referring to discipline committees, it only incorporates the Head of Discipline, the Prefect’s Advisor and all the Discipline Coordinators.

<b>Disciplinary Actions</b>	
Discipline Board will take necessary actions against students based on their accumulated misconduct and demerit points.	
Table A-Disciplinary Actions	
Demerit Points	Disciplinary Action
5-9	Inform student+verbal warning
10-15	Inform parents+verbal warning+counseling +remedial action
16-30	Inform parents+1 <sup>st</sup> reminder letter+counseling+remedial action
31-40	Invite parents to school+suspension from school for 4 days+ 2 <sup>nd</sup> reminder letter+ counseling+remedial action
41-49	Invite parents to school+suspension for 7 days+Last warning letter+counseling+remedial action
Above 50	Expulsion from school

*Figure 17.* Disciplinary actions for students as a result of demerit points

Notably, discipline teachers would have to put in a lot of effort to conduct investigations and eventually produce a written report. In addition, students have to write their confession report if they have been caught with evidence on their wrongdoings. The process to deal with a single discipline problem is notably tedious and cumbersome especially when discipline teachers are also subject teachers themselves. Most often, they have to sacrifice their precious teaching time to conduct investigations because of the important roles they played. Unlike public schools, discipline teachers in this private school have the same number of teaching hours with other non-discipline teachers. Inevitably, precious teaching time is wasted when dealing with complicated situations, or when seeing parents to communicate the situation concerning their children. Figure 18 is one of the SOPs (or flow chart) for discipline committees to intervene when they first receive complaints from teachers or students.

### Discipline Cases and Investigation Flowchart



*Figure 18.* Flow chart for discipline intervention

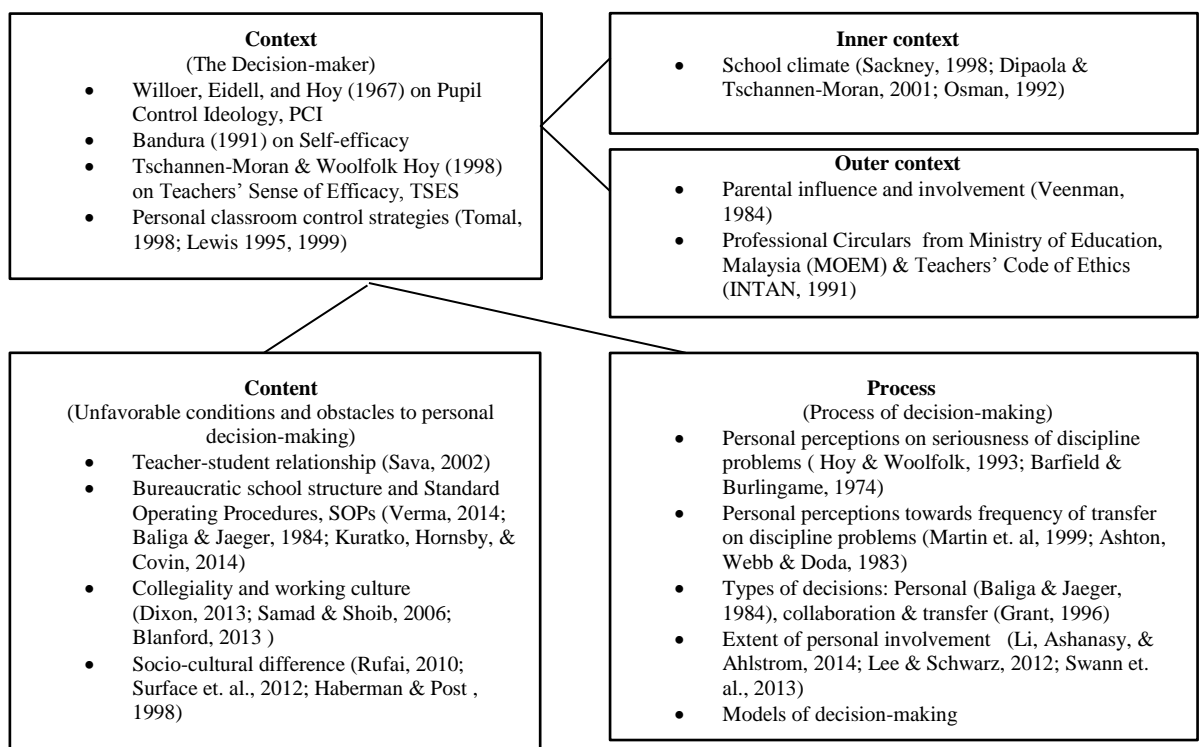
Evidently, the school's SOPs have highlighted that serious discipline problems (or major offences) are to be punished accordingly by caning, expulsion, suspension or signing of a behavioural contract. In addition, Figure 19 is the standard form (referred as pre-inquiry report) used by students and teachers to report to the school's discipline committee after they have conducted their investigations.

<b>Record of Complainant</b>			
Date of incident :		Time of incident:	
Name of complainant:		Place of incident:	
Name of students involved			
Name	Class	Name	Class
Descriptions of incident :			
Name of complainant :			
Signature :			
Date :			
Findings from investigations			
Recommendations			
	Case is dismissed because of insufficient evidence(s)		
	Facts clearly proved and direct to student's involvement		
Name of teacher			
Signature			
Date			
<b>Pre-inquiry report on discipline case</b>			
The pre-inquiry is carried out based on:			

*Figure 19. Pre-inquiry report*

## Summary

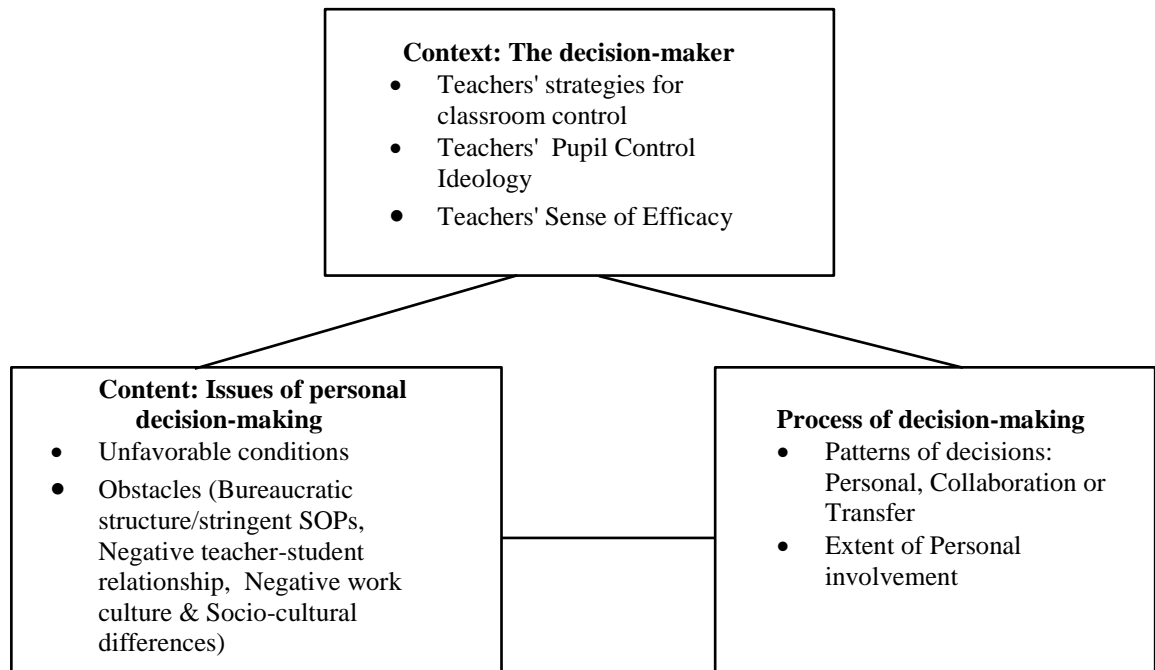
Throughout the course of this chapter, the researcher has reviewed literatures that are related to the study of the decision-maker, decision-making process and issues of decision-making in discipline management. As shown in Figure 20, the theoretical framework summarizes the scope of study that has been covered in this chapter. Parallel to Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework, every element within the key areas of context, content and process has been explored and expanded for the reader to understand and relate between the problem statements and the purpose of the study.



*Figure 20.* Theoretical framework highlighting the dimensions of context, content and process associated with the theme and scope of research

To recap, the first and second section of this chapter have introduced Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework in studying organizational behaviour and change. For this case study, the sequence of research will start with the decision-maker, the process of decision-making and followed by the issues associated to personal decision-making. Figure 21 shows the conceptual framework to be used in this case study.

It highlights all the key elements under investigation within each dimension of the decision-maker, process and obstacles.



*Figure 21.* Conceptual framework highlighting elements under investigations in each dimension of context, content and process of decision-making

The third section of this chapter concentrated on teachers as decision-makers and their strategies for classroom control. Internal factors (such as teachers' *Pupil Control Ideology*, *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy*) were explored together with other factors to explain teachers' behaviours in the classroom management. Pupil Control Ideology was first coined by Willower, Eidell and Hoy (1967) as part of their effort to describe how teachers perceive and interpret their teacher-student relationship in the classroom. As for the study of self-efficacy, much was contributed by Bandura (1977) in his Social Cognitive Theory and Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001). Both humanistic and high self-efficacy beliefs have been associated with better instructional practices, better classroom climate, lesser stress and burnout and better commitment in the profession.

In addition, pupil control ideology and self-efficacy are indications to teachers' effectiveness in classroom management. However, they were merely used to support the profile of respondents in this case study.

The fourth section of this chapter was written to review on the process of decision-making. To understand organizational decision-making thoroughly, this section covered the models of normative and descriptive decision-making. Normative (or prescriptive) decision-making models are concerned with *what* and *when* (rather than *how*), while descriptive models are concerned with *how* decision should be undertaken while incorporating both normative and prescriptive models. Seven normative decision-making models were presented in this chapter, with four of them being heuristic. The rest of the decision-making models were presented to support the researchers' theoretical perspectives in this study. In comparisons, all decision-making models have their own strengths and weaknesses, and a certain level of similarities in characteristics and assumptions. Nevertheless, they are useful for the researcher to find out teachers' perceptions on: (a) their patterns of decision-making; (b) their extent of personal involvement and; (c) how they differentiate between a serious and a less serious discipline problem.

In the fifth section, the researcher discussed some pertinent issues associated with personal decision-making. As a summary from the researcher's literature reviews, some of the issues of personal decision-making are:

1. The bureaucratic organizational structure, a custodial school climate and the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs). These factors are known to inhibit further involvement in decision-making.

2. The weak quality of relationship between teacher-student. This factor could inhibit effective fact-finding, identification of problems and gathering of information for decision-making.
3. The lack of understanding towards cultural differences among students. This factor could impair teachers' quality of judgment in decision-making.
4. The problem of working with others when there are low levels of collegiality and collaboration for decision-making.

It is hoped that more obstacles and issues related to personal decision-making could be uncovered as a result from this case study when studying other factors surrounding teachers as decision-makers.

Subsequently, sections six and seven highlighted the context, discipline policies and other local evidences surrounding the theme of this study. Tuten (2006) referred context as people or participants in the study because they “may best be explored in terms of individuals' perception of the decision-making process”. The impact of external influences (such as school discipline guidebooks, Education Acts and Professional Circulars) are all considered as external context as highlighted by Pettigrew (1987), whereas internal context includes aspects of principal's leadership style and the bureaucratic structure in which the school operates. In essence, all these factors are considered in this study to explain the environment surrounding the decision-maker.

Section eight introduces the background of the researched organization as a private school, their standard operating procedures (SOPs) and other historical facts since its establishment in 2006. A detailed description on their current system of discipline management will help readers to relate between the setting of the organization, problem statements and purpose of research.



As the next chapter progresses into explaining the methodologies and design of this research, it is hoped that the reader can now conclude that a contextual research is very different than the positivist form of research. Even though this case study emphasizes on qualitative methods of research, the data to be collected are both objective (e.g., PCI, TSES test scores for individual profiling) and subjective (e.g., open-ended interviews on decision-making practices). Eventually, the researcher intends to contribute the findings of research as a benefit organizational improvement. Thus, it is not possible to generalize the findings of this research due to this purpose and the nature of a case study.

## CHAPTER 3

### Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology of research that covers three aspects: (a) the philosophical base and purpose of a case study; (b) the research design; and (c) the limitations of case study research. Most important indicators of a quality case study will be discussed with references to scholars such as Hayes (2006), Stake (1995) and Yin (1994). Subsequently, the researcher will present and discuss the overall research design that includes: (a) purposive sampling; (b) preparation as a participant observer and procedures prior, during and after data collection; (d) how data is observed and recorded; and (b) data analyses with research instruments (particularly on the *PCI*, *TSES* and the *Decision-making* questionnaire). Finally, this chapter will conclude with the limitations and threats to case studies, particularly on its reliability and validity, and methods of controlling these threats through triangulation, corroboration and seeking respondents' verification.

#### Philosophical Base of Case Studies

Marshall & Rossman (2010) highlighted that when writing a qualitative research proposal, there must be explanation on the philosophical base pertaining to the approach of the research. Hayes (2006) mentioned that a case study is an alternative to experimental (scientific) and quantitative (positivist) form of research. According to Stake (1995) and Yin (2003), the philosophical underpinning of a case study is based on a constructivist paradigm. Constructivism's claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective (Baxter, 2008). Similar to Searle (1995), he added that constructivism is built upon the premise of a social construction of reality.

Therefore, constructivists claim that truth is relative and dependent on one's perspective, and that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction

between their experiences and ideas. For Merriam (2002), she highlighted that “the world or reality is not the fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that is assumed to be in the positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretation of reality that are in flux and change over time.”

Johansson (2003) quoted Stake (1998) in pointing out that case study research are not the methods of investigation, but that the object of study is a case. Stake (1998) added that “as a form of research, case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used”. Usually, a case study focuses on individuals’ perceptions (Yin, 2013) on any given phenomena and possibly carried out largely by means of interview. The case may be a relatively bounded object or a process; it may be theoretical, empirical, or both (Ragin & Becker 1992). At a minimum, a case is a phenomenon specific to time and space (Hayes, 2006).

For Johansson (2003), case study is a form of explicative strategy in the empirical world of complexity. The researcher will have to deal with people, settings and things in a context that are likely to be very significant in search for helpful explanation of the realities that are being investigated. In addition, the researcher has to experience an unclear, undefined hypothesis that cannot be tested by analysing sets of figures, but rather, has to go through dealing with interpretation of events, opinions, perceptions and so forth to arrive to a conclusion of reality.

Gerring (2004) highlighted that a case study has its aim to “generalize across a larger set of units, and relies on the same sort of covariational evidence unutilized in non-case study research. Thus, it is a particular way of defining cases, not a way of analyzing cases or a way of modeling causal relations.”

In order to analyse qualitatively on the researched organizations, the researcher referred and incorporated some useful strategies from Lijphart (1971):

1. Acquire as many number of respondents as possible.

The researcher ventured into the research organization with an open mind to uncover as many respondents as possible. However, the HOD (as the key personnel to identify respondents) could only manage to identify up to 23 teachers who were perceived to be characterized by the criteria of the purposive sampling exercise. Due to unfavorable circumstances, the numbers were reduced to a final 15 (inclusive of the HOD) as respondents. Further explanations on sampling would be presented in the subsequent part of this chapter.

2. Reduce the number of variables considered or the “property –space of the analysis.

To relate to this study, the researcher had to be specific in determining the appropriate scope and depth of this study, and identifying the core variables under investigations that are concerning directly to the research problem.

3. Focusing on cases that are highly “comparable” –that is, cases that possess highly similar initial conditions, so that whatever differences in outcomes are observed can potentially be explained in terms of those few dimensions on which initial conditions are not identical.

In terms of current practice, the researcher would conduct two levels of analyses, starting with collective analyses and followed by individual analyses. Comparative analyses (in terms of similarities and differences) would be carried out at the first level, while elaborating on a few respondents who are prone to transfer discipline problems to the HOD.

4. Working with and attempting to construct relatively simple theories of few key variables.

While this current study is an exploration, the researcher has to relook at data constantly in order to uncover patterns in personal decision-making , or findings that can be related to other theories (as a form of theoretical triangulations).

For Yin (2003), he highlighted that a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) one cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) one wants to cover contextual conditions because they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

### **Purpose of Conducting a Case Study**

Merriam (2002) mentioned that a case study is used when there is a lack of theory or an existing theory to adequately explain a phenomenon. There is much to discover when relating to teachers’ classroom control through decision-making. As mentioned in chapter one, this case study investigates on one organization that affects multiple teachers as decision-makers in their classrooms. For such reasons, the researcher has to put in extra efforts on reviewing literatures, ascertain that organizational problems exist, define the research questions and select respondents to represent the case under investigations. While doing so, the researcher tried to retain the theoretical flexibility from over-reliance on theories and hypotheses (Eisenhardt, 1989).

According to Hayes (2006), there practically two purposes of case studies. The first purpose is to identify key research questions that can be used for future constructions of questionnaire surveys. In this situation, the case study opens up a number of issues that leads into research questions that are answered through questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Findings from data would allow better

questions to be asked through modification of questionnaires should this study is conducted in another setting or context. Thereafter, many more case studies can be compared and analyzed.

Secondly, case studies do not necessarily have to be linked to only questions contained in the questionnaire survey, but are means to follow up significant issues that have emerged from a questionnaire survey. For this situation, case studies enable a well-informed reflection to focus on single issues, events and circumstances that is also known as “freezing the frame”, or what Pettigrew (1987) described as “catching reality in flight.” These single snapshots of events are not episodic events, but are merged into a continuous frame for the researcher to interpret and understand reality, particularly on organizational behavior. Similar to the view of Pettigrew (1987), Merriam (2002) mentioned that qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context. Similarly, Eisenhardt (1989) highlighted and supported Pettigrew’s model of research as a case study on organizational change and competitiveness.

In terms of setting or context, a case study may be carried out in a variety of different situations, such as a single classroom, a school, a department or a university faculty. This case study is using an identifiable group of people with certain sets of criteria to investigate on personal situations within a common setting. It requires the researcher to use multiple approaches to observe, evaluate and put meaning into an understandable and meaningful conclusion.

### **Research Design**

According to Russell, Gregory, Ciliska, Ploeg, & Guyatt (2005), novice researchers using qualitative research methods will want to ensure enough detail is provided so that readers can assess the validity, credibility and responsibilities to ensure

that: (a) the case study research question is clearly written, propositions (if appropriate to the case study type) are provided, and the question is substantiated; (b) case study design is appropriate for the research question; (c) purposeful sampling strategies appropriate for case study have been applied; (d) data are collected and managed systematically; and (e) the data are analysed correctly.

The researcher has chosen to embark on a case study because it is deemed suitable in the aspect of criteria, application and potential contribution of knowledge to the organization. While selecting the theme of the study, the researcher has a sense of urgency and immediate relevance to carry out his investigation pertaining to the issue and current need of the school. The design of this case study would consider the raw data to be translated into evidence, and that the selection, interrogation, accumulation, analysis, interpretation and judgment of data are done continuously with the assistance of recording tools such as the field notebook, photos or other forms of electronic or non-electronic media.

As a strategy, the researcher has to learn to relate to teachers' daily experiences by observing and reflecting on the issues, events and circumstances that are occurring or have occurred within the organization. While becoming a participant observer, the researcher has to step back and observe the reactions or responses of teachers when dealing with discipline issues in the classroom without interrupting or suggesting to them on what to do. In addition, the researcher jots down points describe the feelings, dilemma and circumstances that teachers' face in the organization. While doing so, he has to reflect and figure out the link between theories and every day's life events.

In relating to the philosophical base and purpose behind the use of case studies, the researcher will now highlight the following prerequisites as the research design:

1. A large portion of this case study is to be concentrated on qualitative methods of analyses;
2. Scores from the PCI and TSES forms are calculated for descriptive purposes only. In addition, these numbers serve to support individual profiles and not for inferential analyses. Descriptive statistics are used to look beyond the surface of numbers and to understand the motivation and inhibition of teachers' behaviors.
3. Evidences are collected as they are needed by the researcher and to portray the closest proximity to the truth. The issue of truth must be supported by close observations, triangulation and seeking clarification from respondents. In addition, there will be a voiced-recorded interview to ascertain matters that are unclear or needed further exploration and elaboration on issues and personal processes of decision-making.
4. Multiple perspectives are solicited from teachers with different socio-demographics: position, experience in teaching, gender and so forth. Apart from being a respondent himself, the Head of Discipline (HOD) recommended fourteen other respondents to be suitable for the study. These fourteen respondents are qualified due to their experiences of reporting discipline cases to the HOD and ability to articulate their experiences in problem solving and personal decision-making. In addition, the perception of the HOD and other forms of documented evidences may be sought through triangulation and corroboration as efforts to improve the validity of this case study. Therefore, the inculcation of holism (or the sum of parts is greater than the whole) is advocated in a case study to yield a greater the range of data.



As this case study is explored for the first time in a private secondary school, there are not many past research evidences to refer or learn from. However, other researches that contain similar themes to this research are used to support the rationale and methods of the research. Therefore, ambiguity in observation and reporting is tolerated rather than absolute outcomes that are usually clinical or clearly defined solutions. Ultimately, the goal is to search for better ways to understand organizational behavior while the purpose of this case study is exploratory, explanatory and partly comparative in nature. The focus on classroom control and personal decision-making requires constant references to context, content and process as characterized by Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework. Among the research objectives, one of the potential contributions of this case study is to highlight areas for improvements especially in personal decision-making. For the benefit of readers, it is necessary to use communicable forms of language to extend to the widest readership as possible. However, it keeps in mind the characteristics of a research dissertation, and not as an excuse for casual use of language.

As mentioned in chapter two, researching on teacher-student interactions is difficult because it is often considered a taboo (Sava, 2002). The researcher has to clarify and assure respondents pertaining to doubts and personal fears, while being sensitive to their psychological and emotional reactions if sensitive questions were ever asked. In addition, assuring respondents on personal data protection and being anonymous in the study is important and necessary. Ethically, the protocols employed in this case study should be agreed in advance from the respondents, the school authorities and the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

While observing ethical research, these are some of the researcher's practices in conducting ethical research:

1. Openness and honesty as essentials to retain trust and confidentiality of respondents.
2. Be aware of hidden motives of the respondents, such as an example; a respondent using the researcher as a vehicle to carry his or her opinions to an influential figure in the organization as one of a political strategy to achieve a personal agenda.
3. Safeguarding respondents from the consequential results of publications, through the use of pseudonyms and anonymity.

In a nutshell, the major challenge in the research design is to find out how to conduct research ethically where there could be organizational restrictions and threats on teachers' confidentiality. In order to address these concerns, the next few sections will clarify the sampling technique, data collection procedures and methods of analyses that have been carried out from the start through the final phases of this case study.

#### ***General preparation and procedures as a participant observer.***

Prior to data collection, the researcher had to apply for approval from the school management and the Research Unit, Ministry of Education to conduct a case study pertaining to the purpose and objectives of research. As a participant observer, the initial goal was to identify and ascertain the series of criteria, circumstances and characteristics that led to the qualification of the education institution as a case study. Subsequently, the researcher looked for opportunities to interact occasionally with the Head of Discipline so that he could consider his choice of respondents during the purposive sampling exercise. Eventually, participation observation assisted the researcher to successfully acquire primary documents such as school discipline rules and SOPs, minutes of meeting and access into the school's common facilities with personal assurance and agreement of non-threatening use in this case study. Ultimately, these primary documents serve to assist the researcher to understand the history, culture

and standard operating procedures in discipline management. Additionally, written notes of researcher from interactions with school communities and video recording to describe the physical environment were also documented as initial evidences of research.

When approaching respondents, the researcher had to thoroughly explain on the research objectives, about their voluntary participation and their rights as interviewees to withdraw from the research. Konecki (2008) highlighted the difficulty of researchers to be a participant observer because they are usually regarded as strangers in a certain culture. Therefore, Dawson (2002) highlighted the importance for the researcher to establish rapport, while Hayes (2008) mentioned of the importance to clarify the boundaries between researcher and respondents. For the latter, it is vital for respondents to be informed and agree on how their opinions are to be published, in addition to the confidentiality and anonymity of personal data.

After six months of continuous observations and interactions among school communities, the researcher was able to cooperate with the Head of Discipline (HOD) to identify several key respondents prior to the purposive sampling exercise. Furthermore, HOD had to be assured that his perceptions (be it positive or negative) on respondents to be chosen in this case study will be kept private and confidential. With this respect in mind, the researcher was also aware to not let the HOD's views on the selected teachers affect the interpretation and analyses of respondents' profiles and behaviours. Be it knowingly or unknowingly, the researcher made extra effort to not add, nullify or misrepresent all respondents' opinions and perceptions to the core questions asked. To mitigate these obstacles, ethical standards were exercised during the phase of data analyses so that the researcher's bias can be minimized by having respondents' to validate on their transcripts, acknowledging that the researcher did not influence their opinions (or decisions) and conducting an inter-coder reliability test after

the process of coding. For this case study however, video recording during interviews were restricted by the school management. Nevertheless, respondents were allowed to have their statements recorded and transcribed for analyses.

In terms of data collection, all fifteen teachers (including the Head of Discipline) who voluntarily participated in this study were asked to complete the *Pupil Control Ideology* (PCI) questionnaire and *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (TSES). With regards to discipline incidents that happened in their previous encounters, teachers were asked to reflect and describe their personal decision-making practices in a separate *Decision-making* form. Subsequently, these responses were followed by a voice-recorded interview for further clarification and feedback. As data were collected and analysed simultaneously, the researcher integrated the process of member checking during and after the interview process.

In this process, the researcher's analyses of data were shared with the participants, and the participants had the opportunity to discuss, clarify and verify the interpretation. Member checking allowed the researcher to contribute new or additional perspectives on the issue under study. Additionally, it is important for the researcher to stay neutral in his observation and avoid taking sides with the views of any of the participants. For example, getting verification from respondents' opinions could minimize the researcher's bias pertaining to the impression of the HOD on the selected respondents during the purposive sampling exercise. Ideally, other methods to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the results were mitigated by triangulation that would be discussed in the later sections of this chapter.

The role of the researcher as a participant observer ended after the phase of data collections. According to Dawson (2002), if a researcher is immersed in a particular culture for a very long time, it could be a problem to break away. On the other hand,

Baxter (2008) highlighted that prolonged and exposure to participants can improve trustworthiness in the study, as more rapport and perspectives can be collected from willing participants. In essence, it is to the researcher's choice and rationale to know when to break away even though he (or she) chooses to remain connected as a role of a researcher. Fundamentally, it is important for the researcher to leave the school community in good terms while keeping in touch with the respondents. Pertaining to the outcomes of this case study, the researcher must be cautious and ethical to not put respondents (or any school communities) under jeopardy, humiliation or public scrutiny. Most importantly, it is important to not betray trust and to ensure that other researchers (including the researcher himself) have other opportunities to conduct future research in the same organization.

Beyond data collection, the researcher keyed in the details into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and ATLAS.ti analyses software for analyses and interpretation. Data from the PCI and TSES forms were entered into SPSS for descriptive analyses (such as calculations of frequencies, percentage and means), while data from the *Decision-making* questionnaire and the voice-recorded interview (after transcribing) were entered into ATLAS.ti analyses software for coding and analyses of patterns. ATLAS. ti was also useful for the researcher to use as a databank to save pictures, scanned responses from questionnaires and other forms of evidence that are directly (or indirectly) related to the research objectives. Much information pertaining to sampling, observation and data recording and analyses from research instruments (PCI form, TSES and *Decision-making* questionnaire) will be presented in the subsequent sections.

### *Sampling.*

Teddlie & Yu (2007) mentioned that the purposive sampling is usually designed to “pick a small number of cases that will yield the most information about a particular phenomenon.” They added that unlike probability sampling that is planned to select a large number of cases to lead to greater breadth, purposive sampling leads to greater depth of information. In addition, they also highlighted that purposive sampling is “carried out based on expert judgment of the researcher, or some available resources identified by the researcher.” In essence, purposive sampling is primarily used in qualitative studies and be defined by “selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s question. Ideally, these are the few general guidelines in which purposive sampling should be used in this case study:

1. Purposive sampling should stem logically from research questions that are being addressed in the study.
2. The researcher should be sure to follow the assumptions of the purposive sampling techniques that he used.
3. Purposive sampling should be thorough to sufficiently answer all research questions and generate “saturated’ information.
4. Purposive sampling should allow the researcher to draw clear information, explain what is happening and what he learned from this study.
5. Purposive sampling must be ethical that include informed consent to participate in the study, highlighting any risk to participants, absolute assurances on confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study any time.

6. Purposive sampling should be feasible and efficient. The researcher should consider the time and money to complete the data collection, access to all data sources and that the strategy is congruent to the abilities of researchers.
7. When purposive sampling decisions are made, the researcher should know the characteristics of the study samples as much as possible.
8. Lastly, purposive sampling should be described in enough detail to allow other researchers to understand and use the same technique in future repetitive studies.

As mentioned earlier, the Head of Discipline (HOD) was first invited to assist the researcher to identify teachers who are suitable for this study. Rationally, he was the key figure who knew most about discipline situations and how teachers behaved in response to the problem. However, he was not able to explain how teachers make decisions in the classroom when confronted with discipline problems.

In purposive sampling, Flyvbjerg (2006) suggest to look for ‘most likely’ or ‘least likely’ of cases to uncover the richness of data. Therefore, the researcher produced a list of criteria (in relation to the problem statements) to the HOD to consider for purposive sampling with the following prerequisites:

1. Identify teachers who are likely to handle discipline cases without much reliance on his assistance.
2. Identify teachers who are likely to transfer trivial discipline cases to him.
3. Identify teachers who are likely to be “hot tempered” and harsh when they discipline students.
4. Identify teachers who are likely to be lenient when dealing with students’ misbehaviors.
5. Identify teachers who are likely to ignore their responsibilities to deal with students’ misbehaviors.

Twenty-three teachers were initially listed as potential respondents. Other than these potential respondents, the researcher selected another thirty teachers to be involved in a pilot study. As to be explained in the section of the research instruments, the pilot study was conducted to analyse on the internal consistency reliability of the PCI and TSES forms. Due to unforeseen situations, nine teachers withdrew from the initial twenty - three volunteers due to the following reasons:

1. Three teachers resigned to work in other schools.
2. One teacher contracted terminal illness and resigned from school.
3. Two teachers declined to have their voice recorded for personal reasons and choice.
4. Two teachers felt that the questions were sensitive to their own confidentiality and privacy of practice.
5. One teacher excused himself for being overloaded with work responsibilities due to a school-wide event.

Eventually, fifteen teachers (fourteen teachers and the Head of Discipline) volunteered for this study. In addition, the selection teachers consists of a cross-sectional differences in terms of gender, years of teaching experience and roles from being in the Discipline committee (known as level coordinators) to being regular teachers who do not hold any post in the Discipline committee. Interestingly, two teachers once held the position as the Head of Discipline among respondents prior to the current one. They were particularly chosen to provide historical and perspectives on organizational culture.

Concerning the small number of respondents, Baker (2012) highlighted that student researchers who conduct qualitative research frequently ask about the sufficiency in number of interviews or respondents. It is a vital question to be asked when designing research projects, and this question was asked to renowned social scientists and early career researchers. The riposte to the question of “how many” from



most contributors was “it depends” on the epistemological, methodological and practical issues to take into account when conducting research. In response to the question “how many”, Harry Wolcott (one of the pioneering qualitative researchers) highlighted,

It depends on your resources, how important the questions is to the research, and even how many respondents are enough to satisfy committee members for a dissertation. From many qualitative studies, one respondent is all you need- your person of interest. But in general, the old rule seems to hold that you keep asking as long as you are getting answers, and that is a reminder that our little samples we can't establish frequencies but we should be able to find the RANGE of responses. Whatever the way the question is handled, the best answer it to report fully how it was resolved (Wolcott, H., cited in Baker, 2012).

Towards the end of their article, Baker (2012) concluded and advised,

In sum, the number of people required to make an adequate sample for a qualitative research project can vary from on to a hundred of more. However, when considering the length of time this type of research often takes, the difficulty of gaining entrée to even the most mundane group or setting, the difficulty in transcribing thousands of hours of interviews, and the “publish or perish” world in which we live, our best bet is to advice in the broad range between a dozen to 60, with 30 being the mean (Baker, 2012).

Teddlie & Yu (2007) mentioned that sampling for purposive techniques “involves using two or more of these sampling strategies when selecting units or cases for a research study.” Within purposive sampling, there are: (a) sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability; (b) sampling of special and unique cases; (c) sampling that are sequential; and (d) sampling using multiple purposive techniques.

They added that many qualitative studies reported in literatures utilized more than one purposive sampling due to the complexities of the issues being examined. For this case study, both (a) and (c) sampling strategies were used inculcate aspects of comparability and generation themes while data were being collected. Above all, the selections were based on their relevance to the research questions. Within strategy (a), the typical case sampling would be concerning teachers who have dealt discipline problems in the classrooms. As for (c), respondents were approached to share their personal experiences to corroborate with the Head of Discipline. In terms of effectiveness and efficiency, teachers who had completed the first two questionnaires (PCI and TSES form) were subsequently interviewed with the *Decision-making* questionnaire on the “first come, first served” basis. These procedures would be further described in the next section.

#### ***Observation and data recording.***

The researcher had to carefully consider the research questions together with the social behaviours that are relevant to the study (Altmann, 1974). As a participant observer, the researcher had to avoid intrinsic biases particularly on the personal impression to teachers with high PCI or low TSES. Thus, it would enable the researcher to report and analyse data as they are without additional presumptions or personal perceptions that are not clarified or validated by respondents. Most importantly, triangulation and corroboration must be carried out to ascertain stories, matters or events that have occurred in the school as they were being said from one teacher to another.

As mentioned by Patton (1999) and Yin (2003), the hallmark of case study research is the use of multiple data sources which also enhances data credibility. They mentioned that potential data sources may include, but are not limited to: documentation, archival records, interviews, physical artefacts, direct observations, and

participant-observation. Tellis (1997) mentioned that case studies are designed “to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data.” For Yin (1994), he identified six primary sources of evidence for case studies:

1. Documentation.
2. Archival records.
3. Interviews.
4. Direct observation.
5. Participant observation.
6. Physical artifacts.

In this case study, the researcher has gathered school documents, archival records and also permitted to sit in classroom lessons by the respondents as a form of direct observation. As it was unnecessary and prohibited by the school management, no physical artefacts were allowed to be taken as evidence of the case study. Acceptably, Yin (1994) and Tellis (1997) highlighted that not all sources are essential in every case study, and the importance of multiple sources of data is to mitigate the bias so that the reliability of the study is well established.

The set of research questions outlined in this study guides the researcher towards the completion of this study. It also serves as a purpose to gauge the point of saturation and end of data collection. According to Saumure & Given (2008), theory constructions take place while data are being collected. Nevertheless, saturation point is said to occur in data collection when there are no new or relevant information emerges with respect to the newly constructed theory. Similarly, for Teddlie & Yu (2007), they also mentioned that the point of saturation is reached when researchers have heard a range of ideas and are not getting new information. Eventually, as the researcher addressed the fundamental research questions through voiced-recorded interview, a point of saturation was indicated when the same pattern of ideas were repeated from one respondent to

another. Additionally, the researcher had to acquire their acknowledgement when they have no more information to share or contribute in this study.

### ***Data Analyses.***

As uniquely compared to George (1985), he mentioned that using statistical techniques to analyse organizational decision-making is either uneconomical or simply not feasible. For long term and multiple case studies, he suggested using comparative methods to strengthen the confidence in case studies. In order to do so, the researcher selects a number of respondents (or other units) for analysis, considering certain individuals differ from one another on some dimensions judged significant by the researcher. Thereafter, the researcher can then compare outcomes of behaviours and relate the occurrence of differing outcomes to the presence of differing initial conditions, or relate common outcomes to the presence of initial conditions.

As uniquely compared to other forms of qualitative research, this case study allowed the researcher to collect and integrate the survey data together with the voice-recorded interview. It facilitated the researcher in reaching a larger understanding of the phenomena being studied. Subsequently, data from these multiple sources were then converged in the analysis process rather than handled individually. Each respondent's perception was likened to a piece of the "puzzle" to contribute to the researcher's understanding of organizational behaviour when data was converged (George, 1985). Thus, these convergence added strength to the findings as the various strands of data were braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case.

As interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed and coded for analyses, each of the participants will be identified with pseudonyms in the report. The use of SPSS and ATLAS.ti enabled analyses being carried out smoothly for knowledge organization and presentation. Although the opportunity to gather data from various sources was

extremely attractive because of the rigor that would be associated with this approach, the dangers of collecting an overwhelming amounts of data required a process of data management and procedural analysis. Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) mentioned that researchers often find themselves “lost” in the data. Therefore, in order to bring some order to the data collection, a computerized data base is often necessary to organize and manage the voluminous amount of data.

In addition, the analyses from this case study will inculcate theories as means of explaining things. As mentioned by McAninch (1993), case study for teacher education “must link theory and practice in a way that will promote connected understanding.” Whether it is a singular or several theories, it enabled the researcher to be conscious of the subjects of research, be it in teachers’ actions, beliefs, priorities or values. From the exercise of literature reviews, theory may enter into practice directly or indirectly through the judgment of the researcher. In other words, theories became the “lens” for the researcher and subjects of study to observe the phenomena, and that these theories turn out to be conceptual structures that enable the incident to be observed, interpreted and understood.

For the purpose of analysis, the researcher had relied on theoretical frames to first develop his understanding into the domains and variables of exploration. In response, he integrated both subjective and objective questions to try to explore and explain what is happening as respondents gave their viewpoints. As mentioned in the previous chapters, Pettigrew’s (1987) conceptual framework was parallel to this case study to explain and describe teachers’ classroom control though decision-making. In practice, a final conceptual framework ought to include all the themes that emerged from data analysis. Returning to the propositions that initially formed, the conceptual framework ensures that the analysis is reasonable in scope and that it also provides structure for the final report as suggested by Yin (2003). However, he added that one of

the drawbacks of a conceptual framework is that it may limit the inductive approach when exploring a phenomenon. Therefore, to safeguard against becoming deductive, the researcher had to journal his thoughts and discuss with other researchers to determine if their thinking has become too driven by the framework. The following paragraphs will describe the use and analysis of Pupil Control Ideology, Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy and the *Decision-making* form.

### ***Analysis of Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) Form.***

Teachers' pupil control ideologies are measured using Hoy's (1967) Pupil Control Ideology (PCI). The PCI form is a 20-item (five-point Likert scale) that measures the degree to which an individual's pupil control ideology is custodial or humanistic. On each statements on the PCI form, items are scored 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 corresponding to the extent of agreement with strongly agree=5, agree=4, undecided=3, disagree=2, or strongly disagree=1. For items 5 and 13, they are reversely scored (that is strongly agree=1, agree=2, undecided=3, disagree=4 and strongly disagree=5).

In addition, PCI scores are relative and there is no cut-off value between humanistic and custodial. Much interpretation of the score is based on contextual and cultural aspects of the sample. As mentioned earlier, every item within the PCI form probes on teacher's perception through a five-point Lickert scale that range from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". As examples, teachers are asked if "it is desirable to require pupils to sit in assigned seats during assemblies". The stronger is the agreement, the more custodial is the teacher. Conversely, a more humanistic ideology is measured by the portrayal of lower score. Eventually, a teacher's cumulative score on the PCI indicates his or her placement on a continuum of humanistic to custodial ideology.

For humanistic ideology, it is characterized by the tendency to create an educational community atmosphere where students' interaction and cooperation are emphasized in a democratic orientation between pupils and teachers. Some other attributes within this humanistic view include meeting students' needs, self-discipline, shared decision-making, interpersonal sensitivity and open communication. Relationship with students is viewed as personal, and teachers are optimistic to maintain an open communication channel.

In contrast, teachers who are characterized as custodial are most likely to stress on rigid classroom control and maintenance of order. Other attributes include having autocratic, hierarchical organization with downward flow of power and communication to students. In addition, students are perceived as irresponsible and indisciplined (Willower et al., 1967). Furthermore, teacher-pupil relationships are impersonal and pessimism and mistrust prevails. (For a sample of the PCI form, refer to Appendix A).

*Reliability and validity of the PCI form.*

Much work has been done regarding the validity and reliability of the PCI form. The construct validity of the scale has been supported by a number of studies (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967). Willower et al. (1967) reported using a split-half reliability coefficient in two samples of .95 (N=170) and .91 (N=55). The reliability of the scale is consistently high-usually .80-.91 (Packard, 1988; Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967). Gaffney and Byrd-Gaffney (1996) also provided information on the validity of the original PCI, which includes Graham et al.'s (1985) alpha coefficient of .90 and Hoy and Woolfolk's (1990) alpha coefficient of .72.

Earlier on, the researcher has conducted a pilot study using the PCI form on 30 teachers (other than those chosen during purposive sampling) within the same organization. The internal consistency reliability results are as shown in Table 5 and

Table 6 below. It is important to note that for item seven and eight, the researcher made no attempts to omit the items due to the fact that the PCI form is only used to support the profiles of respondents, and not for any inferential analyses. Subsequent correspondence with Professor Hoy (PCI form originator) indicated that there is no need to delete the two items if alpha value is at least .70. As a proposal for organizational improvements, the PCI value only serves as an indicative value on who should be best paired up or peer-coaching. (See recommendations in chapter five.)

Table 5  
*Reliability Statistics of the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) Form*

Cronbach's Alpha	Total Items
.754	20

Table 6  
*Reliability Item-Total Statistics of the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) Form*

Items	Scale Mean if item is deleted	Scale Variance if item is deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item is deleted
1	61.0667	86.685	.569	.721
2	61.0667	88.202	.663	.717
3	62.7333	96.616	.432	.739
4	61.4667	91.016	.493	.730
5	60.5333	89.292	.593	.722
6	60.5333	92.257	.519	.730
7	61.3000	114.010	-.376	.799
8	59.8667	103.913	.002	.761
9	61.2667	103.857	-.031	.770
10	61.1667	91.040	.432	.734
11	61.7667	97.564	.306	.745
12	60.7333	91.237	.701	.722
13	61.3333	93.885	.353	.741
14	60.6667	97.816	.221	.751
15	61.5667	96.668	.172	.759
16	60.5333	90.671	.598	.724
17	60.1667	93.385	.452	.735
18	60.3667	106.654	-.142	.773
19	61.3333	94.161	.372	.740
20	60.9667	94.792	.339	.742



### *Analysis of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES).*

Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001) designed one of the most commonly used instruments to measure teacher efficacy that is the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TSES). It was assessed by Henson (2001) as “promising development in the measure of teachers’ efficacy” (p. 145). The TSES features three dimensions of teachers’ efficacy; instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management. Every item within each dimensions (also called subscales) probes on teacher’s beliefs in “how much they can do”.

As for examples, questions that probe teachers in the area of classroom management would be like “How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?” or “How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?” In essence, the three dimensions are believed to better represent the vast and varied tasks that teaching requires.

Originally referred to as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), it has two versions: a long form of 24 questions, and a shorter form of 12 questions. On each statement on the TSES form, items are scored 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 (or nine-point Likert scale) corresponding to the extent of agreement with “a great deal”=9-8, “quite a bit” =7-6, “some influence” =5-4, “very little”=3-2, or “nothing”=1. Unlike the PCI form, no items in the TSES are found to be reversely scored.

Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001) recommended that the 12-item short form be used for the study as respondents are not consist of pre-service teachers. . In addition, the short TSES form was utilized because all respondents were hired from other private and public schools (who had usually undergone training in teacher’s training college), and had previous experiences in teaching. The groupings of each item are as shown in Table 7. (For a sample of the TSES form, refer to Appendix B).

Table 7  
*Items Grouped within each Subscale Scores of the TSES (Short Form)*

Subscale scores	Items
Efficacy in Student Engagement	2, 3, 4, 11
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	5, 9, 10, 12
Efficacy in Classroom Management	1, 6, 7, 8

*Reliability and validity of the TSES form.*

Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk (2001) indicated that the TSES form (for both long and short form) has high reliability and validity. The TSES scale is also referred to as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) because it was developed at the Ohio State University. Similar and concurrent to the PCI form, the researcher has also conducted a pilot study on the 30 teachers in the organization to test on internal consistency reliability for the TSES form. Results are as shown in Table 8 and Table 9.

Table 8  
*Reliability Statistics of the TSES Form*

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.945	12

Table 9  
*Reliability Item-Total Statistics of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES-Short)*

Items	Scale Mean if item is deleted	Scale Variance if item is deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item is deleted
1	61.6000	172.593	.759	.940
2	61.3667	174.861	.699	.942
3	61.2000	176.855	.637	.944
4	61.2333	165.909	.829	.937
5	61.6000	174.869	.768	.940
6	61.2667	175.237	.717	.941
7	61.1000	163.817	.857	.936
8	61.3667	171.689	.849	.937
9	61.3333	174.023	.780	.939
10	60.9000	174.438	.625	.945
11	61.5667	175.633	.649	.943
12	61.0000	171.379	.796	.939

According to both researchers, it is important to conduct a factor analysis to determine how the participants respond to the questions. Nevertheless, the researcher had consulted Professor Anita Woolfolk (one of the developers of the TSES questionnaire) pertaining to the nature of this case study. In response, she highlighted to the researcher that it is unnecessary to conduct factor analysis on only 15 teachers, and that their mean could be calculated and used as an anchor to compare their TSES values in relation to each other or to the mean.

### *Analysis of Teachers' Decision-making questionnaire.*

Prior to data collection, the researcher had also designed the *Decision-making* questionnaire to collect information on teachers' classroom control strategies, their decision-making processes and issues related to decision-making. This notion required a separate process of creation, correction and editing by academicians in the field of decision-making and authorities in educational leadership. Before the constructed questionnaire can be deployed to respondents, this process was vital to improve the credibility and the appropriateness of the questions. In addition, most of the questions served as opening statements to assist the researcher to muddle through more impromptu conversations pertaining to personal perceptions and concerns towards the matters discussed. Subsequently, all the research questionnaires were approved by the Research Unit in the Ministry of Education prior to carrying out data collection.

In terms of content, most of the questions within the *decision-making* questionnaire are open-ended and require respondents' personal reflection. Fundamentally, the major questions were derived directly from the research questions, while the rest of the minor questions were only used as support to uncover more data pertaining to the theme and scope of this study. During voice-recorded interviews, respondents were allowed to share freely about their concerns and obstacles in personal

decision-making. However, when the interviewees have reached saturation points, the researcher would then end the interview session. (For a sample of the *Decision-making* questionnaire, refer to Appendix C).

With the data obtained from the *decision-making* questionnaire, two methods were used to code the transcripts: (a) inductive coding; and (b) deductive coding. Deductive codes were preliminary derived from theories during literature reviews, while inductive coding emerged along the process of analyses. After the researcher coded the transcripts with the ATLAS.ti software, he approached two experts in the field of education management to conduct the intercoder reliability test on the coding process. By definition, intercoder reliability refers to the extent to which two or more independent coders agree on the coding of the content of interest with an application of the same coding scheme (Lavrakas, 2008). It is also referred to as interrater or interjudge reliability. In essence, intercoder reliability is critical for content analysis of open-ended survey responses and it is a standard measure of research quality. Higher levels of intercoder reliability values indicate that interpretation of the data content (or transcript) is considered objective and valid. In addition, a clearly defined unit of analysis allows coding to proceed smoothly and increases intercoder reliability (Webb et al., 2015).

Facilitated by the SPSS software, the researcher conducted the intercoder reliability analysis using Cohen's kappa and results showed a high value measure of agreement. Comparing the values between the researcher's codes with the first and second coder, the values were .887 and .802 respectively. Additionally, comparison between the two independent coders yielded the value of .858.

### *Triangulation and corroboration of data*

During the process of data collection, triangulation and corroboration was to confirm findings pertaining to organizational events. Teddlie & Yu (2007) mentioned that triangulation allows researchers to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study. As for Mathison (1988), triangulation typically expects various data sources and methods to lead to singular proposition about the phenomenon being studied. Nevertheless, she highlighted that “triangulation may result in convergent, inconsistent and contradictory evidence that must be rendered sensible by the researcher. “The value of triangulation is not as a technological solution to data collection and analytical problem, but as a technique to provide more and better evidences from which researchers can construct meaningful propositions about the social world.

On ways of approaching triangulation for this case study, data sources, theories, and gathering of organizational documents were also used. According to Konecki (2008), there are four types of triangulation methods: (a) by data; (b) by other researchers (or even respondents); (c) by theoretical perspective; and (d) by other methods. All methods highlighted by Konecki (2008) were carried out in this case study. As examples, data triangulation was carried out by referring to primary and secondary school documents (minutes of meetings, written SOPs etc.), results of analyses from the PCI and TSES questionnaires and qualitative data obtained from the interviews with respondents. Triangulations with respondents were carried out through the HOD’s personal impression during purposive sampling, member-checking with all respondents for clarification (during and after personal interviews), and verification of researcher’s interpretation when writing was completed.

As discussed earlier, pilot study, intercoder reliability test and other methods (such as the use of PCI and TSES forms to support the profile of respondents) were also carried out preliminary to further enhance and solidify the finding of this study. Eventually, theoretical triangulations were later used in chapter two, four and five to support the researcher's understanding of the case. In essence, the purpose of triangulation is to evaluate accuracy of analyses, verify interpretations of the researcher and to increase the validity of findings. As analysis is usually located within the descriptions, a more neutral, formal style was used in reporting. Triangulation of data sources, data types would support the principle in case study research that the phenomena be viewed and explored from multiple perspectives. Therefore, the collection and comparison of this data enhances data quality based on the principles of idea convergence and the confirmation of findings.

The final section of this chapter will elaborate on the limitations and threats (in aspects of reliability and validity) of this case study. Briefly, the general limitation would first be discussed before moving into specific threats of this case study.

### **Limitation of Case Studies**

Merriam (2002) mentioned that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. While understanding is the ultimate goal, the human instrument is able to respond, adapt and would seemed to be “the ideal means of collecting and analysing data.” She added that “other advantages include the ability to expand his or her understanding through non-verbal as well as verbal communication, process information or data immediately, clarify, and summarize material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation and explore unusual or unanticipated responses.”

However, she highlighted that human instrument has shortcomings and biases that may impact the study, and these biases or subjectivities cannot be eliminated, but to “identify them and monitor them as to how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data.”

Quite recently, case study like all other qualitative research was viewed as inferior to the more established experimental scientific or positivist approach. It is viewed perhaps the least attention and guidance among nearly all social science research methods (Yin, 2011). In addition, replications of case studies in social sciences are less common as compared to empirical studies in natural science (Tsang, 1999). Case studies could be wrongly viewed as a soft option of research because there are no hard numbers to manipulate, no scientific experiments to set up for monitoring, and that they are people-centred in their own natural settings. Nevertheless, it is now accepted by a majority of educational researchers “as a prime strategy for developing educational theory which illuminates educational policy and enhances educational practice.” (Bassey, 1999)

In practice, a case study is complex because it involves a variety of research instruments and measurement that must be used carefully during observations, interactive situations, interviews and other forms of data collection. Even though this case study demands consistency in data collection that is relevant to the research, it is an uncontrolled intervention into the lives of other people (Hayes, 2006). It could be an emotional encounter when sensitive questions could “trigger concealed tensions between members as deeply hidden resentments, concerns and priorities are drawn out. “ Therefore, the researcher needs to be aware on looking at patterns or uncommon things within the common and usual setting, and to develop a strong keen of sense or ability to draw together different forms of data and drawing meaning in them.

In addition, a case study takes close account of the researcher and that their own position in respect to the setting or situation they are examining is relevant (Robson, 2002). Questions pertaining to teachers' motives, their choice of answers, and their reactions to the relationships with familiar people would all influence the observation and conclusion of the data. Cautiously, there should be a clear line drawn between the researcher and the respondents, and that openness and confidentiality must be earned and preserved throughout the research period. Robson (2002) highlighted that participants are concerned with how they appear in report, and whether their interests, individually or collectively are affected by the publications. Therefore, it is important to keep the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality that the researcher has given to the respondents.

The researcher should reflect on his own behaviour and do not become too assimilated with the subjects of research themselves. Being assimilated would mean taking sides with the opinions of the respondents and writing a skewed report that is not supported by data. Therefore, while progress is often uncertain, it requires the researcher to be aware of their own prejudices and assumptions and gather as much evidences from multiples point of views to support the findings. However, interviewing and observing to a subject of study may undermine institutional structures in ways that the kinds of questions asked during interviews itself can be a tool for change as it sets respondents thinking in ways that they may never have done otherwise (Hayes, 2006).

Other than participant bias, a case study may also be led into a biased view and distorted picture of the reality. The manners in which the researcher record, transcribe and analyse data can only give a limited perspective of the truth. Therefore, the researcher must bear the main responsibility for analysis and presentation of findings.



If different groups of respondents provide different perspectives and saying of the same matter, the researcher must presents all facts, and not be indecisive or thrown into a dilemma of whose opinions should carry the greatest influence. Therefore, the final report of the study should compromise between what is intended by the researcher to say and what the school is permitting.

Even though historical events may be examined, a case study is usually a cross-sectional in terms of contemporary life events, and that it may give a pale reflection of the many realities and could possibly be out of date by the time the report is published. Therefore, a case study normally tells a truth of events and circumstances, but not the whole truth as they are always partial accounts and constructions of reality or representations. This is was Pettigrew (1987) described as “catching reality in flight”.

As the researcher is contemplating on this study, he has to be aware of the immersion in the uniqueness of the case to the extent that he does not lose sight of wider factors such as prevailing external conditions (policy change, new impact of new management directions and others). In addition, there should not be too much of data with too little explanation and analyses, which poses a risk in confusing the reader rather than clarifying the issues in the case study.

Yin (2003) and Stake (1995) have suggested that placing boundaries on a case study can prevent the tendency for researchers to attempt to answer a question that is too broad or a topic that has too many objectives for one study. They provided suggestions on how to bind a case that include: (a) by time and place (Creswell, 2003); (b) time and activity (Stake, 1995); and (c) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Therefore, binding the case will ensure that this study remains reasonable in scope. In consideration of these aspects, Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework is therefore used as the reference to guide and analyse data findings.

In addition, data and claims of the findings from emerging evidences can become detached from the objectives or original intentions of the research, and that the research could end up meandering from issue to issue. The weak links between the researcher's literature reviews to the formation of the theoretical or conceptual framework may deprive a study of its academic status and instead, portrays a narrow-minded approach.

Having too little emphasis on the impact of the researcher on the respondents or subjects of the study may also delude the authenticity and value of the research. Moreover, the failure to study closely on the detail over the period of the research exposes the case study to the danger of superficiality and threats of other validity. The following paragraphs will elaborate on the threats to validity and reliability in this case study.

#### ***Threats to validity.***

The researcher has considered the threats to the validity of his research, but nevertheless, has taken many proactive steps to counter the problem that persists. As mentioned earlier in the limitations of research, the researcher needs to be aware of observer biases and how typical events may be overlooked. The likelihood of false inferences such as assumptions of cause-and-effect and the lack of external validity could occur. The following paragraphs would describe some considerations in aspects of validity in a case study research.

In matters of construct validity, the researcher has to first select the right questionnaires to measure and other criteria of observation to be used to construct the research. As mentioned, three questionnaires: (a) Pupil Control Ideology (PCI); (b) Teachers' Sense of Efficacy (TSES); and (c) the *Decision-making* questionnaire were all utilized in this research. After data collection, respondent have to verify their responses so that their responses are properly represented. Verification would be in the form of including the signature column for respondents to sign as a confirmation to what they meant or indicated in the survey forms.

The second threat is the threat of internal validity. Beyond the surveys that are used to measure teachers' pupil control ideology, self-efficacy or explain on personal decision-making, one should consider if the respondents are honestly assessing their own feelings, behaviours or practices. One example of controlling the threat of internal validity is by ensuring the survey is not administered to teachers when situations are inconvenient, or being rushed to submit in the forms because these factors could result in misrepresentation of facts or personal experiences.

The third threat in this case study is the threat of external validity, or generalizability. It is important to note that case studies should be intelligible and that ideas should relate to existing knowledge so that other people in different situations can interpret them in the light of their present situation and contexts of understanding. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston (2013) highlighted that there is no one right and accepted way of doing qualitative research as the methods used reflect a particular mix of philosophy, research objectives, participants, finders and audiences. Therefore, it must be emphasized that the context of the researched organization (such as existing culture and norms of the researched school) is not easily comparable to respondents to the context of another school. Therefore, little can be said to the representative nature of this case study.

### ***Threats to reliability.***

To establish reliability in this case study, the whole process must be done in a consistent manner, especially in terms of design, implementation of research procedures and ways to generate data analyses. Earlier on, the researcher has shown that both PCI and TSES are reliable instruments through a pilot study that involved 30 teachers in the organization. While it should be as informative as possible, it should allow other researchers to use similar approaches in their own situation or contexts to arrive to similar or perhaps relatable conclusions.

Any forms of documentation, evidences, or source materials should be scrupulously compiled and that there should always be a support towards a clarity of data, while allowing others to understand the writings of this research and utilizing the information effectively without excessive use of jargons in the English language. According to Hayes (2006), for a case study to be considered to be strong, there should be some characteristics, such as:

1. A sense of completion, focus and completeness of data upon saturation, while leaving some interesting speculation and unanswered questions that could be dealt with in another research.
2. An acknowledgement of research limitations, assumptions, alternative explanations and positions in which the researcher may take up.
3. A close scrutiny and discussion of the ideas presented from multiple perspectives, such as the use of triangulation and corroboration.
4. All evidences pertaining to the study are systematically organized and stored for ease of reading, understanding and presentation.
5. A considerable use of ethical principles that must be held vigilant and communicated clearly to all respondents and authorities beforehand.

6. A clear, convincing feel that can marshal the reader forward into a depth of understanding of the issues concerned.

The final section of this chapter will summarize the information that has been presented so far. Thereafter, chapter four will present the findings in response to the research questions, while chapter five will present the discussion and conclusion of this study.

### **Summary**

This chapter began with the philosophical base and purpose of conducting a case study. The understanding of the philosophical underpinning is important between qualitative or quantitative studies, because there has been various school of thoughts on which research methods are better, or which is more important than the other. In addition, it would serve as a preparation for the researcher to defend the nature, contexts and issues that are inherent within a case study. The ultimate factor in choosing which is more important and appropriate lies in the objectives of research, the issues concerned with the theme of this research and the potential contribution for the benefits of the organization. The important indicators of a quality case study has also been discussed and supported by prominent scholars, among few; Hayes (2006), Stake (1995) and Yin (1994).

Subsequently, the researcher presented and discusses the overall research design that includes: (a) purposive sampling; (b) preparation and procedures prior, during and after data collection; (d) how data is observed and recorded; and (b) data analyses with research instruments (The *PCI*, *TSES* and *Decision-making* questionnaire). Finally, this chapter concluded with the limitations and threats to case studies, particularly on its reliability and validity, and methods of controlling these threats through triangulation, corroboration and seeking respondents' verification.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Research Findings**

This chapter begins with a brief discussion on the chronology of research. As the first process, the researcher will describe of respondents' demographics and analyses results from their PCI and TSES scores. Parallel to Pettigrew's (1987) conceptual framework, the researcher will then present the results of this study from the areas of the decision-maker, process and eventually issues pertaining to decision-making. In the area of the decision-maker, respondents' classroom control strategies will be described in four-directed strategies. For the second area, teachers' processes of decision-making will be analyzed to reveal information pertaining to their patterns of decision-making, and subsequently explain behind their extent of personal involvement. Subsequently, the third area will present the unfavorable conditions and obstacles that teachers face in their personal decision-making. Lastly, the researcher will highlight a list of respondents' suggestions to improve personal and collaborative decision-making. For reader's reference, individual profiles of analyses will be supplemented at the end of this chapter.

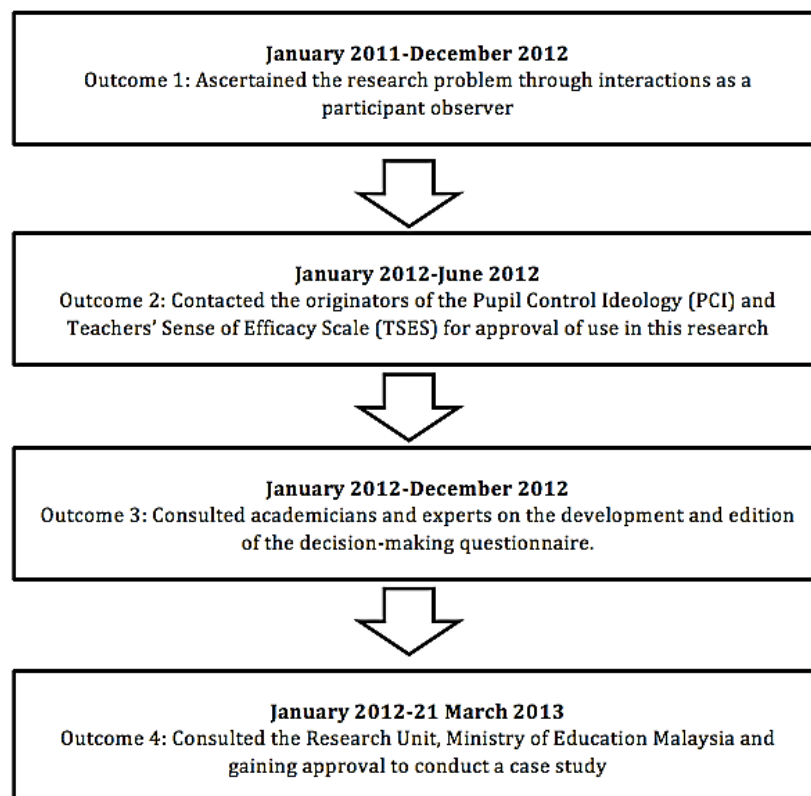
### **Chronology of Research**

This section is written with the purpose to debrief the process, progression and encounter towards the completion of investigation as carried out by the researcher. Although the research methodology was already explained in chapter three, it is necessary to explain the extent of how this investigation turned out as compared to the initial plans of the research.

In addition, it would prepare the reader to understand that prior to presenting the full report on the resulting data, this section serve as the bridge to usher the reader from the beginning point of research to understanding the fulfillment of all research objectives.

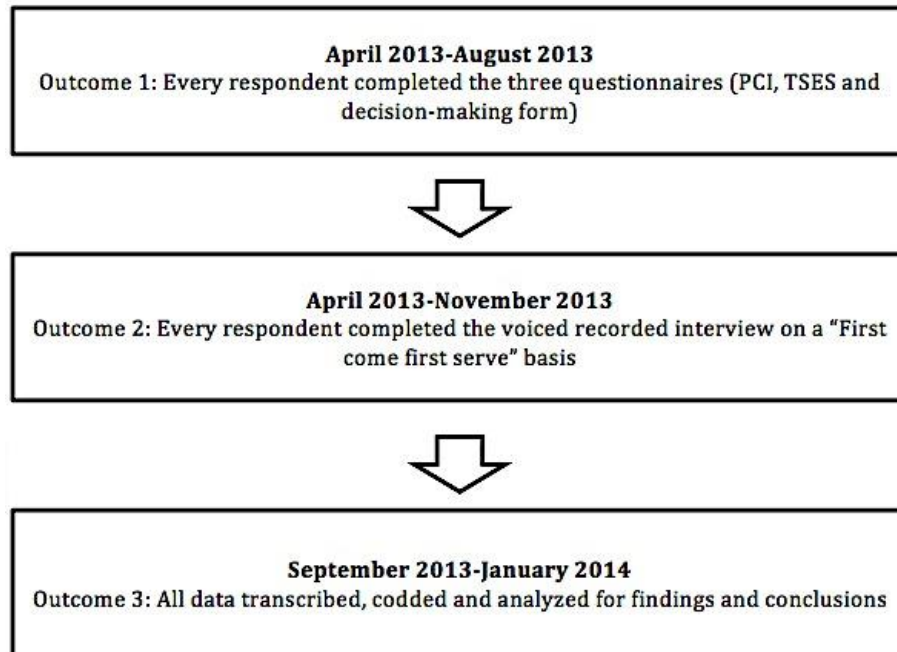
While conducting a qualitative case study, the researcher stumbled upon many changes of personal plans and unexpected circumstances during the phase of data collection. As far as practicality was concerned, contingency plans were incorporated to cater to the change of respondents' availability. This section is written prior to data analyses to explain the situations that occurred during the process of data collection.

Figure 22 is a chart to show the chronology of research that took place before the phase of data collection. The earliest activity started with the researcher setting himself as a participant observer in the private school to build the foundations of this research.



*Figure 22.* Process before data collection

Subsequently, Figure 23 is another chart to indicate the chronology of research during and after data collection. The duration between the dates may appear to coincide because the researcher has carried the process of research simultaneously. While waiting for one phase to complete, he would use the spare time to concentrate on other matters that are equally important and urgent to him.



*Figure 23.* Process during data collection

As mentioned before in chapter three, the PCI and TSES questionnaires were designated to provide descriptive data and support the personal profile of the interviewees. Unlike the PCI and TSES form, the design of the decision-making instrument was only available after a series of meetings, alterations and approval from two university lecturers in the field of education leadership.



In mid-January of 2013, several teachers from the English, Mandarin, Science and Mathematics departments were also approached to indicate if they understood the questions and instructions written in the *Decision-making* questionnaire. Within the same week, a pilot study was carried out on thirty teachers (excluding respondents) in the organization with the PCI and TSES questionnaire in order to analyze on its internal consistency reliability. By the end of March 2013, all the three questionnaires were ready to be used for this case study.

Subsequently, the commencement of the data collection was carried out officially in April 2013 after the approval from the Research Unit of the Malaysian Ministry of Education. Thereafter, fifteen teachers who were selected for this study (including the Head of Discipline) underwent through the phase of data collection that included the completion of the PCI form, the TSES form, the *Decision-making* questionnaire and a voice-recorded interview.

All three questionnaires and voice-recorded interview sessions were administered separately due to the numerous questions and amount of time involved. This was done to avoid straining respondents with unnecessary emotional or mental stress. Alongside, they were also briefed on their choice of participation, purpose of the research and instructions to complete of the questionnaires. As mentioned in chapter three, the questions from the *Decision-making* questionnaire were open ended and subjective in nature. Thus, respondents were supposed to reflect and express their thoughts through writings. Eventually, most teacher respondents took an average time frame of two weeks to return the form, while some took up to six weeks. As a strategy to save time, the researcher would proceed with the voiced-recorded interview when any of the teachers have completed the questionnaires. Personally for the researcher, it was an effective and efficient strategy to allow other teachers to complete their assignments without being hurried.

Upon collection of all three questionnaires, the researcher had achieved three outcomes: (a) capturing written data; (b) identifying responses that needed further clarification and; (c) creating rapport with the respondents for a more detailed interview. For every written script that was collected from the respondents, the researcher studied and thought of additional questions to clarify on their statements. Subsequently during voice-recorded interviews, all respondents were probed further and encouraged to elaborate on their personal encounters with students' discipline problems. While keeping in mind with the present scenario, teachers who worked in the school for many years were great informers of school history and culture.

From records, the time taken for each voiced recorded interview ranged between twenty to fifty minutes. Data transcription and coding started immediately and consecutively after the first interviewee completed the voiced recorded interview in September 2013. Eventually, all fifteen respondents (including the HOD) completed the voiced recorded interviews successfully by the end of November 2013. For each of them, the stage of data saturation enabled the researcher to finally focus on full data analyses that included transcribing, coding and conclusion that lasted until January 2014.

### **Process of Reporting Research**

As mentioned in chapter three, findings from the PCI and TSES forms were analyzed through IBM's Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for the purpose of description and individual profiling. However, no inferential statistical analyses were carried out due to small number of respondents. On the other hand, data from the *Decision-making* questionnaire and voiced-recorded interview were entered into ATLAS.ti to analyze for findings through coding and pattern recognition. To manage

the threats of information overload, non-relevant data were carefully sifted out, leaving only data within the scope and objectives of the research.

In chapter one, research questions were crafted in relation to the research objectives so to fulfill the overall purpose of this study. These research questions were arranged in a way that they are to be answered constructively in four continuous phases. The first phase of the research was to investigate teachers as decision-makers. Descriptive analyses (such as central tendency) are used to explain both the individual and the group's pupil control ideology and self-efficacy. The PCI form triangulated teachers' perception on their students, while the TSES triangulates their perception on personal confidence in aspects of student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management. Although the some items between the PCI and TSES were closely related, they extended the researcher's paradigm to elaborate on his respondents and supported the analysis of each personal profile. Ultimately, the first phase was carried out to answer the first research question in this case study.

The second phase of research investigated into the dimension of the process of decision-making. Teachers were asked to reflect on classroom discipline matters and describe on their experiences, considerations and rationale to personal decision-making. Thus, the second and third research questions were answered in this phase.

For the third phase, the researcher looked into the obstacles and issues (the fourth and fifth research question) related to personal decision-making. The fourth and fifth research question requires respondents to state their unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making respectively.

This exercise included categorizing and highlighting the main obstacles from every individual and among respondents. Lastly, phase four gathered personal suggestions to improve teachers' general practice in classroom control in order to answer the last

research question. Ultimately, the researcher highlighted the findings together with theoretical support to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making. The next will first introduce the demographic profiles, followed by the individual scores of Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy (TSES). Subsequently, all other results will be presented according to the sequence of the research questions.

## **Respondents' Collective Analyses**

### **Respondents' Demographic Profiles**

Through purposive sampling, fifteen respondents agreed to participate in this cases study. As explained, they were selected through purposive sampling with the assistance of the Head of Discipline, and in considerations of other criteria such as age, positions and teaching experiences. At the time of data collection, there were fifty-two teachers in the school consisted of permanent or contracted personnel. Contracted teachers who are those hired within six months, and teachers who work beyond the formal retirement age. For the latter, all of them are retirees from public schools and they are absorbed as teachers because of their technical knowledge and experiences.

All the respondents were also chosen based on their willingness to write, reflect and explain the issues pertaining to the purpose and objectives of this research. Table 10 presents the information pertaining to respondents' demographic profiles.

Table 10  
*Demographic Profiles of All Fifteen Respondents*

Demographic Profiles	Respondents	(%)
<b>A. Gender</b>		
1. Male	5	33.3
2. Female	10	66.7
Total	15	100
<b>B. Age</b>		
1. 21-30	3	20.0
2. 31-40	6	40.0
3. 41-50	2	13.3
4. 51-60	2	13.3
5. 61-70	2	13.3
Total	15	100
<b>C. Position</b>		
1. Teacher	11	73.3
2. Discipline Coordinator	3	20.0
3. Head of Discipline	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0
<b>D. Highest academic qualification</b>		
1. Certificate		
2. Diploma	2	13.3
3. Degree	7	46.7
4. Master	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0
<b>E. Teaching level</b>		
1. Higher secondary (Form 4–5)	5	33.3
2. Lower secondary (Form 1–3)	4	26.7
3. Both Higher and Lower Secondary	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0
<b>F. Department</b>		
1. Languages	3	20.0
2. Sciences	2	13.3
3. Mathematics	3	20.0
4. Social Sciences	1	6.7
5. Technical Sciences	4	26.7
6. Others	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0
<b>G. Certified from Teachers' Training College</b>		
1. Yes	8	53.3
2. No	7	46.7
Total	15	100.0

*Note: Total respondents, N=15.*

Table 11 is the Head of Discipline's impression on each respondent who were selected during purposive sampling. As mentioned in chapter three, nine teachers dropped out from the initial twenty three teachers prior to the actual data collection. Therefore, the

researcher could only present the HOD's impression for the balance of the fourteen respondents who volunteered for this study.

Table 11  
*Head of Discipline's (HOD) impression on fifteen respondents who were selected through purposive sampling*

Respondent's code	Respondent's position	HOD's impression from purposive sampling
Teacher A	Discipline coordinator	Likely self-reliant
Teacher B	Teacher advisor to the Prefects	Likely self-reliant
Teacher C	Head of Discipline	Not applicable
Teacher D	Subject/homeroom teacher	Likely angered
Teacher E	Discipline coordinator	Likely self-reliant
Teacher F	Discipline coordinator	Likely self-reliant
Teacher G	Subject teacher	Likely angered
Teacher H	Subject teacher	Likely self-reliant
Teacher I	Subject/homeroom teacher	Likely lenient
Teacher J	Subject/homeroom teacher	Likely ignorant
Teacher K	Subject teacher	Likely dependent on transfer
Teacher L	Subject teacher	Likely self-reliant
Teacher M	Subject teacher	Likely lenient
Teacher N	Subject/homeroom teacher	Likely dependent on transfer
Teacher O	Subject/homeroom teacher	Likely self-reliant

Note: *HOD is irrelevant in this table. Homeroom teacher is assigned to be charge of the organization and students' affairs management of their particular class.*

The HOD's impression is provided as a form of triangulation to support each respondent's profiles. As mentioned earlier, much of the selection criteria from the HOD were based from his experience while working with these teachers. However, no direct comparisons can be made among respondents because of different contexts and experience with discipline problems.

### **Analyses from Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) form**

Previous work from Willower, Eidell, and Hoy (1967) suggested that teachers' pupil control ideology could be described on a continuum between humanistic to custodial through the analysis of the *Pupil Control Ideology* (PCI) form. In addition, Sackney (1988) mentioned of the use of PCI form as an instrument to measure the school climate, particularly of the interaction between students and teachers, and how teachers actually perceive the nature of the organizational structure. Any schools using custodial approach would operate from a controlled, impersonal, and order-oriented environment. In other words, a custodial PCI view indicates a bureaucratic organizational setting. Conversely, a humanistic oriented school would operate from an interactive, self-disciplined and open communication atmosphere.

According to the email correspondence between the researcher and Professor Wayne Hoy, the value of PCI on the continuum is actually relative and there is no definite border between being humanistic or custodial. Should there be an intention to determine the cutoff point, it is advisable to get a representative sample of teachers (such as the ones determined in this study) to determine the mean score. The analyses of the PCI form as compared to the mean of the representative sample could only conclude who among the teachers was more custodial (or humanistic) than the other. As mentioned Professor Hoy, much of the interpretation of the PCI score is based upon contextual and cultural aspects of the sample.

Table 12 presents the PCI scores alongside the HOD's impression for each respondent. Additionally, each individual PCI scores were also triangulated with the HOD's impression during the purposive sampling exercise. In reality and practice, the use of data triangulation adds on another perspective to the profiles of respondents. As seen, respondents with the highest score for PCI were Teacher D, Teacher G, Teacher I

and Teacher N. Conversely, the most humanistic among all respondents was Teacher E. In both directions along the PCI continuum, any PCI value that was within one standard deviation ( $\pm 6.89$ ) of the mean value (67.73) was prescribed to be ‘moderate’. Subsequently, PCI values that exceeded more than one standard deviation were prescribed to be ‘very’.

Table 12  
*Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) Scores of All Respondents*

Respondents	PCI score	Analyses	HOD’s Impression
Teacher A	64	Moderately humanistic	Likely self-reliant
Teacher B	65	Moderately humanistic	Likely self-reliant
Teacher C (HOD)	62	Moderately humanistic	Not applicable
Teacher D	78	Most custodial	Likely angered
Teacher E	54	Most humanistic	Likely self-reliant
Teacher F	69	Moderately custodial	Likely self-reliant
Teacher G	77	Very custodial	Likely angered
Teacher H	64	Moderately humanistic	Likely self-reliant
Teacher I	76	Very custodial	Likely lenient
Teacher J	61	Moderately humanistic	Likely ignorant
Teacher K	62	Moderately humanistic	Likely dependent on transfer
Teacher L	70	Moderately custodial	Likely self-reliant
Teacher M	68	Moderately custodial	Likely lenient
Teacher N	75	Very custodial	Likely dependent on transfer
Teacher O	71	Very custodial	Likely self-reliant

Notably, it is technically inappropriate to conduct a correlational analysis between HOD’s impression with the PCI scores due to the small number of respondents. Moreover, the PCI form was never intended to be used for inferential analyses as stated in the objectives of this research. However, it is observable that the same behavior perceived by the HOD is found among respondents regardless of their PCI scores. Further analyses on each of these teachers will be presented individually at the end of this chapter for further reading or cross-referencing. Moreover, PCI scores would be utilized to support the findings for the last research question towards the end of this chapter.



## Analyses from Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

Analyses from the TSES (short form) portrayed mixed results that were different and individualistic among respondents. Measurement TSES scores were important to explore the cognitive and behavioral perceptions to self-confidence and personal ability, particularly in classroom management. Similar to the PCI form, the researcher had contacted Professor Anita Woolfolk on matters of analyses for fifteen respondents. According to her, factor analysis can be excluded with only fifteen teachers, and the group's mean is merely needed as an anchor to describe teachers' sense of efficacy. Therefore, every teacher's sense of efficacy can be described in relation to the mean of each subscale. Table 13 presents the comparative analyses on fifteen teachers' sense of efficacy.

Table 13  
*Comparative analyses on Teachers' Sense of Efficacy*

Respondents (N=15)	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)		
	Student Engagement	Instructional Strategies	Classroom Management
	*( $\underline{M}_1 = 6.85$ )	*( $\underline{M}_2 = 7.23$ )	*( $\underline{M}_3 = 7.10$ )
Teacher A	6.75	7.50	8.00
Teacher B	6.25	5.50	6.00
Teacher C (HOD)	7.50	6.00	6.25
Teacher D	8.00	8.00	8.25
Teacher E	5.75	6.50	6.50
Teacher F	5.75	6.50	5.75
Teacher G	8.00	7.00	7.75
Teacher H	7.25	7.25	7.75
Teacher I	6.50	8.00	7.00
Teacher J	7.25	8.50	7.25
Teacher K	6.25	8.00	5.75
Teacher L	6.50	6.50	7.25
Teacher M	8.00	7.50	8.00
Teacher N	7.00	7.50	7.25
Teacher O	6.00	8.25	7.75

*Note.* \*Means of each subscale score were calculated from fifteen respondents and labeled as  $\underline{M}_1$ ,  $\underline{M}_2$  and  $\underline{M}_3$  respectively. Teacher C is the Head of Discipline (HOD). Scores of less than the Subscale Mean value were considered less efficacious, and vice versa.

More descriptions on each of respondents will be presented individually at the end of this chapter. With to the PCI scores, the TSES scores would be co-utilized to support the findings for the last research question towards the end of this chapter. The following sections will present the results in accordance to the order of the research questions.

### **Phase One: Analyses of Context**

#### **Teachers as Decision-makers**

##### *Classroom control strategies.*

##### *Research question 1: What are the classroom control strategies that respondents practice in the organization?*

Analyses from data coding showed that teachers in the school applied many strategies of classroom control. While some tactics appeared to be distinctive, some are also disparate to be classified under any strategies. Data also showed that respondents used different tactics that were also classified under different strategies and purposes.

As a limitation of research, the list of tactics was non-exhaustive as results were only derived from fifteen respondents. Yet, data analyses have outlined four fundamental purposes in every strategy: (1) for education; (2) for prevention; (3) for correction; and (4) for punishment. Referring to the school's rules and regulations, the purpose of punishment is to impose physical corrections that include corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsion. It is an organizational practice that punitive strategies can only be carried out by the Head of Discipline and the Principal. Additionally, teachers in the school are not allowed to use any forms of physical punishments even if these punishments appeared mild or harmless. Nevertheless, some have reported to use punishments that were considered mild to them, such as asking students to stand for some time (Teacher E).

During the course of analyses, one of the complications of explaining teachers' classroom control was that both strategies and tactics appeared similar and spoken interchangeably by respondents. In the study of organizational management, a strategy is a larger, overall plan that can comprise several tactics, which are smaller, focused, less impactful plans that are part of the overall plan. In addition, it was observed that the use of personal strategies varied while the purposes were interweaving. In other words, personal strategies were found to be preferential, inconsistent, unpredictable and situational among all respondents. Additionally, teachers could also be using more than one strategy and purpose simultaneously. Table 14 presents respondents' list of classroom control strategies when dealing with students' discipline problems in their classrooms. It is important for the reader to know that all tactics and strategies were identified through the interpretive coding and categorization of the researcher. Due to in-depths interviews from open ended questions, not all respondents have to necessarily appear in any of the said strategy.

Table 14  
*Classroom Control Strategies among Fifteen Respondents*

Strategies	Tactics	No. of times mentioned	Mentioned by
Self-directed	1. Approachable to students	3	Teacher B
	2. Avoid being emotional	2	Teacher M, J
	3. Aware of students' behaviors and temperaments	8	Teacher K, J, D, M, F, B
	4. Improve communications with students	4	Teacher B, C
	5. Do not stereotype students on their past	21	Teacher L, I, N, K, H, A, J, J. D. E. O. G
	6. Eagerly investigates	16	Teacher I, J, J, D, C, M, E, F, B, G
	7. Flexible with different behaviors	8	Teacher I, F, B, J
	8. Prefers correction over punishment	4	Teacher J, K
	9. Prefers to reason than to enforce	9	Teacher J, C, M, B, N, K
	10. Rationalize on students' patterns of behaviors	10	Teacher I, A, D, M, E, O, G
	11. Resourceful to relate to students	3	Teacher D, F
	12. Sensitive and aware of socio-cultural differences	3	Teacher O
	13. Strict to get things done	14	Teacher F, B, H, A, D, E, O. G
	14. Strict when discipline problems occur	8	Teacher N, A, M, O, B, G, L, E
Student-directed	15. Allocates time for students to reflect and apologize	8	Teacher B, F, O, G, L
	16. Allows students to explain	3	Teacher F, N, K
	17. Demands compliance to school rules	6	Teacher A, F, O, G, L
	18. Execute mild punishment	2	Teacher L, E
	19. Explain rationale before punishment	1	Teacher C
	20. Focus on building students' trust	12	Teacher J, C, B
	21. Intolerant towards repeated mistakes	11	Teacher N, H, A, D, E, F, B
	22. Treats students' childish behaviors leniently	5	Teacher B
	23. Refers to counselor	3	Teacher A, F
	24. Reminds students on behaviors	2	Teacher N, A
	25. Scolds students publicly	4	Teacher D, O
	26. Show temperaments to students	1	Teacher D
	27. Ignore students' manipulative behaviors	1	Teacher J
Situation-directed	28. Anticipate risks and threats	5	Teacher M, F
	29. Contain problem from escalating further	4	Teacher B, D, C
	30. Prioritize on urgent matters	4	Teacher N, D, B
Organizational-directed	31. Rely strictly on SOPs for decision-making	6	Teacher J, E
	32. Transfer to HOD for urgent/complicated discipline problems	13	Teacher I, N, K. A. J, D, F, O, B, K
	33. Improve collegiality among teachers	5	Teacher I, C, B, G
	34. Influence to improve on SOPs	7	Teacher I, C, M, E, F

The researcher would further discuss on each of the strategies in chapter four. As in the area of pupil control ideology, the mixture of humanistic and custodial scores supported the theoretical view that respondents actually use both enforcing and supportive tactics to achieve the purpose behind each strategy. In general, custodial view on the PCI continuum would literary meant that respondents would have a more combination of enforcing tactics as compared to supportive tactics (Baş, 2012). Table 15 highlights the use of strategies for the purpose of education, prevention, correction and punishment in accordance to respondents' perceptions and opinions.

Table 15  
*Multipurpose Reasons behind Respondents' Four-directed Strategies for Classroom Control*

Strategies	Purposes	Examples
Self-directed	a) For Education: To improve on personal strengths (such as skills, leadership styles and problem solving) in classroom management	Teacher D, N, I
	b) For Prevention: To avoid from overreacting and punishing students unjustly	Teacher J, K
	c) For Correction: To improve on personal weakness through self-reflection	Teacher A, O)
Student-directed	a) For Education: To teach and cultivate students towards good behaviors	Teacher A, F
	b) For Correction: To highlight students' mistakes and guide them to change	Teacher K, D
	c) For Prevention: To curb students' misbehaviors from deteriorating and re-occurring in the future (Examples: Teacher J, M)	Teacher J, M
	d) For Punishment: To enforce change through autocratic styles of classroom leadership	Teacher L, G
Situation-directed	a) For Education: To manage discipline situations according to importance and urgency	Teacher N
	b) For Correction: To foresee risks and manage uncertainties	Teacher O, M, F
	c) For Prevention: To control situations from deteriorating and to evaluate them reoccurring	Teacher C, D
Organizational-directed	a) For Education: To manage discipline problems within personal roles and scope of SOPs	Teacher E, F, H
	b) For Prevention: To depend on SOPs for protection when responding to familiar/unfamiliar discipline problems.	Teacher J, E
	c) For Correction: To improve collegiality and influence organizational change towards effectiveness and efficiency through personal opinions, consensus or collaborations.	Teacher N, B, C, G

To explain how respondents relate their strategies with purpose, a few of their responses are exemplified below. In relation to using self-directed strategies for the purpose of education, correction and prevention, Teacher D highlighted,

*“Normally, I would be strict to ensure that students would understand my lessons, so that the teaching and learning processes are not interrupted.”*

(Line 43 from personal transcripts.)

As for Teacher K, she highlighted the need to use student-directed strategies for education, prevention and correction,

*“I always give students a chance to explain themselves and before making my conclusion. I give them the benefit of doubt and to remind them that they have to be responsible to what they say or do.”*

(Line 41 from personal transcripts.)

In aspects of situation-directed strategies, Teacher O highlighted the purpose of correcting and preventing discipline problems from escalation,

*“If every discipline problem is to be reported to the management, I feel that a trivial discipline case could worsen by the time a solution is determined.”*

(Line 48 from personal transcripts.)

As for organizational-directed strategies for the purpose of education, prevention and correction, Teacher N highlighted,

*“I prefer the school to enforce more punishments other than just reprimanding so that students can really change from their mistakes.”*

(Line 47 from personal transcripts.)

In relation to styles, respondents portrayed emotions behind different levels of coercive and supportive tactics in classroom control. Emotions like anger (Teacher D and H), frustrations (Teacher J), calmness (Teacher C) and assuring (Teacher K) differentiated their leadership styles in their classroom. Nevertheless, it is not the purpose of this

research to investigate on emotions when respondents decide to enforce or support behind the strategies that they used on students. This additional viewpoint emerged from the researcher's analyses due to the rich data obtained from a qualitative study. As a supplementary finding, Table 16 distinguishes teachers' tactics in classroom control according to enforcing and supportive styles. After omitting other tactics that are not distinguishable, both supportive styles and enforcing styles emerged out of data comparisons.

Table 16  
*Differentiating Enforcing or Supportive Styles among Tactics used by Respondents*

Styles	Tactics	Examples
Supportive	1. Allocates time for students to reflect and apologize	Teacher J, D, M, K, B
	2. Approachable to students	Teacher C, B
	3. Build good teacher-student relationship	
	4. Focus on building students' trust	Teacher J, D, B, C
	5. Lenient towards childish behaviors	Teacher B
	6. Prefers correction over punishment	Teacher J, K, B
	7. Prefers to reason than to enforce	Teacher J, M, N, K, B
Enforcing	1. Demands compliance to school rules	Teacher A, F, O, G, L
	2. Execute mild punishment	Teacher E, L
	3. Intolerant towards repeated mistakes	Teacher N, H, A, D, E, F
	4. Scolds students publicly	Teacher D, O
	5. Show temperaments to students	Teacher B
	6. Strict to get things done	Teacher F, H, A, D, O,
	7. Strict when discipline problems occur	G, E, L, B

As a brief summary on the first research question, the researcher concludes that thirty-four respondents' classroom control strategies were personal, preferential and situational. In relation to the analyses from the PCI form, respondents' tactics were also differentiated through styles of enforcing or supporting. Subsequently, respondents' classroom control strategies were categorized into four-directed strategies: (a) self-directed; (b) student-directed; (c) situation-directed; and (e) organizational-directed.

Even though their organizational Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) demands strict adherence, teachers used multiple strategies for different purposes simultaneously.

However, there is much to explore on how teachers make decisions when they apply these strategies in their classrooms. Therefore, the researcher's quest to explain on their processes of decision-making will be presented in the next phase.

## **Phase Two: Analyses of the Process**

### **Process of Decision-making**

For the second phase of the research, respondents were asked of how they made decisions pertaining to discipline problems in the classrooms. Initially, the researcher presumed that teachers would portray the same process of decision-making under their common standard operating procedures (SOPs). However, it was uncovered in phase one that teachers do not practice the same strategies and tactics of classroom control even though the discipline problem may be similar. Thus, their personal patterns of decision-making were analyzed (collectively and individually) despite their compliance with the standard organizational process of decision-making. Much information pertaining to individual patterns will be presented at the last section of this chapter. As for patterns that are analyzed collectively, they would be presented in the next section.

*Patterns from data analyses.*

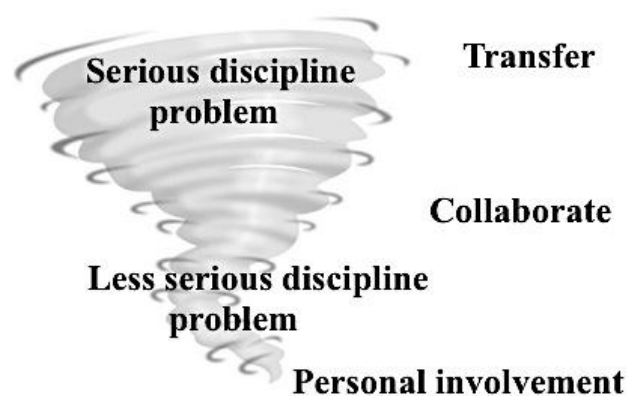
*Research question 2: What are the observable patterns of decision-making when respondents manage classroom discipline?*

Analyses of data suggests that regardless if teachers chose to use the four-directed strategies that were either supportive or enforcing, their patterns of decision-making were found to be progressing from personal involvement, collaboration and



finally transfer to the Head of Discipline (HOD). All respondents expected the HOD to intervene and solve the discipline problems upon transfer.

Another recognizable pattern was that teachers would progress their process of decision-making from personal involvement to collaboration and finally transfer when discipline problems deteriorates from less serious to more serious (as indicated by Teacher A, E, H, L and M). Cross checking with their PCI and TSES values in Table 12, no predictions can be made from this case study to explain if these teachers are likely to transfer discipline cases due to these internal variables. However, theoretical triangulation from Martin et al. (1999) had suggested that teachers who are prone to transfer discipline cases are reported to have low self-efficacies. Additionally, teachers with high PCI values also tend to be low in their self-efficacies according to Woolfolk, Rosoff and Hoy (1990). Interestingly, there are teachers who would prefer to transfer directly to the HOD without any need for collaboration when discipline matters are very urgent and serious (as indicated by Teacher D, F, G, J and O). As an illustration, Figure 24 shows the patterns of decision-making exhibited by respondents as a result from data analyses.



*Figure 24.* Respondents' Patterns of Decision-making

***Research question 3: What is the extent of respondents' personal involvement in decision-making?***

In this section, the researcher would elaborate on the subject of transfer and explain on teachers' extent of personal involvement. Prior to the beginning of the sampling exercise, the Head of Discipline (HOD) was asked to reflect and identify teachers who were suitable for this case study. The purposive sampling was carried out to narrow down respondents in the school so that much information can be captured and analyzed (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Rationally, the Head of Discipline (HOD) would be fully involved and decide on all discipline matters in the school. Regardless of the nature of the discipline case, the HOD must prepare a report to explain his decisions and outcome of personal intervention to the principal. Thus, the HOD would only transfer discipline cases to the principal. Occasionally, he would collaborate with his team of Discipline Coordinators for consensus towards a final decision. Due to this obvious circumstance, this research question will only concentrate on the rest of the fourteen teachers because little was known on the extent of personal involvement among the fourteen other respondents.

To answer the question on teachers' extent of personal involvement, the researcher looked into four areas of sub-analyses: (a) their frequency of transfer; (b) internal factors related to transfer (such as PCI/TSES scores, roles or experience); (c) how they differentiate between a serious and a less serious discipline problem; and (d) their personal intervention prior to transfer. Other minor questions to support individual perceptions on their extent of personal involvement were written separately and included as individual analyses in the last section of this chapter. As much as collective analyses are concerned, only major areas from (a) to (d) are addressed. Additionally, the researcher will compare respondents in terms of similarities and differences.

*Respondents' frequency of transfer.*

In one of the questions from the *Decision-making* questionnaire, respondents were asked on their frequency of transfer (to the HOD) for both serious and serious discipline problems. Respondents who answered 'frequently' serious discipline problems and 'sometimes' for less serious discipline problems were highlighted and tabulated for reader's reference. Table 17 presents the data pertaining to the frequency of transfer among fourteen respondents.

Table 17  
*Analyses of Fourteen Respondents on their Frequency of Transfer to the Head of Discipline (HOD)*

Type of discipline problems	Frequency of transfer	Respondents	No. of respondents
Serious discipline problem	Never	Teacher A	1
		Sometimes	6
		Teacher B	
		Teacher H	
		Teacher I	
		Teacher J	
		Teacher K	
		Teacher O	
		Frequently	5
		Teacher D	
	Teacher E		
	Teacher F		
	Teacher G		
	Teacher N		
	Total	12	
Less serious discipline problems	Never	Teacher A	10
		Teacher B	
		Teacher D	
		Teacher F	
		Teacher G	
		Teacher H	
		Teacher I	
		Teacher K	
		Teacher L	
		Teacher O	
	Sometimes	3	
	Teacher E		
	Teacher J		
	Teacher N		
	Frequently	–	nil
	Total		13

*Note: The Head of Department (Teacher C) was excluded in this table. Teacher M was omitted from the table as she gave no answer to these two questions. Teacher L did not give any answer for 'serious discipline problem', and therefore was omitted in the first section.*

Notably, the focus should be on teachers who have stated high frequencies of transfer for both serious and less serious discipline problems. Respondents who have stated “frequently” (Teacher D, E, F, G and N) and “sometimes” (Teacher E, J, N) were further analyzed in their internal factors. Through triangulation, the researcher looked into their PCI/TSES scores, the HOD’s opinion during purposive sampling and other related findings to understand and explain their reasons behind transfer. The subsequent section explains further on of these particular respondents.

*Respondents’ internal factors related to transfer.*

Due to the nature of a case study, the question on the frequency of transfer was subjective because it was based on individual’s perception. Logically, every respondent does not necessarily encounter the same number of discipline problems, or the same types of discipline problems. Thus, the researcher reminded respondents that their responses should be based on likelihoods, habits and experiences. On this basis for comparisons, it was observable that there were more teachers who claimed that they ‘never’ transfer less serious discipline cases as compared to those who mentioned ‘sometimes’. With exception to Teacher A, a majority of teachers shifted their answers to ‘sometimes’ for serious discipline problem. Later however, Teacher A explained why transfer is better preferred over personal involvement,

“Over the years, I no longer prefer to punish students unless I have the right to do it. Getting them to reflect and write on to their mistakes should be more effective as compared to punishment. Times have changed as parents and students are aware of their rights now. If punishment is to be carried out, it has to be reasonable to the problem. Otherwise, parents will see you in court! The best outcome for me is to see students recognizing their mistakes and understand our intentions behind the punishment. “(Line 60 from personal transcripts.)

Cross referencing to Teacher A revealed that he is an experienced teacher who was once the Head of Discipline. His TSES scores were less efficacious in student engagement while his PCI scores were moderately humanistic. He credited his abilities to manage students' misbehaviors to experience. Thus, years of exposure in discipline management gave him the confidence to handle discipline cases personally without any need to refer to the Head of Discipline.

Respondents' extent of personal involvement was not merely assessed in terms of their frequency of transfer. To further explain on the reasons, all respondents were triangulated from different perspectives that inculcated their PCI scores, TSES scores, and obstacles to decision-making. In addition, the HOD's opinion (from purposive sampling) was also considered as evidence to corroborate with these factors. Therefore, the following results will concentrate on teachers who prefer to transfer discipline cases to the Head of Discipline. Specifically, teachers who claimed to "frequently" transfer serious discipline problems and to "sometimes" transfer less serious discipline case were narrowed in for comparisons as in Table 18 and Table 19 respectively.

Table 18

*Analyses of Respondents Who “Frequently” Transfer Serious Discipline Problems to the Head of Discipline (HOD)*

Respondents	Personal profile	HOD’s criteria during purposive sampling	Obstacle(s) to personal decision-making
Teacher D	High PCI scores (Most custodial) Efficacious in all three subscales	Likely angered	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Parental involvement
Teacher E	Low PCI score (Most humanistic) Less efficacious in all three subscales	Likely self-reliant	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Pre-existing work culture Parental involvement
Teacher F	Average PCI score (Moderately custodial) Less efficacious in all three subscales	Likely self-reliant	Pre-existing work culture Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Quality of teacher-student relationship Socio-cultural differences among students Parental involvement
Teacher G	High PCI scores (Very custodial) Less efficacious in instructional strategies	Likely angered	Pre-existing work culture Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Quality of teacher-student relationship Parental involvement
Teacher N	High PCI scores (Very custodial) Efficacious in all three subscales	Likely dependent on transfer	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Parental involvement

*Head of Discipline is referred to as HOD.*

Table 19

*Analyses of Respondents Who “Sometimes” Transfer Less Serious Discipline Problems to the Head of Discipline (HOD)*

Respondents	Personal profile	HOD’s criteria during purposive sampling	Obstacle(s) to personal decision-making
Teacher E	Low PCI score (Most humanistic) Less efficacious in all three subscales	Likely self-reliant	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Pre-existing work culture Parental involvement
Teacher J	Average PCI score (Moderately humanistic) Efficacious in all three subscales	Likely ignorant	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Pre-existing work culture Quality of teacher-student relationship
Teacher N	High PCI scores (Very custodial) Efficacious in all three subscales	Likely dependent on transfer	Bureaucratic structure: Obstacles in SOPs Parental involvement

*Head of Discipline is referred to as HOD.*

As the analyses looked into teachers who responded “frequently” and “sometimes”, it was evident that Teacher E and Teacher N appeared in both tables as likely to transfer discipline cases to the Head of Discipline. Further analyses into Teacher E revealed that despite her role as a discipline coordinator, she preferred to transfer discipline case to the HOD because it was not within her powers to decide on matters pertaining to any outcome of discipline problem. In other words, she was

merely complying with organizational procedures even though she mentioned that she was capable of solving the problem. Therefore, she preferred collaboration over personal decision to determine the outcome of discipline problems. Unlike Teacher E, Teacher N was not in the discipline committee. Despite highlighting her limited role in decision-making (like Teacher E), she attributed low confidence as her problem to further involve in decision-making.

Another noticeable conclusion is that while Teacher N was efficacious in all three subscales, the PCI score was found to be highly custodial. In contrast, it was also noticeable in Teacher E that while all subscales was less efficacious, the PCI score was found to be the most humanistic. This is contrary to previous empirical findings that highlighted teachers with high PCI would usually be less efficacious (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990). On the basis of personal habits and experience, many more comparisons can be made among the list of fifteen respondents pertaining to their frequencies in transfer. For the purpose of explanation, the researcher has picked two samples among respondents (such as Teacher E and Teacher N) to explain the extent of personal involvement due to their likelihood to transfer discipline cases to the HOD. For readers' own reference, the analyses of every respondent are presented in the last section of this chapter. However, the researcher will compare the similarities and differences between all respondents towards the end of this section to conclude on their extent of personal involvement.

Across all respondents, it was notable that internal factors are insufficient to explain the reasons behind the frequencies of transfer. Regardless of their pupil control ideology and personal level of efficacy, teachers attributed more of their behaviors to external obstacles that inhibit personal decision-making. Interestingly, this was also consistent with the findings from Oldenburg et al., (2015) and Wang, Hall & Rahimi (2015) who mentioned that when teachers do not feel that they have personal influence

or control over a discipline situation, they are most likely to attribute their failures to external factors.

This idea was also substantiated through the examples of Teacher H, M and N who were efficacious in all three subscales but each highlighted personal obstacles to decision-making. Even though Table 12 and Table 13 portrayed the obstacles associated with personal decision-making, much of these external factors will be presented in the next phase of findings; the obstacles of decision-making.

*Respondents' perceptions to differentiate between a serious and a less serious discipline problem.*

From analyses, all respondents described serious discipline problems as synonymous to physical injuries and harm to others. Although their experiences with discipline problems were different and contextual, they defined seriousness similarly from a few other aspects. Beyond their personal strategies and styles in classroom management, their personal differentiating aspects determined if the discipline problem should be solved personally, or be transferred to the Head of Discipline for further actions. Table 20 is a comparative summary between a serious and a less serious discipline problem according to all fifteen respondents' perceptions (including the Head of Discipline, HOD). All aspects of comparisons were based on their opinions, experience and personal encounters with discipline problems.



Table 20

*Comparisons between a Serious and Less Serious Discipline Problem from Respondents' Perspectives*

Aspects	Highlighted by	Situation of Discipline Problem	
		Less Serious	Serious
Involvement of principal	Teacher J	Less likely	More likely
Involvement of more people	Teacher K,J,E,O,B	Less likely	More likely
Standard Operating Procedures	Teacher B	Less procedures	More procedures
Potential physical injury	All respondents	Less likely	Likely
Time for contemplation	Teacher L, J	Shorter duration	Longer duration
Urgency for decision-making	Teacher H,J,F,G,B	Need not be immediate	Must be immediate
Emotional harm or hurt	Teacher I,K,M,G	Less likely	More likely
Need of corroboration	Teacher N	Less likely	More likely
Requires transfer	Teacher L,A,D,O,E,F	Less likely	More likely
Types of portrayal	Teacher L,H,J	Verbal	Physical and emotional
Familiarity to the problem	Teacher L,N,K,A,B,C	High	Low
Pranks and mischiefs	Teacher A	More likely	Less likely
Frequency of encounter	Teacher B,N	More	Less
Elements of risk	Teacher O	Low	High

*Note: Aspects of differentiation were identified through data coding and limited to a total of fifteen respondents.*

From respondents' viewpoints, physical risk is the differentiating aspect that distinguishes a serious discipline problem from a less serious one. For teacher H, she explained,

*“Serious discipline problems are actions that can disrupt or threaten the educational process. Some examples are vandalizing school’s property, drug abuse and disrespectful to teachers. I once witnessed a serious incident where naughty students threw my colleague’s handbag in the dustbin in another class. Instantly, I reported the case to the Head of Discipline. “*

(Line 44 from personal transcripts.)

From her sharing, she indicated the need to transfer to the HOD whenever she is faced with serious discipline problems. Her response was also supported by Teacher C,

*“Serious discipline problems usually affect and impact the school community in a big way, while less serious ones are considered trivial and do not impact others other than their own self. Some examples of serious discipline problems are fights, smoking and threatening others, while trivial ones usually involves impletion of homework or coming late to class.”*

(Line 44 from personal transcripts.)

As for Teacher J, she also highlighted her assumptions from her experience,

*“Serious discipline problems are often traced to family issues at home, whereas less serious ones are not caused by external factors.”*

(Line 47 from personal transcripts.)

In reality, not every respondent highlighted the same number of aspects for comparison. Nevertheless, all responses were gathered and compiled altogether to present a general overview on how discipline problems were perceived among all fifteen respondents.

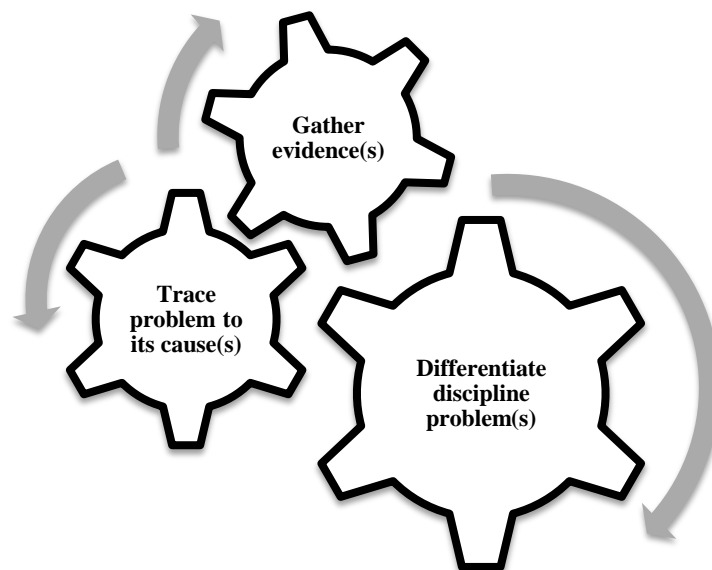
*Personal intervention prior to transfer.*

Prior to transferring discipline cases to the HOD, all respondents confirmed during the interview that they could gather evidences, trace problems to their cause and differentiate the seriousness of discipline problems. They claimed that these measures were taken to conclude if discipline situations were serious enough before they decide on their next course of actions. Table 21 presents the result analyses on coding from all fifteen respondents to highlight their abilities in the three areas within personal involvement. Within the same table, respondents explained further on their reasons to intervene at the personal level.

Table 21  
*Respondents' Personal Intervention Prior to Transfer*

Personal intervention	Further explanation	No. of times mentioned	Mentioned by
Gather evidence(s)	Respondents would probe students to investigate	12	Teacher L, K, H, A, J, M, E, F, O
	Respondents would be assertive to ask for confession with sufficient evidence	2	Teacher L
	Respondents would look for students' favorite hangouts during investigations	3	Teacher N
	Respondents wanted to be sure in their investigations	15	Teacher N, H,A, D,M,E,F,G,
	Respondents wanted to be neutral and fair before concrete evidence is found	11	Teacher C,E, F, O, G
	Respondents would corroborate with other teachers to find evidence	3	Teacher J,F
	Respondents gather evidence to find out if students are lying	2	Teacher A, N
	Respondents wanted to find out if problems are repeated	7	Teacher J, D, F, G, O
	Respondents wanted to identify students who are directly/indirectly involved	16	Teacher L, I, N, K, H,A. D,F,O,G
	Respondents wanted to separate the culprit from the victim	8	Teacher N, K, A, D, O
	Respondents gather evidence to ascertain students' intentions	3	Teacher L, I
Trace problem to cause(s)	Respondents highlighted the cause of problems be from internal and external factors	5	Teacher J, B
	Respondents mentioned that they would find out about student' environment at home	4	Teacher L, A, J and E
	Respondents attributed problems to societal labeling on weaker students	3	Teacher D
	Respondents mentioned that discipline problems are caused by peer groups	2	Teacher A
	Respondents tend to use their instincts for personal judgment	3	Teacher A, D and K
Differentiate discipline problem(s)	Respondents differentiate the problems by looking at students' habits and patterns	5	Teacher I, J, E,O,G,
	Respondents differentiate problems by relying on their experience	10	Teacher N. K. A, J, M, G
	Respondents differentiate problems by looking at urgency	2	Teacher E, F

For each respondent's individual analysis, further information will be provided at the end of this chapter. In essence, respondents carried out these tasks within their investigation process to arrive to personal decision: (a) to transfer the problem to the discipline teachers; (b) to seek assistance from others (collaborate); or (b) to solve the discipline problem personally. Additionally, if there were no option for immediate transfer to the Head of Discipline, some respondents will do their best to contain the situation from deterioration (as mentioned by Teacher I and G). These teachers would (a) gather as much evidence as possible and; (b) be prepared to give an account to the principal or Head of Discipline. These steps were carried out to fulfill personal responsibilities and organizational expectations before proceeding into collaborating or transfer to other persons-in-charge. As an illustration, Figure 25 summarizes respondents' intervention within personal involvement.



*Figure 25.* Personal interventions prior to transfer

In addition, it was not known if respondents intervened with these measures consistently in their professional practice. As highlighted earlier, respondents were only probed on the frequency of transfer between serious or less serious discipline problems.

When respondents indicated a high frequency of transfer to the Head of Discipline, the researcher cannot ascertain if such behavior implicate a lesser tendency to carry out these measures within the personal involvement stage. As a precaution of research, the researcher must not conclude without sufficient evidence. However, knowing that they carried out all three measures was a good indicator that none of the respondents were lacking in basic skills for personal involvement.

Furthermore, the time taken between personal involvements prior to transfer varied between one respondent to another. Some respondents preferred to give second chances to their students, to allow students to reflect on their mistakes and to delay transfers to HOD (such as Teacher J, K and I). These teachers preferred to withhold punishments and concentrate on corrections and support.

Other respondents would transfer discipline problems immediately to the Head of Discipline to comply with organizational protocol, even though they were capable handling matters directly (Teacher N and E). For Teacher A and H, transfer was perceived as an act of compliance, rather than a projection of incompetence. Naturally, respondents would expect the HOD to decide on the best outcome if any discipline cases were to be transferred to him.

In essence, all respondents admitted that *Teachers' Code of Ethics* and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the school have limited personal involvement, especially in personal decision-making. These findings will be elaborated further in the following research questions. While all respondents acknowledged their personal duties to manage students' discipline, they expressed the risk of trespassing

beyond the SOPs. Several teachers cautioned that a lack of awareness to SOPs could lead to wrong strategies and styles of classroom control even though they have trace discipline problems to their cause correctly. Other teachers have also expressed that they would spread out risks of decision-making through collaboration with other teachers, and thread along the fine lines of SOPs when solutions are unclear or unstated.

### ***Similarities in the process of decision-making.***

To conclude collectively on the extent of personal involvement, the researcher will now compare the similarities and differences between all respondents. Unlike the roles of the Head of Discipline, all fourteen respondents shared four prominent characteristics in their own professional capacities. Firstly, all respondents claimed that they could do the following during investigations into discipline case: (1) gather evidences; (2) differentiate problems and; (3) trace discipline problems to their cause.

These finding suggests that respondents do not lack the ability for personal involvement. Nevertheless, data analyses could not: (1) support if respondents lack the effort to carry out all of these measures consistently in their classroom control; or (2) rank these separate actions into a process of identifiable steps. Instead, data could only suggest that these steps were interrelated, occurred simultaneously and differed in each individual's circumstance.

Secondly, all respondents reported two prominent factors that inhibited personal decision-making in the bureaucratic organization. These factors that were frequently mentioned are: (1) obstacles in SOPs and (2) parental involvement. Nevertheless, there were other factors highlighted as external obstacles and they will be unveiled in the next research question. Interestingly, all respondents highlighted the way they perceive discipline problems as related to their likelihood to involve or transfer discipline cases to others. In terms of similarity, teachers perceived serious discipline problems as

having the potential to cause physical harm and injuries. However, other aspects of comparison varied from one respondent to another.

Thirdly, all fourteen teachers reported of progressing from personal involvement to collaboration and finally transfer of discipline cases when discipline problems worsened. Even though the lack of ability was not the main problem among the respondents, the Head of Discipline highlighted that there was a lack of effort to be more involved in discipline management at the personal level. Rationally, the frequency of transfer for trivial discipline cases could be reduced if measures are concentrated to improve teachers' lack of effort and simultaneously on their abilities during personal involvement. Thereafter, solutions could be set in place to enable teachers to be more competent and committed to towards discipline management.

Fourthly, almost all respondents mentioned of the need to transfer when confronted with serious discipline problems. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this progression in the process of decision-making ultimately ends in transfer. Even though Teacher A and Teacher L mentioned to have "never" transferred serious discipline case to the HOD, they were referring to cases that they can solve within their abilities, roles and experience. This finding is consistent in explaining why the Head of Discipline was so preoccupied with discipline cases that were referred over from many teachers in the school. Further enquiries from the other fourteen respondents (inclusive of Teacher L and Teacher A) revealed that they chose to transfer to comply with the Standard Organizational Procedures (SOP). In other words, transfer was perceived as mandatory in the organization, and that personal decision-making on serious discipline problem is prohibited for serious discipline problems. Alternatively, teachers in the school punish students by using other tactics that were non-physical such as the merit-demerit point system (MDS). Even though all teachers are encouraged to work as a team in ensuring the enforcement and consistency of the system, it is yet to be evaluated

on its effectiveness and commitment from teachers to reduce the number of discipline cases occurring in the school. Nevertheless, it is one of the suggestions highlighted to improve discipline management in the school.

***Differences in the process of decision-making.***

In aspects of difference, all fourteen respondents differed in four prominent characteristics. Firstly, all respondents scored a mixture of PCI values between humanistic and custodial along the pupil control ideology continuum. Relatively, some individuals may be more custodial than others when compared against the mean value of all fifteen respondents.

According to Willower et al., (1973), a custodial PCI score stresses the maintenance of order, impersonality, unilateral-downward communication, distrust of students, and a punitive, moralistic orientation toward control of students. Having the mode of custodial perception was also a direct indication to describe the bureaucratic nature of the organization, or a strict school climate.

The second difference lies in the frequencies of transfer between respondents when dealing with both serious and less serious discipline problems. Due to qualitative analyses, the frequency of transfer was a subjective question because it was based on individual's perception on the basis of personal habits, likelihood and experience. Nevertheless, a new hypothesis emerged after data analyses to test if there is an inverse relationship between teachers' frequency of transfer with their extent of personal involvement in discipline cases. Thus, it is an additional and indirect contribution from this case study.

Fourthly, all fourteen respondents portrayed different classroom leadership styles within personal involvement. Beyond the analysis of PCI form and the TSES, a large portion of findings were analyzed and uncovered from the decision-making



questionnaire. As indicated from data analyses, the flexibility to change from one style to another was prevalent among teachers who had many years of experience dealing with discipline problems.

As a conclusion to this point, the researcher had explained the extent of personal involvement among respondents with regards to (a) respondents' frequency of transfer; (b) internal factors related to transfer (such as personal roles, experience or PCI and TSES scores); (c) how they differentiate between a serious and less serious discipline problem; and (d) their personal interventions prior to transfer.

Collective comparisons in aspects of similarities and differences were also made to explain their extent of personal involvement. Subsequently, the next research questions distinguishes how teachers perceive between a serious to a less serious discipline problem and external obstacles related to their extent of personal involvement.

### **Phase Three: Analyses of Content**

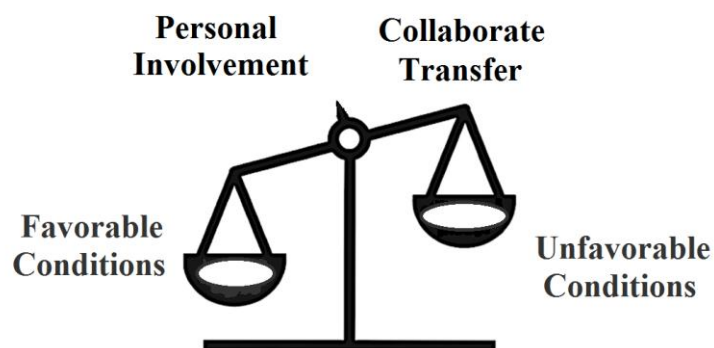
#### **Unfavorable Conditions and Obstacles to Personal Decision-making**

The following section will present the findings of analyses pertaining to respondents' unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making. During interviews, each respondent expressed their personal opinions on external conditions that resulted in further involvement (or withdrawal) from personal decision-making. As mentioned in chapter three, their responses were recorded, analyzed, differentiated and eventually categorized into key obstacles that inhibit personal decision-making. These obstacles will later be discussed separately as issues in chapter five as suggestions for organizational improvements.

**Research Question 4: What are the unfavourable conditions to personal decision-making?**

In this section, all fifteen respondents were asked to highlight external conditions that are favorable or unfavorable to personal decision-making. This research question is important to further explain the extent and rationale behind their decisions for personal involvement. In the context of this research, respondents view personal decision-making as having the power and freedom to control the discipline situation without worrying about consequences arising from organizational pressures or parental threats.

As illustrated in Figure 26, respondents would likely to be more involved in personal decision-making if favorable conditions are stronger than unfavorable conditions. On the contrary, teachers would prefer to collaborate or transfer cases to other personnel when unfavorable conditions are more prevalent. This theory is derived from Thorndike's (1911) *Law of Effect* that states that behavior that is followed by positive consequences will likely be repeated (Nevin, 1999). This illustration is also consistent with other hedonic theory of motivation, where people would usually be motivated towards a pleasurable goal while simultaneously trying to avoid pain due to fear, threats and risks associated with personal decision-making.



*Figure 26.* How conditions influence the choice for personal involvement in decision-making

While it is more pleasurable to be in control of personal decisions as compared to compliance with organizational SOPs, the limitations of this research was to find out which conditions are stronger in relation personal decision-making. Future studies could include efforts to construct instrument for a more detailed comparison and correlation analyses on strengths of relationships. Such exercise could then be carried out on a larger size of sample. At this juncture, data analyses could only suggest that these aspects were prominent and important in the consideration of among respondents. Similar to the manner in comparing between a serious and less serious problem, each respondent faced different situations and connotations on each of these aspects. For the purpose of research, all the common viewpoints of respondents were identified, compiled and compared for general reference. As a result, Table 22 presents both favorable and unfavorable conditions related to personal decision-making.

Table 22  
*Favorable and Unfavorable Conditions to Personal Decision-making*

Aspects	Favorable conditions	Unfavorable conditions	Highlighted by
Alternative to solution	Present	Exhausted	Teacher J, M, G
Consultation with others	If occurred	If did not occur	Teacher E, F
Compliance to SOPs	When fully complied	When not fully complied	Teacher F
Discipline problem	Less serious	Serious	Teacher N, H, M, F, O, B
Experience	High	Low	Teacher N,E,A,L
Familiarity with problem	Yes	No	Teacher N
Limited by existing roles	No	Yes	Teacher N,F, M
Outcome of decision	If likely positive	If likely negative	Teacher D, E
Parental involvement	No	Yes	Teacher L, J
Personal judgment	Able	Unable	Teacher N
Principal empowerment	If granted	If not granted	Teacher L,N,J,C,E,G
Solutions at hand	Yes	No	Teacher B
To fulfill personal responsibility	Yes	No	Teacher O, G
To portray personal competency	Yes	No	Teacher N,A,J,D,M,O
To portray personal credibility	Yes	No	Teacher N, O, G
Trained and prepared	Yes	No	Teacher N,E,F,O,A,L
If asked to involve by HOD	Yes	No	Teacher O

*Note: Favorable and unfavorable conditions identified through data coding and limited to a total of fifteen respondents.*

However, having more favorable conditions to personal decision-making does not necessarily lead to fewer transfers of cases to the Head of Discipline. Within the list of favorable or unfavorable conditions, each aspect could counter and contra with another aspect. As an example, some respondents actually knew what to do with serious discipline matters because of their experience, but chose to transfer instead due to lack of empowerment. For respondents who shared the same concern, empowerment is seen as a stronger condition when compared to experience, even though the degree of strength was not measured quantitatively in this study. In other words, analyses of comparison could only highlight the aspects that were mentioned by the respondents, but not in which aspect is more influential than the other.

In terms of similarity, all respondents were more in favor to handle minor discipline problems as compared to serious ones. They attributed to personal experience and familiarity with the problem. Some of respondents like Teacher A and Teacher G claimed that they did not want to be seen incompetent or indecisive when handling all kinds of discipline problems. Therefore, they would perceive conditions to be favorable when opportunities are available for them to correct the child (Teacher D), or if they are certain that they know the SOPs correctly (Teacher O). Conversely, respondents reported of experiencing unfavorable conditions when discipline matters turned complicated, or they fear of making the wrong decisions (Teacher G). As a result, most respondents prefer to consult others prior to making personal decisions when experiencing unfavorable conditions.

***Research question 5: What obstacles would respondents perceive if confronted with the need for personal decision-making?***

During voice-recorded interviews, respondents were asked to highlight the obstacles that inhibit personal involvement in decision-making. According to Bandura (1986, 1997), there is a triadic reciprocity between internal (such as cognitive, affective

and biological events), behaviors and external (environmental, physical factors) that works to impact each other bi-directionally. At this stage of research, it was noticeable that unfavorable conditions shared the same connotation to obstacles of personal decision-making. While there were many internal factors that influenced personal decision-making, external factors were identifiable and highlighted mostly by respondents. As presented earlier, all respondents claimed that they could gather evidence(s), diagnosing cause(s) and differentiate discipline problem(s). Seemingly, all respondents were able to carry out these processes within the phase of personal involvement in accordance to their own styles, strategies and situations without mentioning any internal obstacles. Only one respondent (Teacher N) indicated of having not enough experience to differentiate a serious discipline problem from a less serious one. If experience is an internal obstacle, it could be corrected by modifying the external environmental factor that institutes organizational learning such as peer coaching and mentoring.

In addition to its priority and purpose of research, most of the environmental factors were studied for organizational improvements as compared to personal intervention or therapeutic change. As an “outside-in” approach, any inhibition to personal decision-making were concentrated on external factors because respondents were affected in the way they work and behaved under a common setting of a bureaucratic organization. To reiterate, a majority of respondents highlighted the significant influence of SOPs and parental involvement as obstacles in personal decision-making. Other environmental factors such as pre-existing work culture, learning disability among students, socio-cultural difference were also highlighted as obstacles for personal involvement. Table 23 presents the list of obstacles and reasons as described by all fifteen respondents.

**Table 23**  
**Respondents' Obstacles in Personal Decision-Making**

Type of obstacles	Reasons	No. of times mentioned	Mentioned by
Parental involvement	Teachers were cautious when communicating with parents	13	Teachers I, N, H, A, D, M, F, G
	Parents could be confused with many processes in SOPs	1	Teacher I
	Parents were fed with one-sided story from their children	3	Teacher G, N
	Parents lacked counsel to understand situation	4	Teacher C
	Parents lacked respect for teachers	1	Teacher D
	Parents not totally honest with child's discipline history	2	Teacher B
	Parents were demanding as a client	2	Teacher A
	Parents were defensive and overly protective of their child	7	Teacher A,D, F, D, G, C
	Parents complained and complicated discipline matters	3	Teacher A, H, E
Pre-existing work culture	Teachers had difficulty to assimilate with teachers from different backgrounds	2	Teacher O
	Teachers had different expectations and consistencies to discipline problems	2	Teacher O, L
	Teachers had differing opinions on work expectations	1	Teacher F
	Teachers do not like interruptions to personal work	2	Teacher J
	Teachers lack collaborations and discussions	5	Teacher J, E, A, F, G
	Teachers lack initiatives to intervene with trivial problems	8	Teacher A, J, E, F, O
	Teachers had resistance to change	11	Teacher A, J, E, O, K, M
	Teachers had difficulty to cope with leadership styles	3	Teacher A, O
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	Difficulty to comply to rigid procedures	6	Teacher J, D,B
	Inconsistency and changing expectations	6	Teacher E, O, B, G, C
	Some procedures are irrelevant and needs to be reviewed	3	Teacher F
	Subjected to biasness when implemented	1	Teacher G
	Subjected to miscommunication and misinterpretation	5	Teacher A, J, M, G, I
	Decision may turned out to be unfavorable to management	2	Teacher M, G
	Lenience in screening and enrolling students with previous discipline problems	1	Teacher B
	Involved many processes	15	Teacher I, N, J, F, O, H, D, B
	Restricts personal involvement for decision-making	8	Teacher L, J, D, O, B, G
	SOPs is never a perfect guide for solutions	1	Teacher B
	Source of information only came from HOD and principal	1	Teacher N
Socio-cultural difference	Teachers taking premature actions without considering socio-cultural differences	2	Teacher O, B
	Students resist to accommodate and assimilate due to different paradigm	2	Teacher K, O
Students with learning disabilities	Teacher enforcing punishment on these students without knowing the state of learning disorder	3	Teacher B, C
Teacher-student relationship	Teacher-student relationship subject to stereotyping and biasness	2	Teacher M, F
	Disciplining could affect existing relationships	5	Teacher K, A, J, B, G
	Lenience could invite more discipline problems	2	Teacher B

*Note: Reasons to obstacles of personal decision-making were identified through data coding and limited to a total of fifteen respondents.*

For each of these obstacles, respondents were asked to explain further on how it affected their further involvement in decision-making. As a result, many personal reasons were featured and highlighted within each obstacle. Additionally, some of the respondents' feedbacks were written as below.

For the obstacle of parental involvement, Teacher A highlighted,

*“Times have changed as parents and students are aware of their rights now. If punishment is to be carried out, it has to be reasonable to the problem. Otherwise, parents will see you in court!”*

(Line 61 from personal transcripts.)

Additionally, Teacher E explained that minor discipline problems can turned serious with parents' involvement even after intervention. From her experience, she highlighted,

*“In one incident, a student secretly pulled away his friend's chair while the latter was standing. In wanting to create a hilarious moment after his friend landed on the floor, it led to a fight between the two boys. I quickly intervened, and even though there were no injuries, it turned serious because of their parents' involvement.”*

(Line 43 from personal transcripts.)

In relating to obstacles associated with pre-existing work culture, Teacher J highlighted,

*“Some teachers may not like you for interfering them with extra duties. It would be difficult for me to influence and convince other teachers to do something for me. On the other hand, there are other teachers in the school who are willing to help and contribute to problem solving, and I frequently look for them if I ever need help.”*

(Line 57 from personal transcripts.)

Similarly, Teacher A shared from his experience on the same obstacle,

*“In every decision I make, I hope to earn the respect from teachers irrespective of their position, seniority, religion, race or culture. Lack of respect could also lead to distrust. It is very difficult to work in such environment. As a principle, I believe in ‘malice towards none, and charity for all’. I do not want to lead people who are reluctant to cooperate.”* (Line 64 from personal transcripts.)

For obstacles deriving from SOPs, Teacher J mentioned,

*“I could mistakenly or unknowingly interfere with the school’s discipline procedure.”* (Line 53 from personal transcripts)

She clarified that she is concerned of breaching the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or teachers’ professional ethics. She indicated that while she is aware of her duty to comply with organizational SOPs, it could stop here from intervening personally on serious discipline problems.

In terms of socio-cultural difference, Teacher E highlighted the problem from her experience,

*“I wanted to share to my colleagues about a religious article, but I did not realize that it is prohibited to use the company’s email to discuss such topic with other teachers. My example became a reminder for all teachers to use company emails for official matters only. The addressee in the email is also taken in consideration as to follow the chain of command.”*

(Line 49 from personal transcripts.)



Teacher B highlighted the obstacle associated with students with Learning Disabilities,

*“We also have students who have learning challenges due to ADHD, Asperger’s Syndrome and Dyslexia. If teachers are not aware, they could be disciplining these types of students like other normal children.”*

(Line 59 from personal transcripts.)

Lastly, Teacher L highlighted the obstacle in teacher-student relationship,

*“If I am too friendly to my students, I could do things out of favoritism. Consequently, I may have difficulty to explain to other students and to show that I am fair to everyone”.*

(Line 45 from personal transcripts.)

Much more descriptions pertaining to these obstacles will be furnished in the individual analyses of respondents. Generally, many obstacles to personal decision-making were derived from personal encounters and contextual incidents that had occurred among respondents. Further discussions on each of these obstacles would also be presented in chapter five.

#### **Phase Four: Suggestions for Change**

##### **Suggestions from Respondents to Encourage Personal Involvement and Collaboration in Decision-making**

At the final part of the data collection, respondents were asked of suggestions to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in decision-making. This phase is important because it could help teachers to be more aware, resourceful and proactive when threading along risks associated with decision-making.

During the interviewing process, respondents were encouraged to voice their thoughts and suggestions freely. As a result, most of the data captured through voice

recording were spontaneous and disorganized. Initially, data coding was carried out to identify and categorize respondents' suggestions into two themes as set out intentionally in the research: classroom control and decision-making. To reiterate, this research does not implicate that personal decision-making is better than collaboration or transfer. In essence, the findings derived from data analyses were merely used understand the behaviors of teachers in the organization.

***Research question 6: What areas can be highlighted to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making?***

Reasonably, if all teachers in the school are competent and committed to: (1) gather evidences; (2) differentiate problems and; (3) trace discipline problems to their cause within the level of personal involvement, it could lessen the work of the Head of Discipline. Thus, the HOD could concentrate on more complicated matters in areas where his role and responsibilities can fully be utilized. Additionally, when facts and evidences are readily made available by other teachers, it would subsequently decrease the waiting time for solutions. It is fair to suggest that further improvement and suggestions ought to concentrate on helping teachers to improve their abilities at the stage of personal involvement. In addition, any focus on self-directed, student-directed, situational-directed and organization-directed strategies should be carried out collaboratively as a unified approach within the researched organization. As long as areas of improvements were identified and categorized accordingly to quadrants as in Figure 27, strategic interventions could be further added, executed and evaluated from time to time for organizational improvements.

<b>Self-directed</b>	<b>Student-directed</b>
<b>Situation-directed</b>	<b>Organizational-directed</b>

*Figure 27. Four directed strategies for improvements*

Table 24 highlights respondents' key suggestions for improvements in classroom control and decision-making.

Table 24  
*List of Suggestions from Respondents for Improvements*

Type	Suggestions for improvements	Suggested by
Self-directed	Do not make premature decisions	Teacher I
	Project professional behavior	Teacher I
	Use punishment as last resort	Teacher I
	Able to explain actions reasonably	Teacher C, L
	Aware of students' backgrounds	Teacher C, J, M, B
	Base decisions on priorities and objectives	Teacher K
	Be consistent through personal actions	Teacher F, N, L
	Be prepared for all kinds of situations	Teacher B, H, M
	Do not stereotype students	Teacher M, H
	Learn more tactics for classroom control	Teacher H
	Practice and sharpen own skills	Teacher N, H, A, O
	Take calculated risks in decision-making	Teacher N, A, B
	Know SOPs at hand	Teacher D, M, E, O
	Be rational and not emotional	Teacher H, M, B, I, O
Student-directed	Reconcile with students after correction and punishment	Teacher J, A, G
	Win students' trust	Teacher O, C
	Communicate clearly to students on teacher-student boundaries	Teacher A, M
Situation-directed	Keep superiors informed with situation	Teacher
Organizational-directed	Improve students' screening process prior to intake	Teacher C
	Institute change management program with teachers	Teacher M
	Keep evaluating and improving SOPs	Teacher A, G, E
	Seek assistance from the right people	Teacher G
	Entrusting and empowering others with trust	Teacher N
	Be informed with updates and changes in SOPs	Teacher N
	Cooperate and collaborate with others	Teacher H, J, E, O, B, I, D, F

*Note: Suggestions for organizational improvements were identified through data coding and limited to a total of fifteen respondents.*

These key suggestions were analyzed, compiled and categorized into the four-directed strategies that were presented earlier from the first research question. As stated in the imitation of research, the lists of improvements were limited and originated from fifteen respondents. Therefore, the researcher does not claim that these findings to represent all teachers in the organization because these areas of suggestions were compiled individually from their own perception within the context of the organization.

Furthermore, more of these initiatives could be further evaluated if an action research is carried out in accordance to teachers' personality and readiness to engage in change. More suggestions pertaining to the subject of action research shall be presented in chapter five as discussions and recommendations. In addition, theoretical support would also be inculcated to explain the psychological aspects when implementing programs for organizational learning and training. Thus, these key suggestions become part of a larger collaborative approach to organizational improvement and change that will be discussed in chapter five.

### **Respondents' Individual Analyses**

This following section is written as an extension of the case study to individualize each respondent's feedback pertaining to all the group's analyses that were carried out earlier. In addition, it provides a closer look for the reader to cross refer and understand the context, content and process of the decision-making that were uncovered from the minds and experiences of the decision-makers. Each respondent is referred anonymously in alphabetical orders, while the order of respondents presented is not according to the chronological dates of interviews.

#### **Respondent 1: Teacher A**

##### *Analyses of Teacher A.*

From the PCI form, Teacher A was found to be moderately humanistic with a cumulative score of 64. For TSES, Teacher A scored above the standard mean for instructional strategies and classroom management, but lower than the mean for student engagement.

Table 25 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher A.

Table 25  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher A*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	* Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.75	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	7.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	8.00	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher A considered himself to be strict and serious as a discipline teacher. As a strategy, he would use “reversed psychology” to correct students’ misbehaviors. This would mean getting his students to self-admit on their own mistakes through a leading question.

When asked on his confidence in making personal decisions relating to discipline problems in the class, he acknowledged boldly and elaborated,

*“In one incident, a gang of students barged into my class to try to punch a helpless victim of my class. Immediately, I went in between the students to separate them and to control the situation. I knew what I should do, and so I wrote a report to the school and recommended suspension to the Discipline committee.”*

(Line 54 from personal transcripts.)

Interestingly, Teacher A was once the Head of Discipline. He mentioned that he would sometimes take action personally on serious discipline matters. He considers himself assertive to play his role as a discipline teacher. He never transfers discipline matters to others if he can personally handle them. Such in a case where students were trying to use the chisel in the wood lab to carve marks the table. To him, vandalism is considered serious and but since he intervened on the matter early, he viewed it otherwise. Even so, he had to ask the student to write a report in the discipline record books.

In another question, Teacher A was asked of foreseeable risks if he were to personally take action on discipline cases instead of transferring to other persons in charge:

*“If I have to personally to punish students for their problematic behaviors, I risk seeing my car vandalized! Although such threats are very rare in this school, it occurred in the early years of my career. Over the years, I no longer prefer to punish students unless I have the right to do it. Getting them to reflect and write on to their mistakes should be more effective as compared to punishment. Times have changed as parents and students are aware of their rights now. If punishment is to be carried out, it has to be reasonable to the problem. Otherwise, parents will see you in court! The best outcome for me is to see students recognizing their mistakes and understand our intentions behind the punishment. “* (Line 59-60 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher A is aware that the Head of Discipline reserves the right to punish students because of the principal’s empowerment. In his opinion, teachers can only decide if discipline matters are serious enough to be handled personally or be transferred to the Head of Discipline. If handled personally, it has to be carried out in a non-punitive way. Nevertheless, he still makes personal decisions to determine the outcome of some discipline problems. Due to his previous experiences, he considers himself confident and competent whenever he deals with discipline problems. According to Teacher A, transferring discipline cases habitually for other teachers to handle only reflects the incompetency of a teacher. Unless the problem is perceived to be serious enough that school needs to be alerted, he will chose to do otherwise.

When asked about the obstacles faced in decision-making, he indicated pre-existing work culture and quality of teacher-student behavior as factors of consideration. He elaborated,

*“In every decision I make, I hope to earn the respect from teachers irrespective of their position, seniority, religion, race or culture. Lack of respect could also lead to distrust. It is very difficult to work in such environment. As a principle, I believe in ‘malice towards none, and charity for all’. I do not want to lead people who are reluctant to cooperate.”* (Line 64-65 from personal transcripts.)

According to Teacher A, teachers’ attitude declined in the past due to lack of leadership. After the sudden demise of the second principal, a senior teacher was appointed as a temporary principal. He was less influential and inconsistency in executing school rules. Sharing on his experience as the previous Head of Discipline,

*“During that time, most discipline matters were passed to me. It annoyed me to see teachers transferring trivial cases like eating during lessons or not completing their homework. The principal expected me to fix everything and was only interested to please the parents as clients of the school. Teachers were seen breaching the standard operating procedures at their own convenience. “*

(Line 67-68 from personal transcripts.)

On qualities of teacher-student behavior, Teacher A highlighted that it is important to know the background of students. He added that students could be triggered by internal and external factors that unleashed their negative behaviors, and it is important for students to be sent to the school’s counselor before further disciplinary actions can be considered. If situation surrounding the child is found to be the root, it demands teachers to be more sensitive to meet the needs of the child.

Teacher A also mentioned that students have mischiefs that are recognizable and habitual by nature. However, when these mischiefs are getting serious, it has to be stopped with some form of punishment. Less serious discipline problems can be escalated into a serious discipline problem if students continue to go against warnings from teachers. Nevertheless, he added that a student does not get punished twice for the same mistakes if it only happened once.

In another area, Teacher A does not consider the bureaucratic structure of the organization as an obstacle to personal decision-making. He works to support the system and is characterized as a person who could approach the principal directly on issues that may not seem right. He is also someone who believes that work protocols, rules and regulations of the school could be improved by suggestions as much as they are being followed.

He added:

*“As teachers, we cannot be silent if we have good ideas to share. One should not be afraid or embarrassed if their ideas seem ridiculous to others. Personal decision-making is important and it usually takes some confidence to do it. But if these personal fears are overcome and the teacher chooses to remain quiet, it will not help the teacher or the organization either. “*

(Line 72-73 from personal transcripts.)



## Respondent 2: Teacher B

### *Analyses of Teacher B.*

Analysis of Teacher B's PCI score of 65 showed that she is moderately humanistic in her perception towards classroom control. Table 26 portrays her TSES scores as higher than the mean in each of the subcategories.

Table 26  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher B*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.25	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	5.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	6.00	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

In line with her PCI value, Teacher B did not consider herself as being strict when teaching in class. Instead, she emphasizes on teacher-student interaction as her main strategy of teaching. She likes students who are opinionated as it constantly challenges their critical thoughts and ability to speak and write. Through probing, discussion and exploration of ideas, she finds that teaching English is better approached through these methods. However, when it comes to discipline matters in the classroom, most of the time she would change her temperament to being strict and serious.

When asked of the reason behind the change of temperament, she mentioned that it is her usual strategy to show students that she is not pleased with them and that she intends to exert a point. She added:

*“Discipline problems are to be handled differently as students need to be taught to choose the right over the wrong”.* (Line 42 from personal transcripts.)

She finds that she is blessed with a strong projection of voice, and it enabled her to be assertive and feared by her students. She highlighted that every discipline problem is different and that cases vary between individuals, their backgrounds and also circumstances.

When asked to differentiate between a serious to a less serious discipline problem, Teacher B highlighted that serious discipline problems would often cause physical injuries to self or others. Nevertheless, her most serious encounter was confronting students smoking in the school compound. In the previous years, many students were smoking in the secret hideouts around the school. Usually, she could ascertain the culprit because of the cigarette's odor detected on their uniforms. When asked of her decision to deal with serious discipline problems, she indicated transfer as her discipline strategy.

She would prefer transfer as the best option when faced with personal indecision for serious discipline problems. Even though transfer is preferred, she indicated 'sometimes' in taking actions personally if situations are manageable and problems can be rectified immediately. Admittedly, Teacher B foresees the risks of making the wrong decision if she is left without any opportunity to transfer.

As for less serious discipline problems, Teacher B illustrated with the example of students playing in the classrooms. She added,

*“Students are generally playful as they are growing up in their teenage years. It is part of their social, mental and emotional development. Don't be surprise that some higher secondary students are also childish at times. Even an eraser looks fascinating to them and can be turned into a game! While teasing may look innocent and fun, situations can turn out of control if the teacher is not careful”.*

(Line 47 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher B would identify the factors of distractions in her class and make sure her expectations are communicated clearly to her students. As a common strategy, she prefers to reprimand her students and take actions frequently when they are found to be going against her orders. She is confident whenever she is confronted with such problems. In a summary, she feels that there is no need of transfer less serious discipline cases to other teachers when situations are familiar and manageable.

In the latter section of the interview, Teacher B mentioned of her obstacles of personal decision-making. These personal obstacles consist of bureaucratic structure, quality of teacher-student relationship and socio-cultural differences among students. Additionally, she added the behavior of students with learning difficulties as a new aspect to this research.

On the first obstacle, Teacher B indicated that personal decision-making becomes complicated process because of too many procedures that are hampering decision-making. She referred specifically to the prolonged time taken between decision-making and action. She elaborated that when there are too many precautions, policies, protocols or procedures to consider, much time is wasted to arrive to a decision. While she admits that complicated matters should be given due considerations, trivial matters should not go through the same process as delays could lead to a bigger problem.

Teacher B explained that delays in personal decision-making are caused by doubts, fear, dilemma or guilt if the outcome turns out negative. Therefore, her easiest strategy is to transfer to the persons-in-charge. She highlighted that the Head of Discipline (HOD) is the best person to act because of his role and empowerment by the principal. Above all, she felt that the HOD would have more skills, experience to deal with discipline problem. She also added that transfer could minimize personal and

organizational mistakes. Therefore, she sees transfers of decision-making as equivalent to transfers of risks.

As a personal strategy, she considers her experience, familiarity and urgency as key indicators for decision-making. If these three elements were positive, she would take personal decisions instead of transferring to the Head of Discipline. Her knowledge and awareness of organizational protocols are improved through self-learning and collaboration with others. Therefore, she also suggests teachers to have more discussions or personal consultations with the principal to better understand organizational protocols.

Her second obstacle to decision-making is the quality of teacher-student relationship. She highlighted that if students are constantly engaged through healthy communication with teachers; there would be less discipline problems and misunderstandings. Students who interact often are more likely to improve their perceptions of their teachers and also to the subjects. She prefers to teach her students with things that challenge their intellectual. Thus, it would keep them interested and participative in her lessons.

Conversely, if the relationship between a teacher and a student is not good, students could show symptoms of boredom, withdrawal and lack of interest to learn in the classroom. Other symptoms include less expression in their emotions when they are probed on their behaviors. Consequently, lack of information and low levels of certainty could hamper effective decision-making. As part of the discipline team, she highlighted her dilemma to convince students and keep their problems private and confidential. Despite trying to be just and understanding, she has to contemplate and discern if transfer is necessary. Nevertheless, she prefers non-punitive strategies so that student can change and trust her.

On the third obstacle to personal decision-making, she mentioned socio-cultural difference among students. She explained that while the school accepts students from different backgrounds, culture and values, not many teachers could accept that students assimilate through different ways including conflicts. Citing from her experience, a lack of awareness and sensitivity to cultural difference are the leading factors of conflicts among students. As parental upbringing could be different, students project their behaviors according to the norms at home. Little would they know that their values are unacceptable or annoying to their other people. Therefore, she suggests teachers to be alert of multicultural differences and penalize students without understanding their cultural backgrounds. Teacher B then highlighted an extra obstacle that she foresees as an obstacle to decision-making. She elaborated,

*“Before I became the teacher advisor of the prefect’s board, I actually asked the problematic students about their discipline history from previous schools. Surprisingly, many of them were honest to talk about their expulsion from the previous schools and that they did not declare this information to the school. This is where good faith between the school and their parents had been abused. We also have students who have learning challenges due to ADHD, Asperger’s Syndrome and Dyslexia. If teachers are not aware, they could be disciplining these types of students like other normal children. As for me, I make sure that I do not judge them too quickly”.* (Line 57-58 from personal transcripts.)

Prior to acceptance, the school management has issued more stringent screening on students with LD. Ideally, the principal should approve the acceptance of these students if supported by satisfactory recommendations by the counselor or any other learning specialists. According to Teacher B, some students were accepted into the school on humanistic grounds after much persuasion from parents. Teacher B articulated a good insight for the researcher to consider as a new list of obstacle in personal decision-

making. She unearthed the state of students' historical records as an attributing factor to discipline problems also the lack of fact-finding on the students' learning challenges. Nevertheless, she complimented the present management strategy that has been improving from merely a profit-oriented organization to becoming an organization that looks into the quality of student's behavior and their psychological state at each intake. As a concluding statement in her interview, she suggested teachers to continually improve themselves by reading books and applying psychological and discipline strategies to improve in their decision-making.

### **Respondent 3: Teacher C (Head of Discipline)**

#### *Analyses of Teacher C.*

Teacher C is considered moderately humanistic as he scored an accumulative point of 62 in the PCI form. Following the analysis on the TSES form, the subscale scores for each element of student engagement, instructional strategy and classroom management are depicted as in Table 27 below. From the table, it can be concluded that Teacher C more efficacious in student engagement as compared to other subscale scores.

Table 27  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher C*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	7.50	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	6.00	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	6.25	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher C mentioned that he would not be strict when teaching his students, and prefers to use a soft approach to win students' trust.

However, when asked if he would be stricter when dealing with discipline problems, he added,

*“Yes, I will be strict then as I have to play my role as the Head of Discipline. When discipline cases are referred to me by teachers, I emphasize on seriousness of the problem by showing to the students that I mean business”.*

(Line 41 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher C considers himself being confident when making personal decisions concerning discipline outcomes. He expressed confidence because he is empowered by the principal to act on discipline issues according to the standard operational protocol of the school. Knowing the facts within school discipline guidebooks enables him to act within his role as Head of Discipline effectively and confidently.

When asked to differentiate between serious discipline problems as compared to less serious ones, he explained:

*“Serious discipline problems usually affect and impact the school community in a big way, while less serious ones are considered trivial and do not impact others other than their own self. Some examples of serious discipline problems are fights, smoking and threatening others, while trivial ones usually involves impletion of homework or coming late to class.”*

(Line 44 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher C was asked to share on the most serious discipline problem that he had encountered, and he elaborated:

*“In 2010, a student was summoned to the principal’s office because he was uncontrollable, disrespectful and constantly going against school rules and regulations. He lambasted vulgar words on another discipline teacher as he was in the principal’s office. The situation was very intense as security guards were also called in to control the situation as other teachers were taken aback on this problematic child. I took the aggressive student away from the aggravated environment in order to calm him down. Eventually, he apologized to the school principal and the rest of teachers after being counseled. Not long after that incident, his parents changed him to another school. “*

(Line 46-47 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher C mentioned that he has to instantly take action to solve all types of discipline problems. He never felt undecided on what to do as his confidence came from principal’s empowerment. As a strategy, he prefers “management by walking”. In his daily job, discipline cases were either self-detected or referred to him from other teachers. On making personal decisions, he added,

*“After thorough investigations and discussions with my fellow discipline teachers, my decisions are usually final. When problems are already contained, they just need to be reported to the principal for her knowledge. Over these years, the principal is supportive on what I do, even though I make some mistakes along the way. For sure, the principal supports my decision when the problem is common. I would only refer to the principal on situations that are unusual or beyond my experience to manage. ”*

(Line 50 from personal transcripts.)



Teacher C highlighted that less discipline problems were always manageable and that transfer to the principal is unnecessary. For similar matters, he acknowledged that he never felt undecided on what to do, and that all teachers expect him to solve discipline problem. Nevertheless, he admitted that he would feel overwhelmed when both trivial and serious cases are given to him to handle.

On personal obstacles to decision-making, Teacher C highlighted dealing with difficult parents and making conclusions prematurely. According to him, many serious cases must be communicated cautiously with parents prior to any disciplinary actions. Some of these parents were hostile and protective of their child regardless of the evidence(s) presented to them. He mentioned that while parents are clients to the organization, no students are entitled for any special treatment. Over the years, he has tried to be fair, calm and patient with parents who are not supportive the school's decision on disciplinary actions. He added that it is also important for him to be confident and assertive when executing punishments, such as caning or suspension in front of parents. For serious discipline cases, he would not rush or make decisions prematurely unless all investigations and gathering of evidences are carried out thoroughly.

For Teacher C, there were two obstacles to personal decision-making. They are the bureaucratic structure and students with learning disabilities. In bureaucratic structure, Teacher C mentioned that while he is clear of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in discipline management, there had been situations or discipline cases that were unique and different. He stressed that while it is necessary to follow the existing SOPs, not all protocols can be followed due to different contexts. For him, decision-making is complicated when new operating protocols were not communicated clearly enough to the rest of teachers. As a result, he would receive complaints from the management where teachers were not quick enough to deal with discipline cases that

were dealt conventionally in the past. As a suggestion, Teacher C suggested teachers to interact frequently in order to keep updated on changing policies and organizational protocols of the school.

When referring to students with learning disabilities, Teacher C highlighted both social and academic problems. On social problems, students face withdrawal or aggressiveness to adapt with their friends, teachers and also the school's environment. Similar to the views of Teacher B, he realized that some students in this school have symptoms of ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome, or Dyslexia that hinders personal learning. He highlighted, "When students are aggressive, there is the likelihood to disrupt others in the class due to boredom and short attention span." Similar to the viewpoints of teacher B, Teacher C stressed that these special students must not be dealt the same way as with other students. As a strategy, Teacher C prefers to send them to the counselor, or focus on building a good teacher-student relationship. As a general rule, Teacher C advised that all teachers to be aware and seize the opportunity to teach them during their teachable moment. Failure to consider their backgrounds and personal limitations would also hamper effective personal decision-making.

#### **Respondent 4: Teacher D**

##### *Analyses of Teacher D.*

Teacher D is considered very custodial with a high PCI score of 78. With reference to the Table 28 below, his TSES scores were also higher than the group's mean of each subscale. Therefore, he is considered efficacious in all three aspects of student engagement, instructional strategy and classroom management.

Table 28  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher D*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	8.00	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	8.00	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	8.25	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

When probed on his usual behavior in the class, Teacher D considers himself strict when teaching his students. He added,

*“Normally, I would be strict to ensure that students would understand my lessons and that the teaching and learning process are not interrupted.”*

(Line 43 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher D prefers to be strict in his classroom control to keep the class in order and also to instill a sense of alertness among his students. He prefers to set a serious tone to his students to highlight that nuisance is prohibited, and intolerable. When probed further, he used the same approach to gather evidence, to gain students' respect and to stress on his authority as a teacher.

Teacher D is also confident when discipline problems are minor and trivial. On a contrary, he would feel otherwise if matters were more serious. He defined serious discipline problems as prone to impact students through physical or emotional means, and that these cases must be intervened by the Head of Discipline.

Most of previous encounters with discipline problems came from the days when he was the school's Head of Discipline. For serious discipline problems, he would consider transfer because it is within his responsibility as a teacher. As for familiar and less serious cases, he would personally intervene and take actions immediately.

Teacher D exemplified less serious discipline problems as students not completing their work or passing up their homework on time. For trivial and manageable cases, he would often be assertive and punish them by giving out more exercises. In his personal perception, transfer of minor problems to the Head of Discipline is unnecessary for small discipline cases. When asked of his obstacles of decision-making, he only indicated bureaucratic structure as the source of risk that he encounters. He added,

*“Some SOPs have too many processes to follow especially on trivial matters. Reporting and writing disciplinary reports on the students takes a lot of my productive time.”* (Line 49 from personal transcripts.)

Nevertheless, he would gladly assist the Head of Discipline by contributing ideas due to his experience in the past. He understood organizational expectations well and strongly suggests teachers to improve on classroom decision-making by consulting other teachers who may be more familiar to the discipline situation.

### **Respondent 5: Teacher E**

#### *Analyses of Teacher E.*

The total PCI score for Teacher E was 54, the most humanistic as compared to all other respondents. With reference to the TSES analysis in Table 29, she had also scored less than the group’s mean for all three categories of student engagement, instructional strategy and classroom management. Similar to the rest of the teacher respondents, she was subsequently interviewed to elaborate on her classroom control and decision-making as a discipline level coordinator.

Table 29  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher E*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	5.75	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	6.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	6.50	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

From her feedback in the decision-making form, she equates serious discipline problems to violence. Similarly to most of the respondents, she exemplified serious discipline cases as having the likelihood to cause physical and emotional hurt to other individuals. In most of her dealings with serious discipline case, she never takes actions personally. As a discipline teacher coordinator, she never felt undecided on what to do other than to transfer them to the Head of Discipline.

When she was asked to share about her personal encounter with a serious discipline case, she recalled:

*“In one incident, a student secretly pulled away his friend’s chair while the latter was standing. In wanting to create a hilarious moment after his friend landed on the floor, it led to a fight between the two boys. I quickly intervened, and even though there were no injuries, it turned serious because of their parents’ involvement”.* (Line 43 from personal transcripts.)

For less serious discipline problems, Teacher E mentioned that she would be intolerant to students who are ignorant to her instructions, or found to be talking or disturbing to others in the class. Most of time, she considers herself to be strict when teaching. For common discipline cases, she would punish her student by asking them to stand for ten minutes in a corner. As far as trivial matters are concerned, she would question their intentions and making them reflect on the consequence of their actions. Nevertheless, when she felt undecided on what to do with less serious discipline problems, she would then transfer them to the HOD. In another aspect, Teacher E sees personal decision-

making as risky when parents are involved. She is fearful whenever less serious problems turned into serious ones. She felt that decision-making takes a lot of contemplation, patience and forethoughts to anticipate on the consequence of a choice. Prior to any decision-making, she considers her personal risk while threading along standard operational procedures as her guide.

If she is empowered by the principal to determine the outcome of discipline problems, she highlighted two obstacles that may hinder her decision-making. First, she highlighted the pre-existing work culture among teachers. She elaborated that if she were to lead other teachers, some may be reluctant because they do not like to be interfered. In elaborating reluctance and resistance to commitment, she added that some teachers do not want to take on personal risks if the outcome backfires on them. She highlighted that some teachers do not like to be disciplinarians even though it is within their responsibilities. She also recalled some teachers in the past that persuaded her to ignore less serious discipline problems in order to save her time and energy. She attributed the negative attitude of some teachers due to a complacent life and previous work culture. As a common teacher, she mentioned of the lack of empowerment to influence her colleagues. To overcome this lackluster culture, she mentioned trust and willingness to learn as key ingredients to organizational change.

The second obstacle mentioned by Teacher E is the bureaucratic structure. While she understands the purpose and the functions of the standard operational procedure within the school, she highlights that personal decisions could go wrong against the organizational policies. She added,

*“I wanted to share to my colleagues about a religious article, but I did not realize that it is prohibited to use the company’s email to discuss such topic with other teachers. My example became a reminder for all teachers to use company*

*emails for official matters only. The addressee in the email is also taken in consideration as to follow the chain of command”.*

(Line 49 from personal transcripts.)

After the incident, she concluded that harmless intentions could sometimes lead to misinterpretation and trouble. The next time she is put in a position of decision-making, she would be more careful with the school’s standard operational procedures. In her opinion, it is impossible for teachers can know everything about SOPs. She felt that the principal and the Head of Discipline are the best persons to be the primary source of information. Nevertheless, she also suggested that the school should keep improving on their SOPs, and educating teachers occasionally on organizational best practice.

#### **Respondent 6: Teacher F**

##### *Analyses of Teacher F.*

Teacher F is moderately custodial with a PCI score of 69. Surprisingly for TSES, she scored below the group’s mean value for student engagement, instructional strategy and classroom management. Table 30 is the result compiled from her TSE scores.

Table 30  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher F*

Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	5.75	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	6.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	5.75	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

As her strategy, Teacher F is strict when teaching in the class. She wants her students to be more attentive in class to focus on solving mathematical problems. Except for group activities, she prefers a serious atmosphere for students to concentrate

and train on their mental alertness. She does not hesitate to take actions on students who take her instructions lightly. Habitually, she keeps track on students' personal achievements especially for those who are weak. In essence, she wants them to stay alert, confident and engaged in her teaching.

On a contrary, she could be gracious to weak students as to allow them to overcome the fear of making and learning from mistakes. For this instance, she allows room for her students to progress independently and share about their problems. She sets the right classroom climate for teaching, and she discerns when to be strict, or when to behave otherwise. When discussed on the matters of decision-making, she is confident in taking personal decisions. Nevertheless, she indicates the need to reflect and ascertain the causes to the discipline problems to avoid making premature or bad decisions.

Teacher F was also asked to differentiate between serious and less serious discipline problems. She defined serious discipline problems as students causing physical injuries to others, or when the safety of other children is threatened. During her interview, she provided two examples that were considered serious. In one occasion, there was a search operation for forbidden items. Following the search, an aggressive student threatened another teacher for searching his locker without his approval. In another incident, she witnessed a prank being video-recorded on another student and eventually hosted in the Internet.

As a discipline coordinator, she intervened immediately in both discipline cases because they were considered urgent and serious. Nevertheless, she indicated 'sometimes' to always intervene on serious discipline problems. Occasionally, she would transfer discipline cases to the Head of discipline if she is doubtful or undecided on what to do. In essence, she highlighted that teachers are not empowered to make



personal decisions with regards to disciplining students. Thus, she would only act within her capacity and experience as a discipline teacher.

As for a less serious discipline problem, she exemplified as students not bringing their books or completing their assignments. For such cases, she frequently intervenes and never transfers it to others to handle. Sometimes, less serious problem can worsen and turned into serious problems. The ability to differentiate on the seriousness of discipline problems is important for her to consider between personal intervention or transfer to the Head of Discipline.

When Teacher F was probed on her obstacles to decision-making, she indicated pre-existing work culture among teachers in the school. She highlighted the difficult tasks of persuading other teachers to be involved in discipline management. As an example, she felt that some teachers were less enthusiastic and were preferential towards organizational commitments. She elaborated how some teachers were complacent at their job, and indicated that some were prone to avoid disciplinary tasks other than their core responsibilities in teaching. Teacher F highlighted the organizational obstacle in getting commitments from teachers to work together. As change is often seen as cumbersome, she suggested more consistent efforts to pave way for information sharing, discussions and collaborative involvement of teachers.

The other obstacle highlighted by Teacher F was in the area of quality teacher-student relationship. She mentioned that good teacher-relationships with students could be misinterpreted as biases when it comes to disciplining. She highlighted the importance to get another teacher who is neutral to assess the discipline issue before further actions can be taken. It is also important for her to consistently remind her students on her expectations towards classroom discipline and clarify the borders in teacher-student relationships so that students will not misinterpret her actions.

## Respondent 7: Teacher G

### *Analyses of Teacher G.*

Teacher G is very custodial with a high a score of 77 on the PCI continuum. In aspects of self-efficacy, Teacher G scored above the group's mean for classroom management and student engagement but otherwise for instructional strategy. Table 31 is a summary of his overall score as compared to the mean.

Table 31  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher G*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	8.00	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	7.00	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.75	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher G mentioned that he is usually strict with his students during lessons. In fact, he highlighted that being strict enables him to control students. He dislikes students taking his instructions lightly as physical education involves risks and potential physical injuries. Nevertheless, Teacher G is confident to handle discipline problems effectively. According to him, he is versatile to switch his emotional tone to manage any situation arising from the students.

Similar to the rest of respondents, he described serious discipline problem to be associated with physical injury or having the potential risks to cause further emotional and physical harm. In one encounter, he witnessed a fistfight between two students and intervened immediately to stop his students. For serious and urgent situations, he mentioned the importance to quickly intervene on students' problems. Only when situations are contained, he would send students to the Head of Discipline.

However, Teacher G highlighted that not every discipline case requires transfer to the HOD except during times of indecision. As such, he is also cautious about making wrong decisions, as they may turned out be unconstitutional or beyond the scope of his role. Teacher G highlighted the possibility of making wrong decisions that are not favorable to the management, or being liable to the student if parents complain of his actions. At the root, he is fearful that people could misinterpret his actions. When such situations occur, he prefers to transfer discipline cases to the Head of Discipline.

For less serious discipline problems, Teacher G is confident as he always relies on his experience. He rarely transfers trivial discipline cases to the Head of Discipline as compared to his earlier years as a teacher. Teacher G exemplified less serious discipline problems as students arguing or using foul language. Frequently, he takes personal actions on them and never feels undecided on what to do.

On obstacles of decision-making, Teacher G highlighted the pre-existing work culture among some teachers as the first problem to personal and effective decision-making. He shared that it was difficult for him to garner support from all teachers to implement plans for the school's sports day. As a strategy, it was always better for him to start with teachers who are willing to cooperate and collaborate.

The second obstacle to personal decision-making is the bureaucratic structure. According to Teacher G, there are too many processes that are constantly changing and enforced by the Standard Operating Procedures. In addition, there could also be inconsistencies in the ways things are handled by teachers. The third problem highlighted is the quality of teacher-student relationship. On disciplining, he mentioned,

*“It is difficult to be fair, especially to those who shared a good teacher-student relationship with me. I experienced students shutting me off after I punished them on their wrongdoings.”* (Line 45 from personal transcripts.)

Seeing how a teacher-student relationship is affected, he is more cautious whenever he tries to explain the reasons behind a punishment. In addition, he now sets his expectations clearly while he maintains a good teacher-student relationship. For suggestions on how decision-making can be improved in the organization, Teacher G suggested that the management should be more transparent and open for teachers' suggestions to improve the discipline situation of the school. He expressed that the burden of discipline management should not necessarily rest on the Head of Discipline, but rather be distributed through collaborative decision-making. The organization should enable teachers to voice their concerns when it comes to personal complication in deciding what to do. Therefore, SOPs must evolve as much as they are enforced to make positive changes that are beneficial to all communities of the school.

#### **Respondent 8: Teacher H**

##### *Analyses of Teacher H.*

The data analysis from the PCI form had portrayed Teacher H to be moderately humanistic with a cumulative score of 64. From the analyses of the TSES form, she is efficacious in all three subscales of classroom management, instructional strategies and student engagement when they are compared to the group's mean. Table 32 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher H.

Table 32  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher H*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	7.25	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	7.25	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.75	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher H is strict when dealing with discipline problems in the class, she added,

*“I strongly believe that if students are focused on learning, they will achieve success without many obstacles. Teachers need to guide their students by setting a good example for their students to see. Eventually, students can choose between what is right and what is wrong.”*

(Line 41 from personal transcripts.)

As a former principal, she is confident of making personal decisions because she is familiar with the instructions given in the discipline guidebook. Nevertheless, she highlighted that disciplining students should vary and dependent on circumstances.

When probed further on how she distinguishes between a serious and a less serious discipline problem, she said,

*“Serious discipline problems are actions that can disrupt or threaten the educational process. Some examples are vandalizing school’s property, drug abuse and disrespectful to teachers. I once witnessed a serious incident where naughty students threw my colleague’s handbag in the dustbin in another class. Instantly, I reported the case to the Head of Discipline. “*

(Line 44 from personal transcripts.)

Less serious discipline problems are exemplified as students not completing their assignments. For such cases, she never transfers to other teachers or felt indecisive on what to do. Usually, she makes her students complete their work in the classroom before going home. She highlighted her classroom control strategies to always concentrate on prevention, education and correction instead of punishment. For her, these strategies are practical and effective to deal with students’ common misbehaviors in the classrooms.

However, Teacher H considers personal decision-making as riskier as compared to transfer. Personal decision-making needs contemplation and interrupts her teaching process. She also highlighted the possibility of seeing parents complaining on how their children are disciplined by teachers. Therefore, she prefers prevention instead of punishment to eliminate pressures from parents who are protective of their children. For suggestions to improve decision-making, Teacher H suggests teachers be alert to students' misbehaviors, and identify students who are prone to cause discipline problems. When discipline situations occur, they should not rush into a decision, and be rational to consider as many aspects as possible before determining the outcome for the discipline problem.

### **Respondent 9: Teacher I**

#### *Analyses of Teacher I.*

From the analysis using the PCI form, Teacher I is very custodial with high PCI score of 76. In terms of TSES scores, he is efficacious in instructional strategy, but not in classroom management and student engagement. Table 33 is the TSES result for Teacher I.

Table 33  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher I*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.50	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	8.00	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.00	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher I did not consider himself strict when teaching in the classroom. According to him, the level of strictness is dependent on the situation and also the types of students. Nevertheless, he mentioned that he would be stricter if confronted with serious discipline problems and would not hesitate to intervene personally on these problems.

To control the classroom, he can become strict in order to set clear expectations for his students. On a contrary, he could also lighten up the moods of the students by telling humorous jokes to re-engage with his students when they are tired, bored or inattentive to his lessons. Therefore, he acknowledges his ability and flexibility to engage with his students when he needs to.

Teacher I classifies serious discipline problems as having some forms of physical or emotional injuries. He elaborated,

*“In one incident, I did not expect a school prefect to barge into my class to attack another student. Immediately, I stopped the two boys from fighting and sent them to the principal’s office. As a result, the two boys were suspended from school for two weeks.”* (Line 42 from personal transcripts.)

Through this example, he highlighted that he is confident whenever he is faced with the need or urgency for personal intervention. Only when situations are controlled, he would transfer them to the Head of Discipline. Moreover, he highlighted that the act of transfer does not imply that he is incapable to handle discipline situations. Instead, it is to follow organizational procedures within the role of a teacher. For less serious discipline problems, he exemplifies students as not focusing in the classroom or listening to his instructions. For such reasons, he would usually intervene personally since transfer is unnecessary.

When asked of risks he foresees when taking actions personally as compared to transfer, his only concern is seeing the school management disagreeable with his actions. Teacher I highlighted the bureaucratic structure as the only obstacle on personal decision-making. Sharing from his experience as the Head of Department, he is constantly updated on the standard operating protocols of the school. Nevertheless, he finds that the SOPs have too many instructions to follow. Ultimately, he has to resort to

transfer for discipline cases that require many steps to follow. On this careful note, he felt that personal risks should be transferred to the persons-in-charge to reduce personal errors. For improvement in discipline management, he favors the idea of cultivating a learning organization. It is beneficial for the organization when multiple perspectives can be shared through collaboration and positive communication.

### **Respondent 10: Teacher J**

#### **Analyses of Teacher J.**

Teacher J's PCI score was 61, indicating a moderately humanistic view on pupil control ideology. In terms of TSES, Teacher J is efficacious in student engagement and instructional strategy, but not for classroom management. Table 34 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher J.

Table 34  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher J*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	7.25	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	8.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.25	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

As supported by her PCI score, Teacher J does not consider herself to be strict when she is teaching in her class. She mentioned,

*"I want the students to interact. Hence, being strict might not encourage them to respond and ask questions."* (Line 42 from personal transcripts.)

When probed further if she would be strict when dealing with discipline problems in the classroom, she insists on the same mode and mentioned,

*"I like students to reflect on their behaviors or attitudes problem before I act on their problem."* (Line 44 from personal transcripts.)



In addition, she highlighted that personal intervention has to match the situation or circumstance of the problem. She is against punishment if there are no logical reasons to justify the action. When asked of her opinions to differentiate between serious and less serious discipline problems, she differentiates on the causes.

*“Serious discipline problems are often traced to family issues at home, whereas less serious ones are not caused by external factors.”*

(Line 47 from personal transcripts.)

From the voiced-recorded interview, she clarified that certain situations in the classroom could trigger negative reactions in the child. In one serious discipline problem she had encountered, she elaborated,

*“A student spoke foul language in the class. When I scolded him, and he walk out from the class in front of me! I let him go by himself, but later decided to transfer the case to the Head of Discipline so that he can be disciplined. ”*

(Line 49 from personal transcripts.)

Teacher J does not always transfer serious discipline matters to the HOD. Thus, she mentioned “sometimes” to take actions personally on serious discipline matters. Nevertheless, there were also unusual times when she felt undecided on what to do. She clarified that her strategies on classroom control are not always consistent and usually depends on the situation of the problem.

When dealing with less serious discipline problems, she exemplified with student’s refusal to do homework or follow her lessons. For these examples, she mentioned that she would normally give them more time to complete their work or reason with them. Despite her response of “sometimes” taking actions personally, she

did indicate her moments of indecision. When in doubt, she admits that she “sometimes” transfer less serious discipline problems to others to handle.

When Teacher J was asked about the risks of personal decision-making, she said,

*“I could mistakenly or unknowingly interfere with the school’s discipline procedure.”* (Line 53 from personal transcripts.)

She clarified that she is concerned of breaching the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or teachers’ professional ethics. She indicated that while she is aware of her duty to comply with organizational SOPs, it could stop here from intervening personally on serious discipline problems.

In another area, she indicated her obstacles to personal decision-making would come from uncooperative work culture among teachers and a close teacher-student relationship.

On pre-existing work culture, she highlighted,

*“Some teachers may not like you for interfering them with extra duties. It would be difficult for me to influence and convince other teachers to do something for me. On the other hand, there are other teachers in the school who are willing to help and contribute to problem solving, and I frequently look for them if I ever need help.”* (Line 57 from personal transcripts.)

She revealed that there are teachers in the school who are unwilling to be involved in areas of discipline management. Her thoughts seemed to triangulate with Teacher E’s opinion on pre-existing work culture and Teacher G’s strategy on collaborating with other teachers.

On obstacles deriving from a close of teacher-student relationship, she felt that her non-punitive approach could imply to students that she is lenient or incapable to punish them as compared to other teachers. If she were put in charge of discipline, she wants to be stricter to her students. Unfavorably, she foresees a deteriorating relationship with her students if she changes her pupil control ideology to being more custodial. Nevertheless, she mentioned,

*“If student face disciplining from me, I would try to interact with students positively.”* (Line 60 from personal transcripts.)

She highlighted that follow-up efforts are important for teacher-student reconciliation whenever a punishment is executed. When asked on improvements to personal decision-making, she suggested,

*“I will always do background checks before taking any actions on my students. I would try to gather as many feedbacks from others before I decide what to do with the student.”* (Line 62 from personal transcripts.)

Her strategy of conducting thorough investigation is important in the process of decision-making. While she prefers not to punish students for their mistakes, she has to transfer the discipline case to the HOD if she finds that punishment is the best solution. Her focus on decision-making seems to concentrate on ascertaining the cause of the discipline problem by checking on the students' backgrounds. While ascertaining the cause of discipline problems, she corroborates with other teachers. By doing so, she can rationalize and justify the best decision for the discipline problem.

## Respondent 11: Teacher K

### *Analyses of Teacher K.*

Analysis from the PCI form indicated that Teacher K is moderately humanistic with a cumulative score of 62. Supplemented with the analysis from the TSES form, she is considered efficacious in instructional strategy but less efficacious in classroom management and student engagement when compared to the group's mean. Table 35 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher K.

Table 35  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher K*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.25	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	8.00	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	5.75	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

When asked if she would be strict with discipline problems in the class, Teacher K disagreed but instead encouraged students to be open and creative. She added,

*"I always encourage students to ask questions, express their thoughts and think creatively within a given structure of subject area".*

(Line 38 from personal transcripts.)

On matters of discipline problems that occur in her class, she indicated:

*"I always give students a chance to explain themselves and before making my conclusion. I give them the benefit of doubt and to remind them that they have to be responsible to what they say or do."*

(Line 40 from personal transcripts.)

When asked of how she differentiates between serious discipline problems with less serious ones, she explained,

*“Serious discipline problems could cause physical, mental and emotional harm to students. For less serious ones, they are like ignoring instructions during lessons, or disrupting others in their learning”.*

(Line 43 from personal transcripts.)

From her experience, she had never faced any serious discipline problems before. Most of her encounters with less serious discipline problems were from students who did not follow her instructions. In addition, she never felt undecided on what to do with these students, and she prefers to pay personal attention to problematic students directly. Nevertheless, she indicated to “sometimes” transfer to other teachers-in-charge if she is faced with indecision with a serious discipline problem. If she were placed in situations where she has to personally take action on discipline problems, she indicated pre-existing work culture among teachers, quality of teacher-student relationship and sociocultural differences among students as obstacles to personal decision-making.

Negative work culture is the most prominent among the three obstacles. She elaborated that since the school consists of both the national and international school block, it was difficult to cooperate with principals, teachers and students on previous school concerts. She explained,

*“Most of the problems I experienced were due to school events rather than discipline related. These problems came in the form of multiple demands and datelines. I was in the middle of a conflict between two principals, and I merely followed the decision of the principal whom I report to.”*

(Line 46 from personal transcripts.)

Within the bureaucratic structure, she recognizes the position and power of individuals whom she reports to and also in aspects of decision-making. As suggestions for improvement in teachers' decision-making, she highlighted that it is important to focus on decisions that have certain outcomes.

## **Respondent 12: Teacher L**

### *Analyses of Teacher L.*

The PCI score for Teacher L was 70, indicating a moderately custodial view on the pupil control ideology. For TSES, she was found to be less efficacious in for student engagement and instructional strategies, but efficacious for classroom management.

Table 36 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher L.

Table 36  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher L*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.50	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	6.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.25	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher L considers herself strict and expects her students to be obedient to school rules. When asked to define serious discipline problems, she exemplified them as fighting, bullying or stealing. Less serious discipline problems were exemplified as students not paying attention in class, not doing homework or bringing books to school. As she had not experienced any serious discipline problem before, she indicated non-applicable for the particular section on the survey form. Nevertheless, she could provide further details on how she handled less serious discipline problems.

If a serious discipline problem were to occur, she would usually take personal action on her students. Her common strategies would consist of warnings, punishments and informing their parents. When asked to clarify on how she punishes her students,

she would ask her students to stand in a corner during her lessons. She also acknowledged that she frequently deals with less serious discipline problems herself, and that she never felt undecided on what to do with the students. Therefore, she never transfers less serious discipline matters to other teachers-in-charge. When asked of how she viewed risks in personal decision-making, she did not reasoned but instead, highlighted that students could take advantage if teachers are being too lenient. Indirectly, she highlights that teachers must be strict to personally intervene on students' discipline problems. Teacher L was also asked to indicate her obstacles to personal decision-making. She highlighted pre-existing work culture and quality of teacher-student relationship as her barriers. She thinks that other teachers have different levels of strictness and views towards disciplinary problems. Therefore, it could lead to different interventions or varying explanation of reasons behind their decision to deal with the matter.

For the obstacle of quality of teacher-student relationship, she mentioned that if a teacher is too lenient to her students, students could manipulate them. Consequently, a teacher may have difficulty to explain to other students when rules are not followed strictly. As a strategy to improve personal decision-making, she wants to be consistent in dealing with students with discipline problems.

### **Respondent 13: Teacher M**

#### ***Analyses of Teacher M.***

Analysis on Teacher M's PCI form has indicated that she is moderately custodial with a cumulative score of 68. In addition, analysis from TSES showed that she efficacious in classroom management but not in student engagement and instructional strategy.

Table 37  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher M*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	8.00	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	7.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	8.00	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher M considered herself flexible when it comes to teaching students in her class. She determines her own classroom climate during her lessons. Depending on situations, she would use humor to catch her students' attention, or become strict when she wants to highlight important points.

For serious discipline problems, she exemplified them as smoking and vandalism. Her previous encounters of serious discipline problems include seeing students disrespectful to her during lessons. When such problems occur, she prefers transferring them to discipline teachers. She explained that she would not make personal decisions on serious discipline problems unless she has the authority to punish the students.

For less serious discipline problems, they were illustrated as students making noise in the classrooms, or not completing their homework on time. Similarly, she prefers to transfer the case to the Head of Discipline after confronting the students. If Teacher M is empowered by the principal to personally handle discipline problems, she highlighted many obstacles to personal decision-making. Her main concern would be making right decisions that are favorable to the school management. For pre-existing work culture, she mentioned of teachers' negative attitudes and low levels of commitment. However, she believes that her main priority is to produce good academic while discipline management becomes the secondary. Therefore, she prefers to transfer all the risks of decision-making to the HOD because of the SOPs.



For aspects of student-teacher relationship, she felt that teachers are less likely to punish their favorite students. If seen from the perspectives of other children, this could imply that teachers practice favoritism. Teacher M acknowledges the problem to treat all students equally. Therefore, she suggests teachers to set clear boundaries as much as they want to be close to their students. Thus, decision-making can be carried out without personal biases.

The final obstacle mentioned by Teacher M is the sociocultural difference among students. She mentioned of many types of different students with different behaviors. Therefore, she highlighted the need to understand students' backgrounds. A lack of understanding could lead to wrong decisions when it comes to handling discipline problems.

In the final section of her interview, she was asked of some personal strategies for personal decision-making. She reiterated the best practice is to transfer discipline cases to discipline teachers whom she considers as experts. Above all, she suggests teachers to keep sharpening their judgment to anticipate the risks that are associated with personal decision-making.

#### **Respondent 14: Teacher N**

##### *Analyses of Teacher N.*

Analysis of data from the PCI form indicated that Teacher N is very custodial with a cumulative score of 75. In addition, the analysis from the TSES form indicated that she is efficacious in all three areas of classroom management, student engagement and instructional strategy. Table 38 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher N as compared to the mean.

Table 38  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher N*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	7.00	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	7.50	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.25	7.10

*Note.* \* Computed means from fifteen respondents.

Teacher N does not characterize herself to be strict with students in her classroom. She believes that strictness will restrict their freedom to learn from her. However, she would behave otherwise when she encounters discipline problems in her classroom. As her discipline style, she constantly reminds her students to be watchful their behaviors and to think and act like adults.

Teaching students from the same age band allows her to familiarize with their thoughts and behaviors. She is confident to counsel them in their personal or emotional problems. Her preferred style of classroom control is prevention rather than punishment. Occasionally, she would remind and counsel students from reacting and portraying unwanted behaviors in the classroom.

When confronted with discipline problems in the class, she admitted,

*“I not feel confident to make personal decisions. Usually, I need to consult other teachers because I do not want to be liable to any negative consequences.”*

(Line 42 from personal transcripts.)

However, Teacher N indicated that only serious discipline problems like smoking, truancy and unwarranted boy-girl relationships are consulted with other teachers. In addition, she would transfer these students to the Head of Discipline to handle when personal intervention fails and goes beyond her limit of tolerance. She ticked ‘sometimes’ to taking this method of approach, even though she indicated that she would frequently feel indecisive on what to do with the serious discipline matter. As an

inclination, she rated ‘frequently’ to transfer serious discipline cases to the person in charge as her best solution to the problem.

Less serious discipline problems were exemplified as incompleteness of homework, or using hand phones in the class. For such cases, Teacher N would prefer to intervene directly. By far, she is thankful that she did not encounter any serious problems in her class. Most matters were considered trivial even though there were cases transferred to others due to her lack of knowledge and incompetency. However, if she were to personally take action on a classroom discipline case as compared to transfer, she indicated the risks misinterpretation and misreporting by students to parents, other teachers or even the principal.

Teacher N also highlighted the bureaucratic structure as her obstacle in personal decision-making. She mentioned,

*“Outdated and impractical SOPs could hinder creative solutions and slow down the problem solving process. For instance, I face the same students not learning from their mistakes even though they have been disciplined with the usual standard operating procedures. I prefer the school to enforce more punishments other than just reprimanding so that students can really change from their mistakes.”*

(Line 46 from personal transcripts.)

However, Teacher N does not consider obstacles to personal decision-making that are coming from pre-existing work culture, quality of teacher-student relationship or sociocultural differences among students. Whenever discipline cases are unmanageable, she prefers to transfer to others.

For suggestions, Teacher N highlighted discussions and collaborations with other teachers to overcome the obstacles within the SOPs. She hopes that teachers can learn to solve discipline problems collaboratively to avoid making unnecessary

mistakes. Other than having the principal as the primary source of information, she believes in learning from senior teachers because of their experience in classroom control. As her common strategy, she prefers to be strict when confronted with any discipline case so that students are not oblivious to her instructions during her lessons.

### **Respondent 15: Teacher O**

#### *Analyses of Teacher O.*

Analysis of data from the PCI form indicated that Teacher O is very custodial with a cumulative score of 71. In addition, the analysis from the TSES form indicated that she is efficacious in all three aspects of instructional strategy, classroom management and student engagement. Table 39 is the summary profile for TSES in each subscale for Teacher O as compared to the group's mean.

Table 39  
*Profile of TSES in each Subscale for Teacher O*

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	Subscales score	*Mean
A. Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.00	6.85
B. Efficacy in Instructional Strategy	8.25	7.23
C. Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.75	7.10

*Note.* \*Computed means from fifteen respondents.

During the interview with Teacher O, she emphasized that she is strict with her students in the class. She expects her students to pay full attention during her lessons in order to achieve the learning objectives. As a strategy, she would often clarify on her expectations for any unwanted behaviors in the classroom. She is confident when making personal decisions relating to classroom discipline. As her classroom control strategy, immediate intervention is important to curb any discipline situation from escalating. She defined serious discipline cases as prone to cause serious harm to self and others.

On the contrary, Teacher O is not hesitant to take personal actions on less serious discipline problems. In cases like students not focusing on her lessons or being mischievous to others, she never felt undecided on what to do. Nevertheless, she prefers to advise her students instead of punish. When she investigates on discipline problems, she would gather the necessary evidences and determine the level of seriousness. Habitually, she would personally take action on less serious problems instead of transferring to other teachers-in-charge. However, she prefers to transfer when the discipline situations are becoming complicated. In another area, she discussed three obstacles to personal decision-making. First, she indicated the problem in pre-existing work culture. Through interview, she highlighted the negative attitude of teachers that hinder collaborative decision-making.

For the second obstacle, she elaborated on the bureaucratic structure of the school. Labeled bureaucracy as red tapes, she highlighted the risk of delay when it comes to effective decision-making. She highlighted,

*“If every discipline problem is to be reported to the management, I feel that a trivial discipline case could worsen by the time a solution is determined. Therefore, I suggest that the school management improve on its SOPs to speed up the process of decision-making. In addition, the school needs revise on ineffective or irrelevant standard operating procedures that could immobilize teachers due to the fear and other restrictions. “*

(Line 48 from personal transcripts.)

Her third obstacle to effective decision-making was the sociocultural differences among students. Previously, she used to lack the sensitivity, discernment and experience to detect the potential threats of disharmony among students coming from different cultural backgrounds. She also highlighted incidents where students were mischievous to tease each other with race-based jokes, but ended instead with arguments and fights.

Therefore, she emphasized that a quality teacher-student relationship should lead to better decision-making, classroom control and even reduction of such unwanted incidents. While she was the Deputy Principal, she occasionally encouraged teachers to meet needs of students with different sociocultural backgrounds. In order to improve on her own decision-making skills, she recommends reading and collaborating with other teachers. Teacher O concluded her interview by suggesting that teachers should be willing to share and learn from others in order to be familiar with the standard operating procedures of the school.

## Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, the researcher described respondent's demographic profile together with the scores from the analyses of pupil control ideology and teacher's sense of efficacy. Sequentially, this chapter has presented results from data analyses in relation to the six research questions, and all speculations pertaining to the research questions were also positively portrayed throughout the analyses of data. In reporting the findings, results from analyses were concentrated on the three core areas of research: (a) the context; (b) the process; and (c) the content that followed the conceptual framework of this research.

In the first area, teachers were described in their classroom control strategies in the classroom. Analyses of data with the *Decision-making* questionnaire have indicated that teachers portrayed four kinds of strategies during classroom control: (a) *self-directed*; (b) *student-directed*; (c) *situational directed*; and (d) *organizational-directed*. Each of these strategies contained lists of tactics that have the purpose to educate, to correct, to prevent and to punish (mildly). In total, the researcher has uncovered 35 different types of tactics that were identified from the fifteen respondents through the coding of their transcripts.

Simultaneously, the researcher looked into their aspects of decision-making. As competency levels of each respondent were different, the manner and frequency of personal involvement were described from their personal perceptions and experiences. In addition, data analyses have revealed that their patterns of decision-making progressed from personal involvement, to collaboration and finally transfer when discipline problem deteriorates from less serious to serious.

The research explored further into the fourteen respondents (excluding the Head of Discipline) on their level of personal involvement because little was known on their

behaviors prior to transfer. Respondents' extent of personal involvement were analyzed and explained in three areas: (a) their frequency of transfer; (b) internal factors related to transfer (such as personal roles, experience or PCI and TSES scores); (d) how teachers perceived between a serious to a less serious discipline problem; and (e) their personal interventions prior to transfer. By analyzing respondents collectively, comparisons (in terms of similarities and differences) were also made to wholesomely explain teachers' extent of personal involvement.

The researcher concluded that respondents' tendency to transfer was due to various internal (such as PCI/TSES scores, role or experience) and external factors (parental involvement and SOPs). Within the phase of personal involvement, the researcher discovered that respondents could conduct basic investigations such as: (a) to gather evidence; (b) to differentiate discipline problems according to the level of seriousness; and (c) to trace the cause of discipline problems. As a limitation of research, data could not support if respondents were carrying out all three actions consistently in their classrooms. In addition, analyses of data could not rank these separate actions into sequential steps. Instead, data could only suggest that these steps were interrelated and occurred simultaneously among each respondent.

As the last point of conclusion to their process of decision-making, the researcher concluded that respondents' reluctance to involve in decision-making was hampered by external factors that were highlighted as unfavorable conditions and obstacles.

In explaining the list of unfavorable conditions, all respondents attributed their problem of decision-making to external factors. However, this case study did not inculcate quantitative analyses to compare which aspect or conditions were stronger to influence personal decision-making. To highlight the findings, the researcher listed their



unfavorable conditions and subsequently classified their obstacles of personal decision-making into six categories; (a) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); (b) parental involvement; (c) negative teacher-student relationships; (d) negative work culture; (e) managing students with Learning Disabilities (LDs) and; (f) socio-cultural differences. Data analyses concluded that SOPs and parental involvement were mentioned numerously as obstacles to personal decision-making. According to respondents (including the HOD), they behaved in such manner to avoid taking on more risks on themselves, and to also safeguard the reputation and interest of the organization. Other environmental factors such as pre-existing work culture, learning disability among students, socio-cultural difference were less mentioned as obstacles for personal involvement.

In the last research question, respondents contributed their ideas and suggestions to improve on classroom control. For the Head of Discipline, the benefits of knowing the obstacles that teachers faced during personal decision-making would enable him to institute change management programs to assist teachers to be more competent in their own personal involvement. Such example would be training teachers to be more skillful in identifying, diagnosing or differentiating discipline problem prior to transfer. Thus, this research had also highlighted the key areas that would encourage more organizational learning in the areas that are needed most.

A large contribution from data analyses stemmed in uncovering the aspects relating to classroom control and decision-making that was happening within a bureaucratic organization. Inevitably, SOPs are rules that dictate the decisions of all school communities. To face challenges and threats of personal decision-making, respondents suggested that the school's SOPs must undergo improvements in aspects of teacher education, teacher supervision and program interventions. Inculcating multiple viewpoints of teachers in this case study was like putting together a jigsaw puzzle that

would help school leaders to have a larger perspective on the predicament that teachers faced when dealing with discipline problems. As such, school policies must support different viewpoints so that it can be successfully implemented across school communities. Further discussions and recommendations pertaining to the data findings shall be elaborated in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Summary, Discussions and Recommendations**

In this final chapter, the researcher will discuss key findings from data analyses that progresses from the context of the decision-maker, process of decision-making and subsequently on the obstacles in personal decision-making. By incorporating theories and results from data analyses, the researcher will also discuss on respondents' suggestions to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making. In recommendations for organizational learning, there will further thoughts on the implication of this case study in aspects of classroom management, decision-making and organizational change. As the final section of this chapter concludes, the limitations of research will be presented in order to highlight on the obstacles and constraints faced by the researcher throughout the tenure of this case study.

### **Discussions**

#### **Summary on Organizational Context**

Previously in chapter two, the researcher has described the inner and outer context that surrounded the researched organization. To reiterate, a private school has the characteristics of a corporate entity, but functions like a public school to achieve the national education alongside the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2015 (MEP, 2012). All the four phases of study (as shown in Figure 2 in chapter one) were successfully completed to achieve the overall purpose and objectives of this study. Briefly, six research questions were crafted to uncover all the key elements that are parallel to Pettigrew (1999) conceptual framework. Fifteen teachers (including the Head

of Discipline, HOD) completed the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy (TSES) questionnaires.

In addition, a *Decision-making* questionnaire was designed to collect data on the inner context surrounding them as decision-makers. Through participant observation, the researcher explored the school's SOPs, climate and culture, socio-demographic compositions and the principal's leadership. For outer context, situations of parental concern in school discipline, impact of education policies on discipline management, teachers' code of ethics and other organizational circumstances were also explored in tandem with school events and time of analysis. As illustrated in Figure 28 for both internal and external contexts, it is important to take note that these evidences were gathered for descriptive purposes only, rather than for inferential analyses.

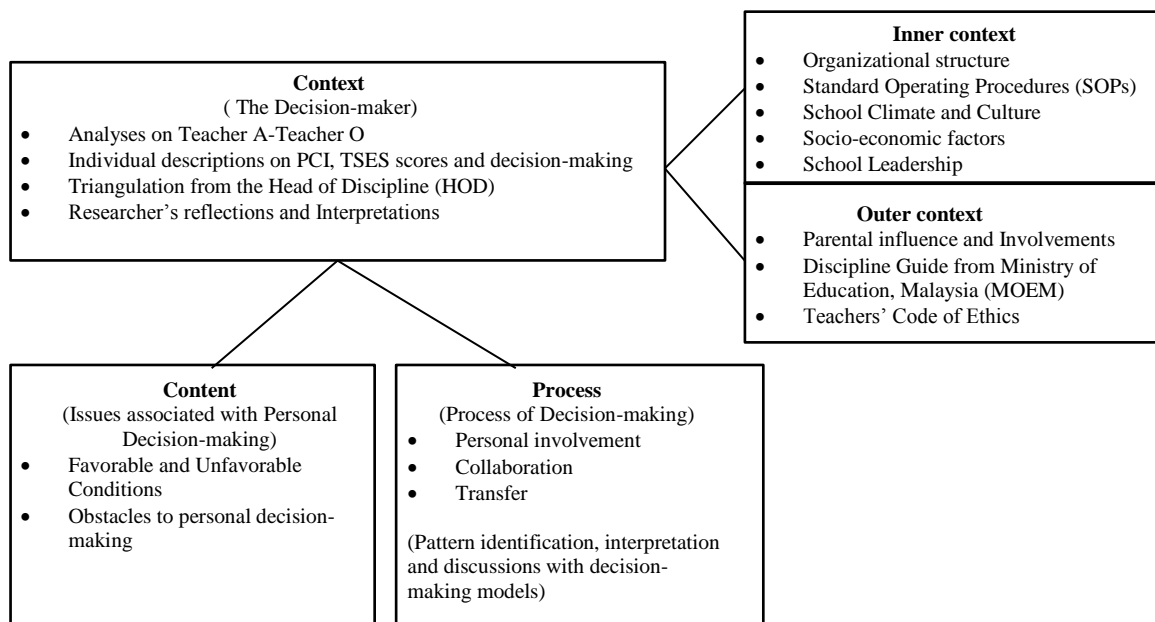


Figure 28. Scope for discussions from research findings

## **Discussions on Context: Teachers as Decision-makers**

### *Discussions on demographic profiles.*

The purposive sampling was used as to select of respondents for analyses. As mentioned in chapter three, twenty-three names were initially proposed to participate in the study. However, due to personal and unforeseen circumstances, nine teachers dropped out prior to the start of data collection. In addition, teachers were selected through the assistance of the Head of Discipline due to several reasons. First, the researcher wanted to look teachers who were experience to handle discipline cases personally without relying much on the HOD's assistance. For such reasons, teachers who were presumed experienced and efficacious could provide clues to effective strategies that are useful for this research. In addition, the researcher was also curious of their motivation or reasons behind their decision to transfer (even though they were perceived to have the experience and capability to handle discipline matters personally). For the same reason, teachers who were likely to collaborate and participate in decision-making were explored in this case study.

According to Sava (2002), it was unlikely to find teachers stepping forward to acknowledge their negative behavior for a variety of reasons (such personal ego, fear of exposure or perceived organizational threats). Nevertheless, the Head of Discipline could identify the teachers concerned because of his previous encounters and experience with them. With a list of criteria, teachers who were perceived to be hot-tempered in the school and those who are presumed to be lenient or ignorant to deal with students' misbehaviors were chosen. Additionally, teachers who were prone to transfer trivial discipline cases to the HOD also became subjects of interest. In essence, the researcher was curious on their personal beliefs, abilities and strategies in classroom control.

Other than knowing their strategies for classroom control, these teachers were investigated on their extent of personal involvement. Therefore, it is understandable that this case study was meant to explore the perceptions and behaviors of these five categories of teachers, instead of generalizing on the total population of teachers in the school. In total, fifteen teachers (consisting of fourteen teachers and the Head of discipline) volunteered and completed this study.

Other than the list of criteria for purposive sampling, the researcher had tried to conduct a cross sectional selection of respondents in aspects of gender, age, position and experience in teaching. Although the fifteen respondents were not representative to the whole population of teachers in the school, they were selected because it was a preliminary effort to help the researcher to explore and understand on the issues concerning organizational decision-making. As an outcome, all respondents would contribute to the accumulation of perspectives to describe organizational realities and behaviors in the classrooms.

### ***Discussions on Pupil Control Ideology.***

In this section, the pupil control ideology form (PCI form) is discussed in terms of its function, suitability and application in this case study. As the focus of using the PCI form was not to generalize the population sample, it was used to support the perceptions of teachers in terms of teacher-student relationships. According to Sackney (1988), the PCI form can be an indicator to the classroom climate that teachers create to assist them in teaching and learning. In addition, the PCI form is also useful to indicate the level of teachers' perception on organizational climate. Vygotsky and Latane (1981) highlighted that a teachers' feelings, thoughts and behaviors are caused by external, contextual and program factors.

Thus, it is not surprising that teachers who are custodial often operate from a controlled and strict environment, such as the bureaucratic context of a school (Hoy, 1967). For Bandura (1996, 1999), he explained that individual beliefs, behaviors and their environment are acting bi-directionally. In other words, teachers influence and be influenced by their environment. When viewed collectively, teachers who worked under a strong bureaucratic structure are more likely to be custodial as compared to humanistic due to higher demands for compliance and conformity to organizational SOPs.

In essence, the PCI form is a useful instrument to evaluate teachers' state of perceptions as compared to others. Through personal correspondence between the researcher and Professor Hoy (as the originator of the PCI form), the score of PCI is actually contextual and relative value. He mentioned that a group of teachers in another school could differ in their PCI score because of another setting and culture.

The idea of using the PCI score to support the information from the decision-making questionnaire was important because it served as a reference point to uncover the extent of teachers' decision-making and classroom control strategies in the classrooms. Furthermore, it was discovered among respondents that regardless if a teacher is humanistic or custodial, their perceptions of serious discipline problems are almost the same, and that all of them had different limits of tolerance to decide if a discipline case should be personally handled or transferred to the Head of Discipline. Nevertheless, the organizational process of decision-making remains the same even though their patterns from personal involvement to transfer differed in terms of frequency, involvement and perceptions on seriousness.

Theoretically and psychologically, a humanistic PCI is preferred over custodial PCI when managing students in the classroom (Hoy & Henderson, 1983; Gilbert, 2012). Results from the PCI form analyses paved the way for the researcher understand respondents' perception especially if they had a custodial pupil control ideology. In certain circumstances however, a custodial pupil control ideology is preferred over humanistic approach. Gilbert (2012) mentioned that students growing up without boundaries and sense of order might respond favourably to a custodial pupil control ideology because they interpret teachers' actions as true and caring. Therefore, a custodial pupil control ideology may be useful in schools where the number of discipline case is high, or when students are more aggressive and difficult to manage.

As mentioned in chapter two, students' discipline problems could be traced to various factors such as the parental socio-economic backgrounds (Radzi, Salma, Hamzah & Udin, 2011) peer pressure, school climate (Ali et al., 2009) and low levels of interest in learning (Razak, 2006). It is not the purpose of the study to look into the factors causing students' discipline problems. In reality however, student management have cause complications to teachers in terms of stress and job burnout (Samad et al., 2011). Unsurprisingly, some would resort to harsher treatments and physical punishments when students misbehave and go against orders repeatedly. To exert on authority, respondents felt the need to be strict and fierce in order to instill fear. As a strategy, they would often warn students on consequence should their bad behaviors persist. Nevertheless, all respondents mentioned that they are mindful to not go overboard when punishing students within the constraints of the SOPs. The discussion of teachers' decision-making in the later section is important to reveal the rationale, motivation and obstacles behind their actions.



### *Discussions on Teachers' Sense of Efficacy.*

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) questionnaire was administered to respondents to understand their beliefs on their teaching efficacy. There were three subscales within the questionnaire, and scores of respondents were analyzed and compared against the group's mean to determine their level of efficacy in three aspects: (a) classroom management; (b) instructional strategy; and (c) student engagement. Similar to the PCI form, the computed scores of each respondent is relative and contextual, and differs among teachers should the same form is administered in another school. Nevertheless, it was important to support the profile of each respondent when triangulated with data obtained from the PCI form or the *Decision-making* questionnaire.

Within the TSES questionnaire, there were several items asked under classroom management. Teachers were asked to indicate "how much they can do" to control disruptive behavior, get students to believe that they can do well in school work, get children to follow school rules and establish a classroom management system with each group of students. In essence, teachers need to be prepared, willing and able to handle all kinds of unexpected behaviors from their students. Inevitably, if a teacher failed to deal with classroom situations effectively, this could allow more opportunities for students to manipulate and misbehave during lessons. From the *Decision-making* questionnaire, it was uncovered that respondents applied different kinds of strategies in the classroom. Other than directing strategies on students alone, respondents have also directed their strategies towards self, situation or the organization. In terms of purpose, they used these four directed strategies to educate, prevent, correct and to punish students on problems that occur in the classrooms.

Undeniably, the more strategies respondents have for classroom control, the higher the state of efficacy towards classroom control (Guo, Dynia, Pelatti, & Justice, 2014). From other empirical evidence, Martin et al. (1999) mentioned that teachers with less efficacious teachers often transfer discipline cases to other personnel-in-charge. In addition, Safran (1989) and Hoy & Woolfolk (1990) highlighted on the negative correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their use of effective management techniques.

In this case study, even though most teachers do not lack abilities to handle discipline problems, they chose to transfer the problem to the Head of Discipline because of compliance to SOPs. Additionally, only Teacher N felt that she was likely to transfer discipline cases to others because she lacked confident in handling problematic students. There are other reasons why teachers transfer discipline cases others, such as personal obstacles to decision-making and conditions that are favorable for personal involvements. Interestingly, these factors would be discussed in the later section.

In aspects of instructional strategies, teachers were asked of the extent they could craft good questions for students, use a variety of assessment strategies, provide an alternative explanation (or example) when students are confused and implement alternative strategies in their classrooms. It is important for teachers to have the ability to teach different types of students. If they apply the "one size fits all" strategy, they could be lacking in ability to identify various types of learners under the spectrum of learning abilities (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2014). Consequently, students who failed to understand teachers' lessons could eventually be left out, or subsequently disrupt others due to boredom and lack of attention (Musliha Salma Mohd Radzi et al., 2011).

Thus, the area of student engagement is important as the third aspect of teachers' efficacy. In this third subscale, teachers were asked of their extent to motivate students who show low interest at schoolwork, help students value learning, calm down disruptive and noisy students and assist families in helping their children do well at school. Teachers who engage with students with their interpersonal skills are less likely to have less teacher-student conflicts (Arbaa, Jamil, & Razak, 2010). In addition, positive student engagement would establish the platform for teachers to cooperate with students and understand their learning difficulties and obstacles. There could other factors that could have led teachers to the feeling of incompetence or less efficacious.

Understandably, no generalization can be made pertaining to the relationship between PCI and TSES due to the sample of fifteen respondents. In practice, a teacher can evaluate his or her own efficacy when compared to other teachers in the school, or be paired up with others who have higher subscales for peer coaching. In other words, organizational improvements could be carried out collaboratively in the future when their current point of reference for efficacy and pupil control ideology is known. In order to describe further, a custodial PCI does not necessarily indicate respondents are less efficacious in all three subscales. Conversely, some teachers who are humanistic could be less efficacious in student engagement (Teacher A), and even in all three subscales (Teacher E). Because of all these differences, it is best to know that both TSES and PCI scores are only relevant and important to support the interviewees concerned, and not for any representation of the organization due to a limited size of sample. In addition, it is also important to reiterate that the purpose of this case study was to identify the patterns of decision-making and to understand respondents' decisions in their classrooms.

With the use of the *decision-making* questionnaire, favorable conditions to decision-making were explored to understand the motivation behind personal involvement, while obstacles to decision-making were highlighted in the content dimension of Pettigrew's conceptual framework (1987).

*Discussions on classroom control strategies.*

***Research question 1: What are the classroom control strategies that respondents practice in the organization?***

During analyses, classroom control strategies were differentiated into self-directed, student-directed, situational-directed and organizational-directed orientations. For the researcher, the idea was eventually conceived when respondents described incessantly on their experience and rationale behind their decisions. As this case study was conducted under the same setting, teachers' classroom control strategies were dependent on situations that they encounter, while their styles (enforcing or supporting) facilitated to create the classroom climate that is conducive for teaching and learning. Within each strategy, many tactics were identified and respondents used them to educate, correct and prevent students from unpleasant behaviors in the classroom.

In the researched organization, teachers were prohibited to punish students physically. Nevertheless, some respondents have reported to administer punishment on students such as standing at a corner, sending them to collect rubbish in the field and detain students during lunchtime. Generally, they perceived these punishments as mild and acceptable because there were no previous complains from students (or their parents). Unknowingly, these teachers could be wronged for acting beyond their codes of conduct, or not complying with SOPs. Consequently, these minor forms of punishments could actually invite parental objections when their actions are unjustified, inappropriate and unreasonable to the types of discipline problems.

The risk and conflict between personal effectiveness and compliance to SOPs remain present, real and to a certain extent unaddressed in the organization.

Both personal strategies and styles enabled teachers create an environment that is often referred to as classroom climate to influence and modify students' behaviors (Sackney, 1998; Yilmaz, 2009). In addition, how situations were perceived in relation to their own beliefs would influence teachers' decisions to transfer, collaborate or personally involving in the matter. In aspects of personal beliefs, the pupil control ideology and sense of efficacy was needed basically to support the profile of each respondent in terms as triangulation with their interviews and the personal views of the HOD.

In chapter two, the researcher presented the school's discipline management system particularly on the roles of discipline teachers. Most of the written roles are categorized under self-directed strategies. These roles consist of: (1) the ability to remain calm; (2) to be firm and fair; (3) to be respected; (4) to lead students; (5) to avoid physical contact; (6) to perform duties to the fullest; (7) to be familiar with the code of conduct; (8) to patrol around the school; (9) to conduct spot checks; and (10) to adopt positive approach. Notably, advising students is the only student-directed role mentioned in the SOPs. There are no situational-directed or organizational-directed roles for discipline teachers such as to improve the SOPs or collaborate with other teachers on decision-making. Since decision-making is inevitable for teachers when confronted with discipline problems, personal strategies must be administered effectively through rightful procedures in the organization.

As an outcome of research, the researcher has formed an alternative view to describe teachers' strategies of classroom control through the four orientations. The list of strategies was also tabulated in chapter four to highlight how respondents applied all their strategies for the purpose of education, prevention, correction and punishment. Although respondents have different levels of pupil control ideology and efficacies in classroom management, student engagement and instructional strategy, much more discussion is needed to explore and explain their personal strategies, internal and external circumstances that influenced their decision-making process in the classrooms. The next four sections will discuss on each strategy separately.

### ***Discussions on Four Directed Strategies of Classroom Control.***

#### *Self-directed strategies.*

From the strategies gathered in the decision-making questionnaire, teachers were known to practice *Assertive Discipline* as mentioned by Canter (1989). As examples, Teacher A, F, O and G demanded students to comply with school rules without compromise. Depending on situations, some respondents would only be very strict to their students when discipline problem occurs, while others are strict at all times to get things done in their classrooms. Generally, respondents (such as Teacher G and I) mentioned that they would intervene immediately on urgent matters to contain problems from deteriorating. Other teachers (such as Teacher F) would scold their students when they need to highlight on the seriousness of the problem or to call for compliance. All respondents mentioned that they rely strictly on SOPs when disciplining students. Some teachers (such as Teacher L) reasoned with students that school rules are important to be observed, and that repeated mistakes are intolerable in the school.

Nevertheless, students are not disciplined more than once for the same mistakes they made, and all students are given the merit points of 100 marks at the beginning of each year according to the *Merit-Demerit System (MDS)*.

Subsequently, some respondents have also adopted the “discipline with dignity” approach by Curwin and Mendler (1988). For such reasons, some respondents rationalize on students’ patterns and behaviors, anticipate risks and are mindful of threats from students’ unusual behaviors and temperaments (Teacher B and K). They tend to highlight the consequences of negative behaviors to students so to be more responsible and self-controlled. While doing so, respondents would prefer to be resourceful to relate to students and emphasize on behavior change. To a certain extent, respondents (Teacher C and G) would have to explain the rationale behind a punishment so that students can understand and learn from their own mistakes.

Relatively, respondents who apply the discipline with dignity approach were unknowingly practicing “Reality Therapy” by Glasser (1977). Respondents (such as Teacher K and M) mentioned the need to help students inculcate positive values and relate between positive behavior and the consequences of a wrong action. These respondents are investigative, preferred corrections rather than punishments, emphasized on teaching moral values and likely to send students to the counselors. Some respondents allocated time for students to reflect and apologize on their wrongdoing, while others do not stereotype students based on their past behaviors (such as Teacher O and N). By nature, they are approachable to students, sensitive to socio-cultural differences and flexible to accommodate a range of behaviors. Other than these, they trust their students and are lenient towards childish behaviors. When students misbehaved, they are allowed to write discipline reports to reflect, to explain and to acknowledge the lessons they learnt from their mistakes.

In another area of discussion, all respondents portrayed different styles (either enforcing or supporting) to remind students to be vigilant of their own behaviors while at school. Some teachers (such as Teacher E and M) would use the 1-2-3 Magic Plan as mentioned by Phelan (2011) to remind students to be attentive to instructions or

otherwise be ready to face consequences. In terms of practicality, this strategy is useful to start or stop a behavior, but not suitable to secondary students who are older and much able to be talked to.

As compared to the strategy of meditation (Schmidt, 1992), no respondents in the private school are known to practice such approach with their students. However, students are required to attend moral lessons and Islamic religious studies separately. In terms of segregation, non-Muslim students attend Moral classes while Muslim students attend Islamic religious studies. Students are taught with values and apply in different situations of life. Even though there is no direct evidence of seeing meditation as a classroom control strategy, there students attending Islamic religious studies use prayer as a meditative intervention to manage students' behaviors. For non-Muslims, teachers or counselors would teach simple methods of breathing to calm down from negative emotions such as anxieties, anger and frustrations.

In another area, respondents would also use academic subjects as a control element to manage students' learning behaviors. Similar to the 'defensive teaching' technique (McNeil, 1982), respondents would simplify their lessons, pace their communication and improve their lesson presentations in order to guide and manage students' attention. To achieve the best outcome in teaching and learning, students are activated in their senses through best pedagogical practices.

Teachers would encourage proactive participation from students in order enhance the experience and memory of students while learning. Some respondents would concentrate on less able students in order to instill self-confidence through participative learning.



*Organizational-directed strategies.*

Macro-managing the school's discipline requires all school personnel to work collaboratively and harmoniously. The school's physical environment has been designed to accommodate more students in the coming years as compared to approximately 1500 students presently. Although discipline teachers are constantly exercising "management by walking", a larger school population would eventually demand for distributed leadership (Blandford, 2013) and enhancement in SOPs. Some organizational procedures may be ineffective and impractical, and needs timely revisions through lateral and vertical communication, instead of the mere top-down communication (Dixon, 2013).

Additionally, teachers could be involved in conflicts with others if they lack the understanding on organizational SOPs especially on the purpose behind its implementations. In certain circumstances, teachers' emotions, commitment and compliance are affected because of disagreements, negative work culture and lack of commitment between individual needs and organizational decisions. Depending on the styles of school leadership, organizational expectations may exert a lot of pressures and unwelcomed procedures on teachers (Cheng, 2002). From data, some respondents perceived SOPs as being unfavourable for personal decision-making. Thus, intervention to change teachers' perception should be reflective and progressive because personal change would often take some time for self-realization and assimilation into a positive school culture.

Relating to how discipline problems are reported in the *pre-enquiry report*, the SOPs only indicated the roles to be played by discipline committees and not teachers as primary receivers on students' problems. Undoubtedly, analyses from this case study have improved the flowchart to encompass all teachers instead of merely discipline coordinators. Thus, the study of organizational decision-making was timely and

important because it looked into teachers' classroom management practice, explained their obstacles and discusses their processes in decision-making while playing their part as classroom managers. Furthermore, there was no indication on how teachers perceive and classify a discipline problem into serious or less serious ones. Much of these unanswered matters were eventually addressed during the phase of data analyses.

The MOE's Directive that prohibits teachers from resorting primarily to punishments (MOEM, 2001) is a rational and strategic move to imply that enforcement and support must work simultaneously. Without proper support, the process of disciplining would not be complete. Furthermore, it is advisable to consider the seriousness of the discipline problem and match it with the intensity for punishment to avoid punishments that are unjust.

By evaluating on the organizational SOPs, it is clear that discipline management in the school requires the "Unified Discipline Approach" as described by Algonzzinee et al., (2001). As a school wide behavior management program, SOPs is to ensure consistency and protection of teachers when implementing school discipline. As highlighted in the previous section, teachers are required to know and apply the sets of organizational procedures as highlighted in the SOP. Failure to comply with school policies and procedures could either be detrimental to their profession or the reputation of the organization. In both aspects, discipline management is a system for risk management, promoting fairness and organizational decision-making.

In terms of the content within SOPs, there must be continuous personal and organizational effort to recognize, evaluate and improve on general policies so that everyone is involved in the decision-making, particularly when distributed and sustainable leadership is concerned (Hashim & Daud, 2014). If no concentrated efforts to collaborate and synergize individual strengths, organizational workload would

increase and only be borne by few individuals such as the principal, the Head of Discipline (HOD) and other school administrators. Additionally, when trust levels are low, numerous problems could persist and invite a series of problems. Consequently, the process of decision-making is delayed, teachers' become more dependent on others and there could be unwillingness to collaborate in organizational problems.

While every organization has existing problems that are contextual and unique to them, the purpose of exploring and evaluating organizational best practices should best be carried out through action research or experimental research. Future organizational interventions should not be limited to implementing new programs or changing institutional policies, but in promoting learning organizations towards a progressive and sustainable change.

*Student-directed strategies.*

With the various styles of classroom control, teachers can be flexible to change their approach when situations are unpredictable and demanding. From the researcher's own reflections as a participant observer, students portrayed basic emotional needs for attention, affection, acknowledgement and appreciation. When one or more of these emotional needs are not met, they will tend to exhibit aggressiveness, frustration, anger or any other physical forms of behavioral expressions (Ali et.al, 2009).

For the researcher, these "expressers" type of students are likely to portray their emotions through verbal or non-verbal means. However, students have caused a serious discipline problem when these forms of behavioral expressions are directed outwardly and physically to things (or people) that result in injury or harm. On the other extreme, there are students who tend to suppress (or subjugate) personal problems that lead to self-inflicted suffering or pain. For "suppressor" type of students, personal problems are

usually directed inwardly to cause disturbances or imbalances to physiological, emotional or psychological state ( Hashim & Kasim, 2015).

As examples, when students portray symptoms such of social withdrawals, moodiness, inattention, insomnia, panic attack and suicidal thoughts, they are usually referred to the counselors of the school. These cases are known to persist from the files of the HOD. Through previous discipline records and personal observations, students differed and portrayed a mixture of characters as expressers and suppressors. Students that are likely to behave in a radical way along the spectrum should be identified, counseled and monitored so that they do not exhibit or react emotionally or irrationally to people and school properties. In addition, the environment that surrounds these troubled students must also be considered so that it does not trigger unwanted and unnecessary behaviors (Razak, 2006). This include plans like relocating students into other classes, assisting them to understand their triggering points, and learning to cope with negative emotions. In addition, the degree of enforcing and supporting by teachers must also be appropriate as there are deeper and complicated issues to be addressed within these types of students.

Technically, discipline problems are also psychological problems because students' psychological and physiological needs are not communicated through listening and understanding. This include the core emotional needs are not met by their surrounding that includes people and circumstances. Consequently, students channeled their demands wrongly through suppressions (as illustrated by Teacher B where students from different social-cultural backgrounds tend to be timid and quiet) or expressions (as illustrated by Teacher A in the potentiality of student to vandalize his car due to personal grudges). Figure 29 is an illustration of the expresser and suppressor spectrum. Synonymous to the symptoms of fight, fright or flight, students portray these behaviors when coping with psychological, emotional or physiological problems.

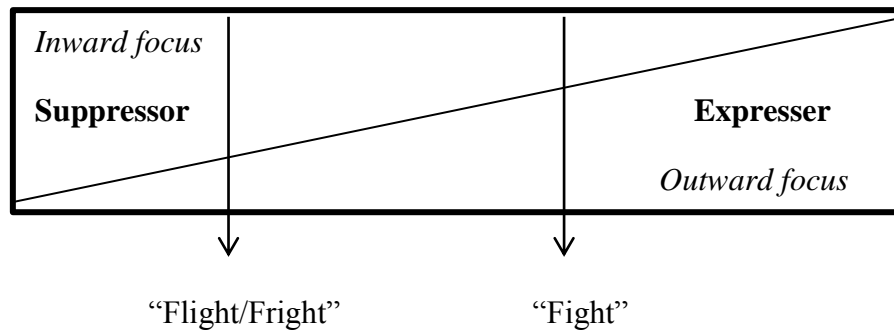


Figure 29. Expresser and Suppressor spectrum

As mentioned earlier, these symptoms are also classified as discipline problems because they cause injury to self, other people and also physical things. Students who are at the ends of the suppressor spectrum are likely portray symptoms of depression and suicidal, while on the other extreme, expressers are likely to portray oppressive behaviors to others and vandalism to school properties. This conclusion is consistent to what Ravichandran & Sasikala (2015) referred as *Internalizing* and *Externalizing* behaviors.

In essence, when teachers fail to understand the coping styles of students, they could be treating the symptoms instead of the cause. Thus, the understanding of discipline styles (Tomal, 1998) should go beyond the use of tactics and strategies to merely treating the symptoms, but to the treatment of causes as well. Unless pursued professionally, teachers are not necessarily certified psychologists, psychiatrist, counselors or even mental coaches. Nevertheless, they rely heavily on their own personal experience to detect the students' types of behaviors and refer their problems to the right people or resources. When confronted with discipline cases that are beyond their knowledge and expertise teachers would naturally default to transfer to the Head of Discipline. Otherwise, teachers would often focus on preventive methods to manage students' behavior, such as implementing character education program due to the

positive impact to students' attendance, academics and the number of discipline incidents (Holt & Holt, 2014).

*Situation-directed strategies.*

From the *Decision-making* questionnaire, teachers were requested to differentiate between a serious and less serious discipline problem. Across collective analyses, respondents described discipline situations in four viewpoints: (a) technical; (b) physical; (c) psychological; and (c) the person(s) involved. From technical viewpoints, discipline situations were differentiated in aspects of urgency, importance or frequency of occurrences. From physical viewpoints, discipline situations were described in the degree of severity, harm or even impact to tangible structures such as school property. Additionally, respondents have also described situations in terms of its impact (or repercussions) on school communities' psychological and emotional being. As for their viewpoints in terms of person(s), situations were described in the degree of severity of injury, harm and impact to self and others (such as students and parents). Other than these four differentiating viewpoints, respondents have also defined and categorized both serious and less serious discipline problems from different aspects such as involvement of principal and familiarity to the problem (see Table 20 in chapter four). Where serious situations are concerned, disciplining requires more processes, personnel and even punishments as methods for problem solving.

Corporal punishment (or caning) is allowed in the school on the basis to serve the purpose of correction and prevention (MOEM, 2003). Today, the question on the effectiveness of caning and how these acts should be carried out are two pressing issues that educational lawmakers are still debating on (Alsaif, 2015). With reference to existing education policies, teachers can only resort to corporal punishments on three conditions: (1) If they are empowered by the principal, (2) If they have used other means of educative, corrective and preventive measures prior to punishment, and (3) If

they are familiar with instructions on physical punishment as indicated from Ministry Directives (MOEM, 2001). Other than Ministry Directives, teachers are constantly reminded that they could only act within the laws of education policies by referring to Teachers' Ethics for Professional Practice and particularly within the SOPs of the organization. In complicated situations however, teachers had to rely on personal judgment, experience and instincts to accomplish the purpose of disciplining without physical punishment.

Beyond classroom control strategies, serious discipline problems could push teachers to the brink of emotional stress and burnout (Cheng, 2002). Some situations are so urgent that they demand teachers to make split second decisions. In some situations, a similar discipline problem could be viewed differently by two persons. Fundamentally, teachers' awareness and preparedness to face different kinds of discipline situations are important.

As an alternative process to problem solving, strategies can also be targeted on themselves, student, situation, or the organization as a whole. When teachers are confronted with different situations, it is important for them to look into the cognitive and emotional state of students. For this reason, situation-directed strategies and student-directed strategies ought to be implemented simultaneously.

With *Situational Leadership* (Blanchard, Zigami & Nelson, 1993), teachers as classroom leaders must first look at the willingness and ability of students to learn and change in the classrooms. This directive (or task) and supportive (or relationship) behavior model works on the assumption that there is no best leadership style and the need to match strategies with students' behavior that could be in the form of delegating, supporting, coaching and directing.

However, it was reported from data analyses that teachers may experience indecision and dilemma due to SOPs, parental involvement and other obstacles to personal decision-making. This finding augmented what Lewis (1999) had referred to as “perceived institutional pressures that may inhibit teachers to implement their ideas of best practice.” Many of the obstacles related perceive institutional pressures were already highlighted in the list of unfavorable conditions to personal decision-making. At the foremost, teachers’ behaviors in classroom management should match the state of their students by using self-directed and student-directed strategies regardless of the external conditions that surround the decision-maker.

### **Discussions on Process: Respondents’ Patterns of Decision-making**

#### *Discussions on respondents’ patterns of decision-making.*

#### *Research question 2: What are the observable patterns of decision-making when respondents manage classroom discipline problems?*

Results from the second research question have revealed that respondents would progress from personal involvement, collaboration and eventually transfer when discipline problems escalate from less serious to serious. From theoretical perspective, Bandura’s (1996, 1999) theory of triadic reciprocity has also enabled the researcher to understand and describe how environment factors, personal (cognitive) factors and behavioral factors are related and affecting each other bi-directionally.

As observed from data analyses, respondents had both outcome expectations and efficacy expectations when dealing with classroom problems. For example, while they believed that certain strategies can solve discipline problems effectively, not everyone has the confidence to carry them out the same task due to lack of experience, case complications or empowerment from the principal. Additionally, factors that inhibit



personal decision-making were highlighted in chapter four included compliance with SOPs, parental involvement, pre-existing work culture and other environmental factors.

From theoretical perspectives, respondents would personally involve in decision-making if they experience more favorable conditions and lesser obstacles (Woodworth, 1950) . Further analyses on their reasons were later explored in Phase 3 (Analyses of content) as unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making.

In a separate development, the increase in students' demographic and population since year 2012 have resulted in more reviews on the current discipline management system. Due to an increase of discipline cases (at one time), stringent procedures were set up to guide and protect teachers from risks when handling students' behavioral problems. As highlighted by the Head of Discipline, the tasks of categorizing discipline problems and improving the reporting process have been outlined in the SOPs. Nevertheless, there were still a handful of teachers who do not wish to transfer serious discipline cases directly because they assessed and dealt with the issues differently. Conversely, other teachers perceived the seriousness to comply with SOPs and would transfer every discipline matter to the Head of Discipline. In addition, teachers in the organization are prohibited to punish students physically for their misbehaviors. Surrounded by these circumstances, the researcher decided to investigate on the extent of respondents' personal involvement in organizational decision-making.

### ***Discussions on respondents' extent of personal involvement***

#### ***Research question 3: What is the extent of respondents' personal involvement in decision-making?***

For this research question, the researcher has explored respondents' extent of personal involvement from four aspects: (a) their frequency of transfer; (b) their internal factors (such as PCI/TSES scores and their experience/previous trainings); (c) their

perceptions to differentiate between a serious/less serious discipline problem; and (d) their personal intervention prior to transfer.

In terms of frequency of transfer, results have analyzed a few selected respondents (such as Teachers E, J and N) who indicated that they were prone to transfer discipline problems to the HOD because of varying and personal reasons such as limited experience, compliance to SOPs and lack of empowerment. Due to the nature of a case study, their frequencies of transfer were purely perceptual, and they were compared on the basis of habits, experience and likelihood to transfer.

Results have also indicated that respondents with varying degrees of PCI and TSES scores do not just apply different strategies and styles in classroom control, but their extent of personal involvement were also reliant on their previous experience and years of trainings as a teacher (as highlighted by Teacher A and G). In addition, their previous experiences have also guided them to differentiate between a serious and a less serious discipline problem. Much of their differentiating aspects have been presented in chapter four. As for personal intervention prior to transfer, respondents have indicated that they could: (a) gather evidences for reporting; (b) differentiate discipline problems if they were serious of less serious; and (c) trace discipline problems to the cause. However, qualitative data could not ascertained in terms of frequency and habits in carrying out these three self-professed abilities.

In essence, teachers need to inform on their extent of personal involvement so that the discipline team could follow up on their report without overlapping the processes of investigations. Ultimately, decision-making could be quickened when information is available and necessary evidences are collected, differentiated and justified by all teachers in the secondary school. Ideally, improvements in organizational SOPs should evaluate on its practicality, effectiveness and efficiency for problem solving. More discussions on respondents' suggestions to encourage personal

involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making will be suggested in the end of this chapter.

For other aspects of improvements, comprehensive analyses could be carried out in the future to identify both weakness and threats on teachers' personal process of decision-making. Pajares (1996) and Bandura (1977) mentioned four sources where individual teachers can be more efficacious in decision-making. First, teachers need to be exposed through collaboration and information sharing in order to increase their experience and mastery in the classroom management skills. If transfer is the only option, they could potentially miss out learning opportunities to better improve in their own weaknesses. Inevitably, personal awareness on the complexity of tasks, the amount of effort needed and the perception towards success are necessary learning steps to enhance personal accomplishments in what Bandura (1977) referred to as enactive mastery.

Secondly, common classroom teachers may not be able to observe how discipline teachers cope with threats and arduous challenges to solve completed problems. In order to improve vicarious experience, teachers must be encouraged to collaborate and practice shared decision-making so that the tasks of disciplining do not always fall on the responsibility of the few.

In addition, it allows the organization to create a succession plan or contingency plan in case the discipline team is short of personnel due to resignation or other personal reasons.

For social persuasion and emotional arousal, some respondents (such as Teacher A, O, E and J) have mentioned that there were difficulties in getting assistance of others to collaborate on discipline matters. This factor was attributed to pre-existing work culture where teachers are less likely to participate in matters that are perceived as inconvenient and not within their job scope.

In another aspect, the principal can decide on the level of empowerment or support to different teachers with levels of readiness and competencies. Bridges (1967) mentioned that when matters are concerning teachers highly, it is advisable to let teachers participate in decision-making, while parliamentary approach is useful to resolve conflicts. Depending on the principal's leadership style, the school climate will continued to be shaped and developed until a culture is consistent and identifiable. While there are pros and cons of collaborative or empowerment to teachers for decision-making, today's challenges in classroom management forces teachers to adapt quickly to the pressing demands of students, parents and stakeholders. Inevitably, teachers cannot merely play their roles as classroom managers, but as classroom leaders in order to make sound decisions on challenging problems. In addition, their personal patterns of decision-making must be further compared with the decision-making models that were highlighted earlier in chapter two in order to bridge the gap between theories and practice. Thus, two sections are dedicated in the following discussions to highlight: (a) the subject of leadership in relation to their process of decision-making; and (b) decision-making models in relation to respondents' process of decision-making.

***Leadership in relation to respondents' process of decision-making.***

For the discipline department, the task to persuade and motivate other teachers to be committed to organizational problems solving remains a challenge for the organization to change. Ideally, organizational problems such as discipline issues should be distributed and solved at each personal and competency level if teachers are individually competent, collaborative and interdependent. As explained in the earlier segment on situational-directed strategy, *Situational Leadership* (Blanchard, Zigami & Nelson, 1993) highlighted the four maturity levels of personnel within any organization: (a) those that are unable and unwilling; (b) those that are unable but willing; (c) those that are capable but unwilling; and (d) those that are very capable and confident.

Relating to the findings of this study, some respondents (Teacher A, O, E and F) felt that pre-existing work culture is an obstacle to personal decision-making because of different degrees of ability and willingness. As an example, they highlighted that some teachers in the organization lacked initiatives to intervene in minor discipline problems. Other example they highlighted was teachers rejecting new ideas and change. Thus, the different situations within work culture was documented to be real and mirrored after the four maturity levels from (a) to (d).

*Situational leadership* suggests that people's stage of ability and willingness are situational and developmental, and the best approach is to match the situation of people with an ideal style of leadership that could be in the form of directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. To contextualize *situational leadership* with the findings of this case study, any personnel with lower abilities and unwillingness ought to be directed (by telling and guiding) in order to comply with SOPs for solutions. For another stage of behavior, when teachers are unable to take on responsibility for their task but are willing to participate in decision-making, they could be coached on strategies by using organizational resources more effectively. School leaders should use persuasion and explanation to encourage the developmental of skills in aspects of classroom management, student engagement and instructional strategy. On the next level, there could also be teachers who are experienced and able to do the tasks but lack the confidence and willingness to take on more responsibility. For such teachers, leaders ought to encourage their personnel with more participation in problem solving. The final level involves personnel who are confident, capable, responsible should be delegated with tasks, so that organizational power is distributed or shared through trust and collaboration.

Empowerment is the other factor that motivated respondents to be involved in further decision-making. Some respondents (such as Teacher L, N, J, E and G) have indicated that if they were empowered by the principal to decide on the outcome for discipline matters, they would (or have) to be confident to execute the job of disciplining. They mentioned that by having the entrustment and authority of the principal, it would make a lot of difference and contribute to change of their personal behavior.

Theoretically, when situations create conflict between personal attitudes, beliefs and behavior, it can be described with Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Teachers (such as Teacher A and G) may experience discomfort in disciplining students initially, but it could eventually lead to the alteration of attitudes, beliefs or behaviors to reduce the discomfort and restore balance as this process continues. In essence, people seek consistency in their beliefs and attitudes when two cognitions are inconsistent regardless of the situation. During the state of tension or cognitive dissonance, people are motivated to reduce, or to eliminate that state of feeling in order to achieve consonance.

From data analyses, some respondents (like Teacher N and L) have indicated that they would agree with the principal's directive order to carry out organizational responsibilities without much resistance. Ultimately, when there is inconsistency between attitudes and behaviors, respondents would change their mindsets, or eliminate their dissonance by rising up to the challenge as given by the principal. To explain from psychological viewpoints, Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory (1957) was explored to understand the rationale of personal compliance over personal will (also referred to as dissonance).

Practically, there are three ways to eliminate dissonances according to Festinger (1957). First, people can change their attitudes, behaviors or beliefs when they do not longer work for them but rather, against them. Consequently, teachers could eliminate their attitude, behavior or belief by choice and preference. Secondly, people can renew their thoughts with new information and knowledge to outweigh their dissonance, and to eventually change their belief, attitude or behavior. Thirdly, people can change the way they see importance and urgency towards the actions they take. Contextually, if teachers are called to be discipline teachers, their state of unwillingness or incompetency could be directed, coached, supported or delegated in accordance to situational leadership. In addition, teachers could redefine their personal mission to educate, evaluate and change their self-perceptions towards their own dissonances. While it is important to highlight that these proactive steps are never a guarantee to yield positive results, what is evident is that people will take steps to reduce the extent of their dissonance in accordance to the theory.

In aspects of decision-making, Festinger (1964) highlighted the tactic of “spreading apart the alternatives” of choices. In other words, people would reduce dissonance by increasing the attractiveness of one choice over the other, or decrease the attractiveness of the rejected alternative. Secondly, when decisions require considerable effort to achieve failed, people could reduce the dissonance through their justification that their previous effort didn't really matter.

From scientific point of view, there are few limitations to explain Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory particularly when referring to the behavior in decision-making. First, cognitive dissonance cannot be physically detected or measured as in material science. Secondly, the term, subjectivity and ambiguity of dissonance were also debated if they are a perception, or feeling about a perception. McLeod (2008) mentioned that it is complicated to generalize behavior especially when people are not

behaving under a natural environment but rather experimented in a setting where there is low ecological validity. In referring to the results from previous social experiments, individuals differed in terms of how they cope with dissonances. Nevertheless, Cognitive Dissonance Theory has withstood for half a century and is regularly mentioned in most general and social psychology today.

For this case study, the process of decision-making is not merely a description of how people make decisions, but the exploration to understand what kind of decisions made in considerations to the “whys” or the reasons behind. Additionally, each respondent’s process of decision-making was studied in terms of patterns and extent of personal involvement. In referring to the setting of an organization, it is understandable that respondents are referring to the same obstacles and conditions that exist in the researched organization.

Vitality, teachers as classroom leaders have to tolerate chaos (Zaleznik, 1977) due to the lack of guidance and allow creativity, intuition and imagination (Kahneman and Klein, 2009). Instead of punishing students, they have to approach discipline problems differently in order to educate, correct and prevent discipline problems from reoccurring. If teachers are merely classroom managers, they could only seek control and compliance on SOPs. Thus, they would not be able to deal with crisis effectively due to low tolerance to risk and unforeseen circumstances. In this aspect, it is a great challenge for the researched organization to empower managers to become leaders.

Vroom-Yetton (1973), Heller (1992), Snowden and Boone (2007) synonymously refer decision-making to leadership. Teachers as classroom leaders are confronted with students’ behaviors that are challenging and arduous. In extreme cases, teachers have reported to suffer from stress and burnout due to the high amount of energy and effort on classroom management (Lewis, 1999). In situations where teachers



are not emotionally or physically fit to make decisions, it could lead to premature actions that could lead to more negative outcomes. Therefore, collaboration is very much needed when teachers are emotionally drained as compared to direct transfer. In addition, anyone (including the principal and the Head of Discipline) could be making wrong decisions due stress and burnout. The current organizational process of decision-making does not consider and incorporate teachers' state of abilities, willingness and readiness to be involved in classroom problem solving. Ideally, teacher leadership can be encouraged through education and training for organizational reform as suggested by Muijs and Harris (2003). Teacher leadership is a new form of distributed leadership where decision-making is not vested only on the principal, Head of Discipline or other school administrators.

Barth (1987) highlighted a few suggestions that principals can do to improve teachers' decision-making as classroom leaders. In relating to the obstacles faced by respondents, there is a need for the principal to clarify to the school community about the intention to develop leaders.

After intentions are clearly communicated, there ought to be more portrayal of evidence that the principal has been relinquishing some powers when handling classroom issues that are situational and easily differentiated. Also on the same classroom issues, there ought to be more support for teachers to have the opportunity, assurance, access and equity to personal decision-making. For teachers who have a personal concern or interest in the problem, they are allowed to shoulder more responsibilities in areas of counseling, education and correction process. Instead of being a directive leader, the principal can choose to do otherwise and be a supportive leader when teachers are ready to take on bigger tasks throughout their professional career. Teachers' efficacy would improve if they are credited for their success, but where failures are concerned, the principal would have to support (instead of punish) teachers in overcoming their fear,

anxiousness or mental paralysis in deciding for on future problems. In essence, it is rather rare but not impossible for principals to admit their needs for assistance in certain situations where there is lack of resources and skills to handle organizational problems. In addition, it takes interpersonal skills of persuasion and effective coaching techniques to enhance teachers' confidence.

Vroom and Yetton (1973) and Hoy & Tarter (1993) agreed on the need to involve subordinates to improve the resources, quality and acceptance of decisions when faced by personal, other personnel or organizational constraints in any given the situation. There are few benefits on why collaboration is encouraged. First, collaboration reduces the emotional reaction that could lead to wrong and unethical ways of problem solving. Secondly, more perspectives to the same problem could be gathered to understand reality, risks and issues associated to the implication of a decision or choice. Multiple perspectives allow the school leaders to see a bigger picture on what is really going on in the organization, and learn to understand the opportunity cost of choosing the best decision, while letting go the second best option.

Through his book entitled *The 3<sup>rd</sup> alternative*, Covey (2011) highlighted that synergy is important in dealing with personal and organizational conflicts. While this case study does not advocate whether personal involvement, collaboration or transfer is better than the other, the need to synergize is vital as an organizational approach to meet today's challenging demands of globalization. In synergy, personal independence is respected as much as social interdependence. According to Covey (2011), both independence and interdependence produces unimaginable results that often surpass organizational restrictions, limitations and expectations in problem solving. In synergy, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Relating between synergy and decision-making, the process of collaboration and transfer of discipline cases does not necessarily mean the end of personal involvement for teachers. It is carried out as part

of a continual and larger process between from the discovery phase of the problem to the final phase of applying solutions. Through synergy, decision-making is not merely defined as a separate independent process to be passed on others, but as an integrated process of collaborative learning and personal contribution to problem solving and organizational effectiveness.

In his book entitled *The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*, Covey (2005) differentiated between leadership and management as in Table 40. People have the tendency to think that leadership and management means the same thing. It is beneficial to know the differences in thinking patterns between a leader and a manager, and to also decide if it is necessary to emphasize on playing one role over the other. Undeniably, the style of personal decision-making distinguishes the personality traits as a leader, or merely acting as a manager. Due to different circumstances or seriousness of discipline problems, teachers have to be prepared to play two roles simultaneously. Understandably, teachers have to take some form of calculated risks when they are limited by choices and cognitive abilities. Seemingly, Covey (2005) added that due to people’s imperfections, it is rare to find someone who is both a good leader and a manager.

Table 40  
*Differences between Leadership and Management*

Leadership	Management
People	Things
Spontaneity, serendipity	Structure
Release, empowerment	Control
Effectiveness	Efficiency
Programmer	Program
Investment	Expense
Principles	Techniques
Transformation	Transaction
Principle-centered power	Utility
Discernment	Measurement
Doing the right things	Doing things right
Direction	Speed
Top line	Bottom line
Purposes	Methods
Principles	Practices
On the systems	In the systems
“Is the ladder against the right wall?”	Climbing the ladder fast

Source: The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit (Covey, 2005).

In aspects of personal decision-making, Covey's (2011) paradigm between leadership and management is useful to highlight that everyone has a different mixed of orientations between leadership and management. Today, the need for classroom leadership is inevitable when students are becoming more sophisticated in the Age of the Internet and free social media. With social platforms (like *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Friendster*) fast becoming their source of news and information, the spread of lies and cyber-bullying is trending and threatening youngsters among their generation. In addition, teachers find it hard to control the flow of information that is enormous and changing in our societies due to the expansion of knowledge in the Information Age. So how do teachers go about preparing students towards civic-mindedness? As a summary, teachers must continually improve their strategies in aspects of classroom leadership and decision-making skills in order to adapt with the challenges of discipline management.

***Decision-making models in relation to respondents' patterns of decision-making.***

When relating respondents' personal decision-making, most elements mirrored the *Classical* or *Traditional model* of decision-making. One of the strong elements in the process requires teachers to identify problems accurately. Respondents have indicated that they could carry out personal investigations, differentiation of problem and identifying the cause with investigative questions like 'what', 'why', 'how', 'when' and 'who'. When respondents have answered these questions clearly, they would have enough information to differentiate if the problem is serious or less serious. Simultaneously, they would have also considered their options to solve discipline problems. Most of the time, they would direct the same five investigative questions as leading thoughts to craft strategies and tactics before deciding on the best choice.

For complicated matters however, teachers could be at the brink of decision-making. While choosing between further involvement, collaborating or transfer, this “juncture of decision-making” becomes their dilemma when SOPs do not state clearly on who should be responsible, or what should be the right thing to do. Thus, considerations have to be made between personal involvement, collaboration or direct transfer to the Head of Discipline. As shown in analyses, there is a list of unfavorable conditions and personal obstacle to decision-making. In reality, too much of transfer to the HOD reflects on the incompetency of teachers, while too much of personal involvement could backfire on teachers if decision outcomes turn out negatively. Furthermore, the school’s *pre-inquiry report* (refer to Figure 19 in chapter two) does not highlight the obstacles faced by teachers, or if the chosen solution can be easily accessed by other teachers in the event of reoccurrences. Ideally, it is advisable to review and improve SOPs with better processes and solutions.

In addition, all of them explained that they could identify the problem, evaluate alternatives, choose appropriate solution and convert their choice into effective solution (Li, 2008). Nevertheless, most of them prefer to transfer to the HOD, or refer to the SOPs in order to compare if their personal intention is favorable with the management. If solutions are outlined clearly for simple classroom issues, the steps are usually straightforward. However, teachers do not always have a clear understanding on the complicated issues, and some may not be as competent as others towards the same problem. Hoy & Tarter (1993) mentioned that the weakness in the *Traditional* and *Classical* model is that teachers are assumed to be competent and knowledgeable in solving organizational problem systematically.

Subsequently, the *Satisficing* strategy of decision-making recognizes the fallibility of the decision-maker. Simon (1947) described perfectly the limitations of information, time and human’s capability of processing information. Similar to what

was described by some of the respondents, decision-making in the classroom is not merely a question how and what to do it, but also in knowing if actions are appropriate, or when situations are different. In other words, decision-makers should be made concerned of the questions of why(s) first, before the how(s) and the what(s). The willingness to feel and think positively, and determining the right process to match with the situation is important at the personal and collaborative level. Thus, teachers become better classroom leaders when they reflect personally or consultatively with others, and to eventually arrive to a rational decision. Similar to the researcher's definition of "the juncture of decision-making", Bendor (2003) synonymously referred to as the "crossing point" where cognitive capabilities ceased to affect decision-making.

In urgent situations, it is almost impossible to make rational decisions and that respondents have to refer the discipline case to other teachers-in-charge. As described by Bruine de Bruin and Fischhoff (2007), they reported that of two types of coping styles during crossing points: (a) *maximizers* and; (b) *satisficers*. With one depicting otherwise for the other, *maximizers* are more likely to show problematic decision-making styles, greater dependence to others, greater tendency for regret and avoidance from decision-making. Thus, if truthful self-reporting is unlikely to happen, is it important to identify teachers in the organization through HOD's feedback, discipline teachers' reporting, or any other forms of triangulation (be it from the survey forms, students' perspectives or discipline records.) While it is challenging to fully understand and evaluate teachers' cognitive behavior decision, the *satisficing* model of decision-making could only address several aspects within the process of decision-making, but not in all aspects in a generalizing statement. This is because consequences of action are not easily thinkable, and that alternatives are often limited by knowledge. This fact is also true for all other models of decision-making.

In consideration for the *incremental* model of decision-making, it is evident that respondents have reported of learning through their own confrontations with classroom discipline. Many of them mentioned of learning through their own encounters and of other people's experiences. From data analyses, respondents select from a list of strategies in their mind to match them with the situation perceived. In trying out new strategies, they tend to evaluate its appropriateness or effectiveness by rational thinking, or by comparing with other people's experience. If their plans succeed, it would be remembered and added into their mental database for the use of the future. Otherwise, they would discard or use them at the very least if their plans do not work. All these descriptions are parallel to what Lindblom (1959) described as the '*Science of muddling through*'.

Through this case study, the intention to highlight areas of improvements (especially in their SOPs) is also likened to *incremental* model of decision-making. With this model, Etzioni (1967) described the six primary requirements for organizational improvements. To begin process of organizational change, the discipline team would have to look and decide on specific areas of improvements. As discussed in the rationale of research, the study of decision-making was chosen due to the impact, relevance and importance to the organization. In doing so, not everything within the SOPs must be changed instantly, but only a small number of policy alternatives are considered, and a restricted number of important consequences are evaluated. As an outcome, the only "right" decision is the decision to continually improve.

As highlighted in the limitation of research, organizational improvements do not incorporate all teachers' viewpoints in change as respondents were selected through purposive sampling. The outcome of this case study is somewhat targeted at a number of personnel that fits the list of criteria to represent the case or problem statement. In the beginning, there was a lack theoretical reference to guide the researcher in exploring the

idea of this case study. Thus, the understanding the case was at the initial level because there were no local evidences to understand the phenomenon.

In addition, the researcher was also afraid that the accumulation of data and steps taken in this case study could lead to nowhere. Nevertheless, this concern was managed constructively with the right theoretical support and flexibility to change. Synonymous to the thoughts of Kollman, Miler & Page (1992), the *incremental* model of decision-making used to design and implement this case study was effective because multiple decision-makers were involved in the problem solving, and that the same objectives were shared between the researcher, the Head of Discipline and the rest of respondents.

In another model of decision-making, the *Mixed-Scanning* model was applicable for some respondents to consider how their personal involvement would impact, or be impacted by the organization, systems or school communities. Some of them (such as Teacher M and G) were fearful that personal involvement without adequate knowledge in SOPs could be detrimental to personal career and personal reputation. Rationally, teachers as decision-makers would consider their choices initially, and eventually look for alternatives that would match close to their desired outcome. For situations that are complicated, the process could be slow, sometimes delayed due to personal contemplation and analysis into the problem. For respondents, every new tactic is considered risky and needed to be self-assessed on the impact to the principal, the school system or parents as stakeholders of the school. As highlighted in the obstacles to decision-making, parental involvement was one of the problems indicated by most respondents in determining the level of personal involvement in the discipline case. Respondents mentioned that the ability to evaluate personal choices and discern to the impact of the preferred choice is an important element for decision-making due individual and collective repercussions.



In reference to the *Garbage Can* model, respondents (like Teacher N) acknowledged the complication to decide for the outcome in serious discipline problems. Problems occur when teachers failed grasp the underlying issues behind any unwanted behavior in the classroom. Issues pertaining to investigation process and the consequential impact of students' behavior on self (or others) are some of the complications that persist in clouding teachers' ability to discern (as highlighted by Teacher E, O, B, and G). They added that SOPs could sometimes be inconsistent due to changing expectations from the management. Inevitably, these respondents had to rely on the Head of Discipline to decide for solutions because of these difficulties.

For the HOD, the *Garbage can* model of decision-making is a model of secondary choice when SOPs do not provide the solutions. The HOD mentioned initially that he has to seek to establish trust with other teachers to counter discipline problems in the school. It took him several years to improve the relationship with teachers and to change the discipline team into a progressive and effective team. Through his experience, not every matter has to be solved with organizational processes. In fact, some problems were self-rectifiable without needing any further actions, such as parents withdrawing their problematic child from school. In another aspect, some discipline problems were solved through other means that were used for other discipline matters. The matching between problem and solution took place in an environment where goals, constraints and consequence of actions were ambiguous and requires *ad hoc*, instinctive and emotional decision-making. Cohen, March and Olsen (1972) described the *Garbage can* model perfectly as “a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations, solutions looking for issues and decision-makers looking for work.” Thus, while decision-making process is not easily determined, the four streams of consideration are the problem, the solution, the participants and the choice opportunities as mentioned by Lindblom (1965).

Nevertheless, not all discipline matters should be handled as the *Garbage can* model because the school's authority is supposed to intervene accordingly with standard operating practices regardless if the matter has been self-rectified or subsided through its own means. In reality, parents deserve to know the school's intervention by its discipline report and evidences should there be complications that arise subsequently after sometime.

Respondents have also reported using the *Political model* of decision-making when dealing with discipline situations in the school. As indicated as pre-existing work culture, respondents experienced an obstacle to decision-making when their colleagues were not supportive or committed to implement organizational strategies concerning discipline management. As a result, some teachers were asking these respondents (such as Teacher E) to ignore the circumstances and to not escalate minor situations into complications. Consequently, these same respondents (such as Teacher G and J) had to rely on other teachers who were easier to work with, instead with those who gave excuses pertaining to personal involvement. As mentioned by Verma (2014), the *Political model* of decision-making does not assume that decisions result from applying existing SOPs, programs of routines but instead from bargaining among coalitions and groups. It views decision-making as conflict resolution, consensus building and product of compromise. In essence, the *Political decision-making* model seeks for an optimal solution where all parties should not be affected by any particular decision due to different perceptions, priorities and solutions to the problem. Thus, respondents had to rely on personal power, relationships, influences and persuasion skills to get other personnel to cooperate and achieve organizational tasks. In addition, Bolman and Deal (1991) mentioned that *Political decision-making* model is legitimate and beneficial to the organization as it charts new paths to unpopular decisions. Nevertheless, the SOPs become the ultimate reference to decide on solution even though the organization

expects conflicts to occur among teachers and stakeholders to the problem. When SOPs are unclear and ambiguous, other decision-making models such as the incremental model or the garbage can model would be used as organizational strategies.

Relating to the *Ethical model* of decision-making, respondents have indicated the need to refer to positive values, religious words and moral considerations when comes to educating, correcting, preventing and even punishing students. The reliance on ethics is vital to cultivate positive character in students through some form of personal coaching and change in the classroom. Without ethical decision-making, it is much difficult for respondents to be fair and just when investigating on discipline matters, or trying to explain the moral reason behind the punishment. In addition, decision-makers often have to resist moral temptations (Ford & Richardson, 1994), and go with their conscious when deciding on punitive disciplining for their favorite students. Respondents have reported of the obstacle to be fair to all students when there are various levels or teacher-student relationships, personal blind spots or biases. Complication persist further when ethical decision-making is not merely a question of right or wrong, but when a choice has to be made between two rights (Kidder, 1995). In this matter, the outcome that gives the most life-changing lesson or experience to the student shall be selected and suggested in the SOPs. Even though teachers' code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical practices in all kinds of situations, proper administrative training is vital to support the education, learning and professional growth of teachers in the organization (Tuten, 2006).

As a summary to this point, many of the aspects within the decision-making models were practiced in varying degree of application, situations and preference. Despite the differences from one model to another, there were some similarities of processes found among respondents, such as: (a) relying on personal experience and knowledge to seek and solve the problem initially; (b) seeking assistance from others

when thinking and cognitive abilities are limited; (c) resorting to rely on the SOPs for guidance and personal protection; and (d) transfer to others or avoid the problem when situations are ambiguous and risky.

As highlighted in the process of decision-making, respondents' decision-making were illustrated as progressing from personal involvement, collaboration and finally transfer. This chapter's discussion continues in the next section towards explaining the issues to personal decision-making.

### **Discussions on Content: Unfavorable conditions and Obstacles to Personal Decision-making**

#### *Unfavourable conditions to personal decision-making.*

#### *Research question 4: What are the unfavorable conditions to personal decision-making?*

Results from research question four have uncovered a list of unfavorable conditions and obstacles that prohibit classroom managers from becoming classroom leaders. In hope to understand, lessen, manage or deal with these obstacles, school leaders particularly the Head of Discipline can implement programs for teachers to change and overcome personal obstacles to personal decision-making.

Inevitably, unfavorable conditions and obstacles will always persist in any organization. Most often, respondents (such as Teacher M and G) have reported that they could not play more roles as decision-makers because of situations that are ambiguous and complicated, and that a wrong decision could backfire from the management. Nevertheless, this is not the case for other respondents (like Teacher A and D) who are more experienced and skillful in student behavioral management. These teachers felt that they were more capable to deal with the situation on their own; transfer of discipline cases to the Head of Discipline was merely a formal organizational process. For less experienced teachers, there is a need to teach and change their

perceptions, beliefs and attitudes in school leadership so that they could eventually be led to a change of behavior. In addition, they could make rational and ethical decisions for complicated problems. Suggestions for personnel improvements would be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

From respondents' feedback, the researcher concluded that most of them were very dependent and compliant with SOPs in a way organizational solutions are implemented. Due to high expectations placed by the management on teachers, many respondents felt that it is better to transfer discipline cases to the Head of Discipline to minimize risk in complicated problems. Results of analyses have portrayed a list of unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making. Seemingly, every respondent have highlighted the problem of meeting multiple job demands, and that it is better to transfer the task of discipline management to other personnel so that they can concentrate on their own tasks. Inevitably, the HOD becomes the key person to deal with all kinds of discipline problems personally due to this negative mentality.

There are basically a few questions pertaining to issues related to matters of decision-making. As indicated from analyses, how respondents perceived the seriousness of discipline problems was directly related to the conditions and obstacles that they encountered. The more unfavorable conditions and obstacles they had, the less likely would they be involved in personal decision-making (Woodworth, 1950). In addition, the more serious is the discipline problem, the more obstacles they face in personal decision-making.

With reference from Table 14 in chapter four, serious discipline problems are likely to involve more people (particularly the principal and parents), more SOPs and more investigations to be carried out. Besides external circumstances and influences from the management and parents, serious discipline problems leave a bigger impact on

other students due to potential physical and emotional injury. In addition, some respondents (such as Teacher M and G) mentioned that they do not trust in their own abilities to deal with serious discipline matters personally because a personal decision may turned out unfavorably to the management. Thus, there is a lack of cognitive, efficacy and affective abilities to confront serious discipline matters wisely, courageously and confidently.

Historically, all respondents reported that they had more encounters with less serious discipline matters as compared to serious discipline matters. With reference to Table 16 in chapter four, unfavorable self-related conditions were due to personal lacking in experience, familiarity, personal judgment and roles, inability to portray personal responsibility, competency and responsibility, being untrained (or ill-prepared) and unwillingness to involve. For strategy related unfavorable conditions, they consisted of exhausted alternative to solutions, or having no solutions to the problem. In aspects of student related unfavorable conditions, they consist of confrontation with serious discipline problems and parental involvement. Lastly, for organizational related unfavorable conditions, respondents mentioned of not complying fully with SOPs, obstacles in collaboration and negative repercussions of a self-made decision. As all these unfavorable conditions were recorded and analyzed as personal statements from all fifteen respondents, it was also concluded that respondents were less likely to involve in personal decision-making when more of these conditions are faced or felt by them. Nevertheless, they would do their part to avoid being seen as incompetent or indecisive by their superiors, the principal or the Head of Discipline.

***Obstacles to personal decision-making.***

***Research question 5: What obstacles would respondents perceive if they were confronted with the need for personal decision-making?***

In essence, there were six areas where all respondents have highlighted as obstacles to personal decision-making. The six key obstacles were: (a) parental involvement; (b) pre-existing work culture; (c) standard operating procedures (SOPs); (d) socio-cultural differences; (e) students' with learning disabilities; and (f) teacher-student relationship. Among all the obstacles, two major setbacks of personal decision-making were due to SOPs and parental involvement.

As mentioned earlier, parents of the students from this school have a higher socio-economic background. According to respondents' feedback, some parents were very much involved with the development of their children in this school to the extent of challenging school policies, the principal and even teachers in favor of their children. Due to their personalities, some parents could also be intimidating teachers in the way they should teach and discipline their children. As a form of protection, the principal have highlighted numerous times to teachers to not punish students physically. As a priority, teachers in the organization must learn to grasp, distinguish and apply the right decision between correction and punishment especially for delicate issues.

In a separate issue, some respondents (such as Teacher A, J and O) have highlighted pre-existing work culture as the second obstacle in the organization. For this matter, it is undeniable that teachers have different perceptions of attitudes and expectations when it comes to involvement, collaboration and decision-making. Organizational conflicts exist between one personnel to another due to many reason and circumstances. Most of the problems highlighted by respondents were traced to unwillingness, and the lack of trust to collaborate (as mentioned by Teacher A, F and

G). In reality, there could be many other reasons to explain why certain teachers in the organization are unwilling or unable to collaborate. Some respondents (such as Teacher O and E) mentioned that other than the lack of ability, some teachers lack personal effort to commit, or contribute positively to the organizational working culture (as highlighted by Teacher E, G and J). For recommendations of research, the researcher will discuss on ways to change teachers' attitude towards creating a positive working culture.

It is an undeniable fact that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have major and numerous impacts on teachers' attitudes, work habits and response to situations of discipline. Respondents have indicated the difficulty to comply with SOPs due to multiple and rigid procedures. Some complained that not all procedures were consistently carried out, and that certain situations were treated differently for the same types of discipline case. Other obstacles include miscommunications misinterpretations and irrelevance to rectify the situation (as highlighted by Teacher A, J, I and M). Therefore, most respondents suggested that SOPs should be regularly communicated and reviewed to ensure that the processes are updated and effective. This obstacle will further be addressed in the discussions pertaining to respondents' suggestions to improve personal decision-making and collaboration.

As for the next obstacle, socio-cultural difference is a result of continuous enrolment of students from different nationalities, ethnicity and background differences over the years. The frequent open days organized by the school have resulted in many registrations of students without much consideration in their previous discipline records. Because the school has business and academic objectives, most students were absorbed into the school without much restriction as compared to other private schools that are more established, favored and branded in the public perception. Because of students' background differences, teachers have to be patient to understand the behavioral and



emotional aspects that are resulted from cultural and traditional upbringing. There are two possible outcomes resulting from this obstacle. In a negative circumstance, teachers could be taking actions prematurely and ineffectively without understanding their students' background. On the contrary, teachers can help students to assimilate in the school instead of rejecting and resisting environmental change.

In another obstacle, some respondents (such as Teacher B and C) highlighted the presence of students with learning disabilities (LD) in the school. When probed further on how to recognize the symptoms of LD among students in the school, respondents mentioned hyperactivity, short attention spans and difficulty to memorize as some observable patterns in the learner. As a precaution, these teachers prefer to avoid punishing students unnecessarily. According to the *British Columbia Ministry of Education* (2011), it is important to understand that LD is not synonymous to intellectual disabilities (mental retardation), sensory impairments (vision or hearing) or autism spectrum disorders. Although they are not totally the same, students with LD share the same features as Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As a general reference, students with LD are struggle in acquiring skills that impact their performance in school, and can be diagnosed into several types such as Dyslexia (difficulty in the area of processing language), Dyscalculia (difficulty in the area of calculations), Dysgraphia (difficulty in the area of written expressions) and Dyspraxia (difficulty in the area of fine motor skills). In addition, some students have information processing disorders that are related to auditory or visual processing.

Because of these personal circumstances, students who have LD could not sit through the class as their normal peers, but end up instead portraying behaviors that are uncommon and unacceptable in the class. Due to cognitive, physiological and emotional discomforts, they could be alienating themselves or become aggressive to challenge other people (or their environment).

For the organization, student with any symptoms of LDs could be detected after their taking of the school's basic entrance exams. If their marks scored extremely below the average, the principal would be alerted to call for an interview with parents. Due to compassionate grounds, some students with LD are accepted into the school with conditional offer. As an organizational practice, the school does not hire special learning teachers because the number of students with LD is very small. For teachers who were aware of the existence and symptoms of LD (such as Teacher B and C), they would restraint from punishing them in a way that is similar to other normal children.

In the last obstacle to personal decision-making, respondents (such as Teacher A, K, J and G) have reported that a close teacher-student relationship is a barrier to personal decision-making. They mentioned that it is difficult to administer punishment fairly due to favoritism to certain students. Through personal experiences, respondents mentioned of seeing students not liking them and withdrawing from them after disciplining (such as Teacher G and B). To avoid being bias to students, some respondents (such as Teacher A and D) prefer to be strict in their classrooms while drawing a clear boundary between the teacher and the student. Thus, these teachers focused on preventive measures to avoid students from manipulating their emotions, while eliminating the tendency for students to take advantage.

### **Discussions on Respondents' Suggestions to Improve Personal and Collaborative Decision-making**

***Research question 6: What areas can be highlighted to encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making?***

In the last research question, respondents were asked to suggest ways that could encourage personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making. To alleviate the obstacles and unfavorable conditions to personal decision-making,

Bandura (1986, 1997) mentioned that individuals can also select and assign differing weights to information to gauge their personal capability to perform a task.

Subsequently, there are four sources in which self-efficacy beliefs can be constructed to overcome low levels of self-efficacy:

1. Enactive mastery experience (also known as real experience)
2. Vicarious experience
3. Verbal or social persuasion
4. Physiological states

Practically, Bandura's (1986, 1997) theory could be used to support respondents' suggestions to improve personal involvement and collaboration in decision-making. The researcher has presented the school's discipline management system in chapter two. More precisely, the standard operating procedures for teachers to report on discipline problems have also been highlighted (see Figure 16 in chapter two).

Figure 30 highlights the flowchart for discipline intervention following the response from teachers' feedback to evaluate and improve their organizational SOPs (highlighted by Teacher A, G and E). In essence, the simplification of the flowchart was resulted from respondents' viewpoints and suggestions for improvements in organizational decision-making.

In addition, it considered the findings from this case study that clarified: (a) their roles as decision-makers; (b) the process of decision-making (such as abilities of respondents to gather evidence, differentiate problems and identify causes); and (c) addressing their concerns and obstacles to personal decision-making. Additionally, this flowchart pinpoints where teachers' roles can be ascertained prior to further involvement in organizational decision-making.

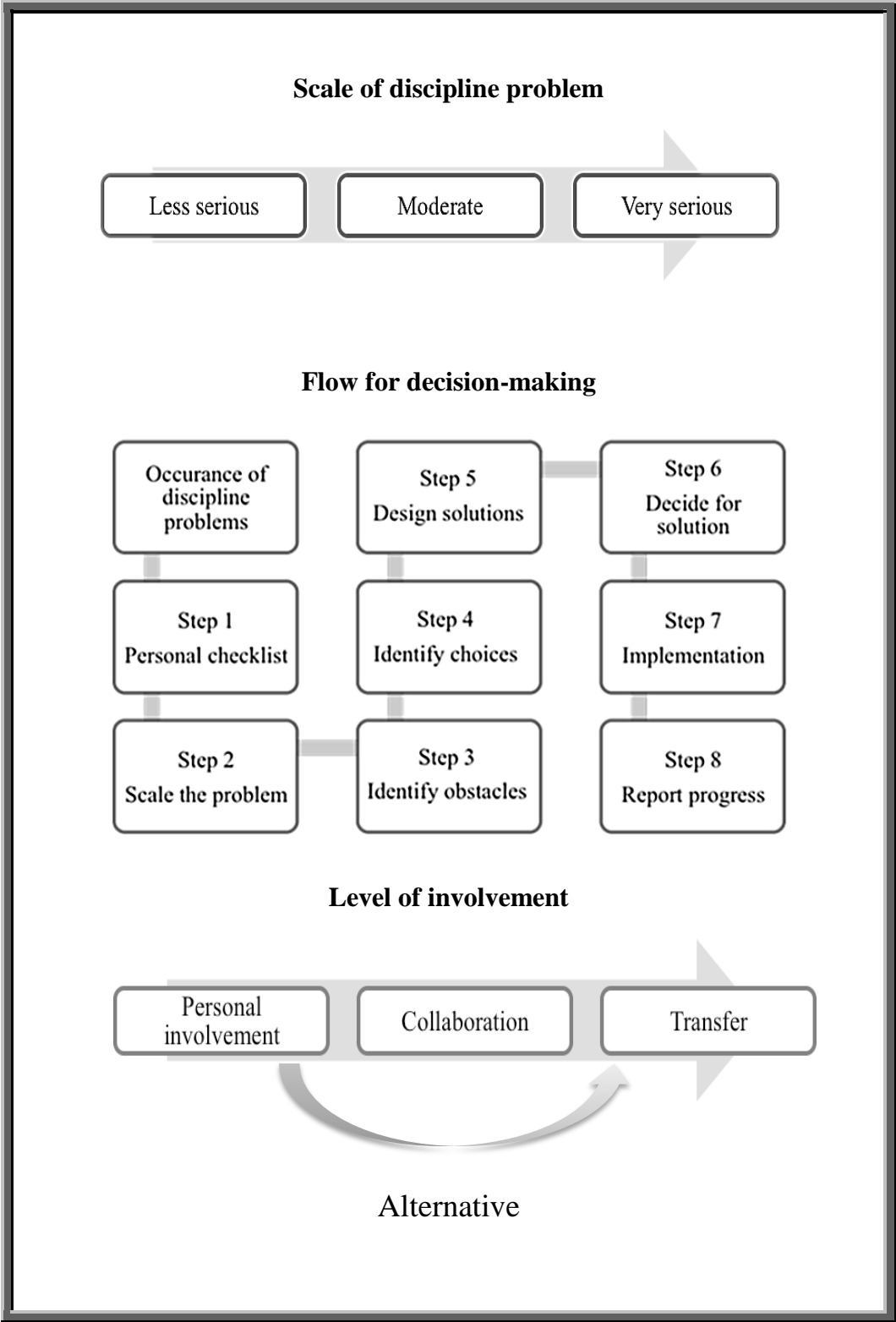


Figure 30. Improvements on the flow chart for discipline intervention

As shown in the figure above, there are three aspects to consider in the decision-making process: (1) scale of discipline problem; (2) flow for decision-making and; (3) level of involvement. As the scale of discipline problem progress from less serious to very serious, so should be the level of involvement from personal involvement to transfer (highlighted by Teacher F). Within each step, more and more items should to be added as a checklist before the next stage can be followed through. For the purpose of discussion, only Step 1 to Step 3 is explained due to the scope of analyses that covered the stage of personal involvement. Moreover, the HOD had merely wanted to improve on teachers' personal level of decision-making in order for him to concentrate on more vital and serious discipline problems. Step 4 to Step 8 involves collaboration and transfer, and may need further theoretical and empirical support in future studies.

With reference from Figure 30, Step 1 is necessary for individuals to check if they have done the following measures within the capacity personal involvement: (1) gathering of evidences; (2) differentiating the problem and; (3) diagnosing for causes. These areas were previously highlighted in chapter four when respondents described their personal intervention prior to transfer. Following these measures, Figure 31 is as an example of a personal checklist card to inform the Head of Discipline on the preliminary efforts taken by teachers that is parallel to the suggestions to institute change management programs (Teacher M), and to keep superiors informed of situations (highlighted by Teacher F). For the HOD, the process of decision-making could speed up when information is made available and accessible. Most importantly, he must empower teachers with trust (highlighted by Teacher N). Thus, a reduced amount of investigative work could allow more opportunities for him to concentrate on complicated and serious problems.

Similar to their existing SOPs, teachers in the school must fill up a personal checklist form prior to any transfer (or after collaboration) to the HOD or to the discipline coordinators. However, Figure 31 is a refined checklist card with the inclusion of teachers' preliminary efforts. Generally, it informs the HOD on the earlier actions taken by teachers to counter discipline case in the class (as mentioned by Teacher F). Whenever the HOD or the discipline coordinators receive this personal checklist form, they would have understood the extent of intervention by teachers and avoid repeating the earlier process of investigations. In such manner, teachers and discipline team works collaboratively in a continuous process without further delay in the process of decision-making. In addition to their existing discipline reporting portal, the researcher suggests that this personal checklist could be hosted securely online so teachers can immediately report their intervention that includes a timestamp. Automatically, the personal checklist form will be archived together with the discipline report for future records and references. In events of doubts or disputes, data will be obtained from the system to explain to parents and also as a form of organizational risk management tool to protect teachers from being liable to complaints and litigation threats. Provided if there is good backup system of support, these digital data can be saved in the long run for organizational reference and learning.

**Step 1: Personal checklist**

Please tick (✓) if you have carried out these tasks and kindly describe the actions taken to the Discipline Coordinators  
(You may tick more than one box.)

Gathered the necessary evidences

Differentiated the type of discipline problems

Identified the cause of the discipline problem

Others (Please describe: .....)

Figure 31. Checklist card on personal involvement

Simultaneously, Step 1 involves profiling all teachers in the organization by using the PCI form and the TSES questionnaire. Figure 32 shows four different combinations of profiles that emerged from this study after respondent' PCI and TSES scores were analyzed.

<b>Quadrant I</b> High PCI Low TSES	<b>Quadrant II</b> High PCI High TSES
<b>Quadrant III</b> Low PCI Low TSES	<b>Quadrant IV</b> Low PCI High TSES

Figure 32. Four combinations of teachers' profiles as outcome from PCI and TSES form

Generally, respondents (such as Teacher A, N, H and O) highlighted the need to further practice his/her own skills in decision-making. As an organizational learning exercise, it is beneficial if teachers who are in Quadrant I be paired with teachers in Quadrant IV through peer coaching or supervision. In terms of theory, this exercise would be consistent in aspects of vicarious experience and verbal/social persuasion as mentioned by Bandura (1986, 1997). Table 41 is a comparative analysis of individual results that were derived from their PCI and TSES scores.

Table 41  
*Comparative analyses between PCI and TSES for all fifteen respondents*

Respondents (N=15)	Pupil Control Ideology (PCI)	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)		
		Student Engagement	Instructional Strategies	Classroom Management
	*( <u>M</u> =67.73)	*( <u>M</u> = 6.85)	*( <u>M</u> = 7.23)	*( <u>M</u> = 7.10)
Teacher A	64	6.75	7.50	8.00
Teacher B	65	6.25	5.50	6.00
Teacher C	62	7.50	6.00	6.25
Teacher D	78	8.00	8.00	8.25
Teacher E	54	5.75	6.50	6.50
Teacher F	69	5.75	6.50	5.75
Teacher G	77	8.00	7.00	7.75
Teacher H	64	7.25	7.25	7.75
Teacher I	76	6.50	8.00	7.00
Teacher J	61	7.25	8.50	7.25
Teacher K	62	6.25	8.00	5.75
Teacher L	70	6.50	6.50	7.25
Teacher M	68	8.00	7.50	8.00
Teacher N	75	7.00	7.50	7.25
Teacher O	71	6.00	8.25	7.75

*Note.* \*Means (M) of each subscale score were calculated from fifteen respondents. Teacher C is the Head of Discipline (HOD). Scores of less than the Subscale Mean value were considered less efficacious, and vice versa. The computed mean for PCI score is 67.73 (M=67.73)

With reference to the table above, it is easy to indicate which personnel are suitable for peer coaching or supervision. In order to improve on respondents' pupil control ideology, those who scored less could be paired with those who scored higher in their PCI value.



Similarly for the TSES, individual values may contain sub-categorical items such as student-engagement, classroom management and instructional strategies. Supposed if teachers felt the need to improve on their classroom management skills, they can be paired with those who have higher values of TSES within the same subcategory. This is a simple exercise for peer coaching and mentoring if supposed all teachers in the school have their individual PCI and TSES scores calculated and recorded.

Additionally, this suggestion critically enhances the current practice of the Head of Discipline (Teacher C) in aspects of collaboration and teamwork. Therefore, it augmented what the researcher described as ‘seeking assistance from the right source’ (as also highlighted by Teacher G).

By relooking at Figure 30, Step 2 is to necessitate respondents to scale the discipline problems into less serious or serious in accordance to their individual perception and with reference to the Malaysian Schools Discipline Guide (MOEM, 1988). To scale the problems involves learning, differentiating and referencing to keep updated with the changing school policies whenever Professional Circulars are issued out by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. This effort is in tandem to what the researcher described as ‘matching discipline problems with the appropriate punishment’. It is carried out to determine if the situation is supposed to be classified as less serious, moderate or very serious. As highlighted by Teacher F, this step is important as a matching process to justify between the right punishment and the nature of wrongdoing. In other words, it portrays organizational solutions and consistency in disciplining against the seriousness of the problem (as highlighted by Teacher N, F and L).

Subsequently, Step 3 is about the identification of internal and external obstacles. During interview session, Teacher I highlighted the need to use common sense with informed decisions when dealing with discipline problems. Therefore, Figure 33 is the improved checklist for teachers to evaluate and reflect on their obstacles to decision-making when confronted with a discipline problem. As highlighted in chapter four, both internal and external factors were derived the feedbacks of respondents during data analyses. Thus, whenever teachers refer a discipline case to the HOD, they could indicate their concerns and obstacles in order for the case to be taken over. In addition to this exercise, teachers should always be rational and not emotional (highlighted by Teacher H, M, B and O) to help them avoid making premature decisions (highlighted by Teacher J). Similar to the personal checklist form in Step 1, this form can be hosted online for teachers to fill up immediately prior to submission to the HOD.

<b>Step 3: Identify Personal Obstacles</b>	
Please tick (√) to specify the obstacles that you face and include your remarks (You may strike off the words that do not apply to you)	
	No ability/skills/experience/confidence to intervene with the problem
	No opportunity/empowerment for further involvement
	Not enough of information/time/investigation to decide
	Work culture/behavior/habits of other colleagues
	Unclear/Complicated Standard Operating Procedures
	Matters pertaining to students/parents/cultural/social differences
	Others (Please describe): .....

Figure 33. Checklist to identify obstacles to personal decision-making

With more respondents included for future studies, it is undeniable that more areas of personal involvement could be identified together with the obstacles that prevail at the individual level. Undeniably, there could be other obstacles pertaining to personal decision-making, and they could be added from time to time. At the very least, this case study have highlighted some major consideration for teachers to reflect on their classroom management and subsequently improve their decision-making skills. The next section will discuss on the implications of research.

### **Implications of Research**

In relation to the findings from this case study, there ought to be some discussions on how teachers' decision-making can be improved in the researched organization. As a contextual study, findings from data analyses are only relevant for the private school and especially to respondents who were involved in this study. In essence, teachers in the organization need to anticipate prepare and adapt to the demands of students, parents and school management as a whole. Data analyzes pertaining to the decision-maker, process and obstacles to personal involvement has expanded the theoretical framework and contributed towards a model for decision-making. Figure 34 highlights the core findings that expanded researcher's viewpoints and original conceptual framework pertaining to the area of the decision-maker, the process and the obstacles associated with personal decision-making.

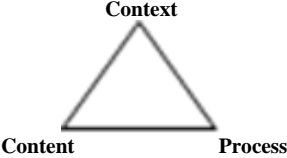
Dimensions	Variables under study	Core findings
	<p><b>Context</b> (The Decision-maker)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' classroom control strategies</li> <li>Teachers' PCI/TSES relative scores</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respondents portrayed different PCI/TSES scores that could be used as a basis for pairing, peer-coaching &amp; mentoring</li> <li>Respondents portrayed four orientations in classroom control and termed as the Four-direct strategies</li> <li>Each orientations of strategy portrayed different kinds of tactics that are used to education, prevention, control and punishment.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Process of decision-making</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patterns of decision-making</li> <li>Extent of personal involvement</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respondents' extents of personal involvements were explored in four aspects (PCI/TSES scores, frequency of transfer, perception to seriousness, and personal intervention prior to transfer).</li> <li>Personal interventions prior to transfer were found to (a) gather evidence; (b) trace discipline problems to cause(s); and (c) differentiate discipline problems</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Content</b> (Issues with personal decision-making)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfavourable conditions</li> <li>Obstacles to personal decision-making</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compared Favourable/Unfavourable conditions</li> <li>Six obstacles to personal decision-making were reported: (a)SOPs; (b)socio-cultural differences; (c)Negative work culture; (d) students with LDs; (e) parental involvement; and (f)Negative teacher-student relationships</li> </ul>

Figure 34. Core findings as expanded from researcher's initial conceptual framework

As discussed throughout this chapter, many of the elements within each of the dimension had been explored by through the assistance of the conceptual framework. Through discussions at the beginning of this chapter, many conclusions have also been made pertaining to the respondents' behavior in classroom control and process of decision-making. Interestingly, respondents' extent of personal involvement were also analyzed and described by their (a) their frequencies of transfer; (b) their personal scores of TSES/PCI, previous trainings or experience; (c) how they differentiated problems; and (d) personal intervention prior to transfer. In terms of obstacles to personal decision-making, students' learning disability (as highlighted by Teacher B and C) and parental involvement were further added into the initial conceptual framework.

Ultimately, the researcher had narrowed the gap between theories and practice of effective discipline management in the school. As a summary, the researcher highlights four implications of research that resulted directly from this case study:

1. This case study had successfully explored teachers' perspectives and awareness as decision-makers, explained their decision-making process and uncovered personal issues and obstacles related to decision-making. In essence, it explored respondents' strategies in classroom control and personal decision-making simultaneously. The decision-making model in Figure 34 presented data findings that were contextual for the Head of Discipline to manage his department effectively and efficiently in the future.
2. The researcher has highlighted respondents' shared experiences and strategies that could be useful for organization learning, while creating the need to improve respondents' pupil control ideology, self-efficacy and decision-making skills. Results from this study could encourage the school management (particularly the school's discipline teachers) to support teachers in many areas of improvements (such as their coping strategies related to stress in discipline management and their lack of confidence to deal with serious discipline problems).
3. Even though the findings of this case study were not meant for generalization, it spearheaded the way for future research by its methods and *decision-making* questionnaire that had been developed by the researcher. In addition, data from this case study could be used for future comparisons of other similar research in another territory, contexts or circumstances.
4. Lastly, this study highlights potential areas for improvements in SOPs, teacher-student and parent-teacher relationships. In addition, it highlights the need to narrow down socio-cultural differences and engaging further with students with learning disabilities. While respondents have suggested many areas of improvements, the core focus of organizational improvement lies in the area of collegiality. Thus, teachers in the researched organization must be encouraged to

participate in organizational decision-making through further involvement and shared decision-making.

Following from the four implications from this research, it is therefore reasonable to suggest some recommendations for organizational change that can further support the model of decision-making.

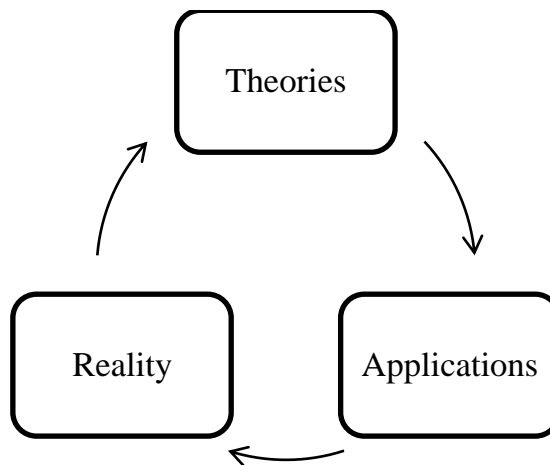
## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for Organizational Change**

For this section, the researcher will synthesized the findings in chapter four and the earlier discussions of this chapter with additional paradigms, concepts and ideas. In other words, subsequent recommendations using the findings from this study are oriented towards organizational change and improvements. As highlighted in the earlier section, there were six external obstacles to the decision-maker. However, it is important to not ignore or disqualify internal obstacles that appear as hindrances to effective decision-making. Even though internal obstacles were difficult to be observed and ascertained, behavioral theories such as Pupil Control Ideology (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1967), *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy* (Tschannen, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1996; 1999), and Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1959) were inculcated to discuss the state, motivation and inhibition behind teachers' decision-making in the classroom.

As mentioned before, no generalization is to be made from the study with only fifteen respondents. However, the researcher had wanted to offer a contemporary and contextual understanding on organizational matters that have driven the primary purpose of this research. Previous discussions at the beginning of this chapter were centered on the all the key considerations in the researcher's conceptual framework between the context, process and content associated with decision-making.

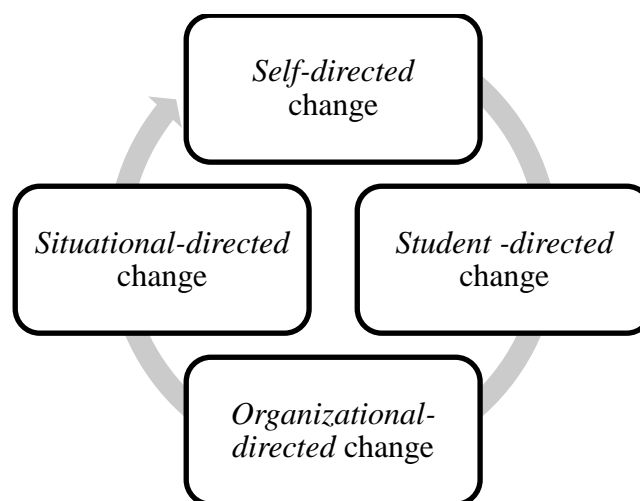
Subsequently, it is important to further explore and relate with other theoretical knowledge (that were not discussed in chapter two) to synthesize information into a paradigm that is understandable, useful and applicable to the organization. In other words, it is the researcher's subsequent move to expand the theoretical frames of this research in order to strengthen, broaden and deepen the understanding of this study. According to Hayes (2006), theories are means of explaining social reality. For George (1985), he highlighted that it is desirable to have multiple theories to explain decision-making processes from a qualitative outcome. In addition to the researcher's effort as a participant observer, analyses of data had yielded a contextual understanding to explain reality from the perspectives of fifteen respondents. Therefore, it is best for the researcher to combine all three aspects between; (a) theories; (b) reality; and (c) applications as recommendations on this section. Figure 35 shows a cyclical synthesis between the three elements by the researcher to recommend ideas for organization change.



*Figure 35.* Recommendations for organization change that would synthesize between reality, theories and applications

As mentioned earlier, these recommendations are ideas for respondents to cope with their unfavorable conditions and manage their personal obstacles to decision-

making. Relating to the four directed strategies in classroom control, the researcher suggests that *self-directed* and *student-directed* change to concentrate on improving the affective and cognitive aspects in teacher-student relationships, while *organizational-directed* and *situational-directed* change should concentrate on improving the technical and communication aspects between school communities. Even though the purpose of these strategies are meant to educate, correct, prevent and even punish, it is vital to reiterate that the outcome of discipline management should be primarily centered on learning, change and improvements of students, teachers and the organization as a whole.



*Figure 36.* Improvements of organizational decision-making in the four-directed areas of change

Figure 36 is another illustration to indicate how all four directed strategies could be used in improving the decision-maker, process and obstacles associated with personal decision-making. Ultimately, this case study has yielded a new concept to understand the scope and depth of the school's discipline management, and areas of improvements where decision-making is concerned. Subsequently, it is suggested that the future phase of intervention should be concentrated on designing programs for school community learning and evaluating change through different phases towards



improvements. The next few sections would elaborate on some key considerations of the four directed areas of change. Within each area, the researcher would discuss his recommendations from his interpretation of reality, the support of relevant theories and suggested applications for improvements in organizational decision-making.

### ***Self-directed change.***

While the vision, mission and goals of the researched organization have been outlined by the school management, there is a need to highlight further on the desired outcome for change. Inevitably, change is vital for the survival and success of the organization.

In order for the discipline team to thrive in the area of personal decision-making, there ought to be some considerations behind change. In the first area of *self-directed* change, there is a need to look into the area of cognitive and affective state among teachers and students. Without awareness to personal thoughts and emotional state, teachers could be mistreating students while trying to get them to respond to change in a one-way relationship. Instead of treating on the cause of the discipline problem, teachers could be busy “fire-fighting” with the symptoms. Consequently, when students’ problems are not treated to the root level, they would keep creating more troubles to themselves (or others) regardless of the types of discipline problems that occur. Similarly, when teachers’ ignore their personal cognitive and affective weakness, it would impact students negatively and this is manifested by disobedience, rebelliousness or retaliation. It is unsurprising when students choose to test the personal limits of teachers by mocking the teachers disrespectfully or creating unwanted incidents that could further result in stress and burnout from classroom control.

The importance for teachers to self-evaluate their own pupil control ideology and teaching efficacy is a starting point towards positive change. When teachers

evaluate their perception about their discipline style and their efficacy (to answer the question “what”), the following next questions would be knowing why and how to improve from where they are. Although there is no general rule to state which is more important, the researcher prefers to start with the ‘why’ of change before proceeding into the ‘what’ and ‘how’ to change. When personal reasons are strong, self-directed change would subsequently follow. Ideally, there should also be a personal standard for measurement and achievement, so that teachers can keep track of their own performance.

Because respondents perceived SOPs as stringent control on their personal decision-making, there is a need for them to perceive their organizational SOPs differently, holistically and positively. From data, it seemed that all respondents viewed the organizational SOPs as a “management control tool” that was also identified to be an unfavorable condition and obstacle to personal decision-making. While it is true that Veenman (1984) highlighted SOPs as impersonal and formal organizational solutions, many benefits of SOPs have been discussed in the earlier part of this chapter. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to see SOPs as an evolving mechanism instead of rigid, impersonal and coercive tool for management. In reality, some teachers (such as Teacher A and C) understood the need to use SOPs as a risk management tool in their decision-making process.

It is also necessary for SOPs to allow teachers to intervene and treat the cause of a discipline case selectively, rather than merely treating students’ wrongdoings with consequences or punishments. By complying with processes alone, teachers can only determine what should be done without further reflections, involvement and personal intervention. Therefore, when teachers fail to explain the cause of the discipline problems, they could miss out the learning opportunity to grow in their classroom management skills.

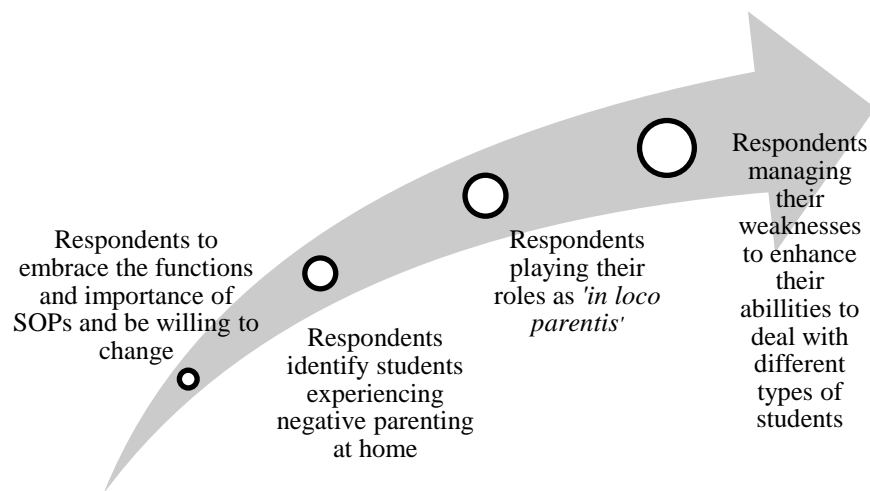
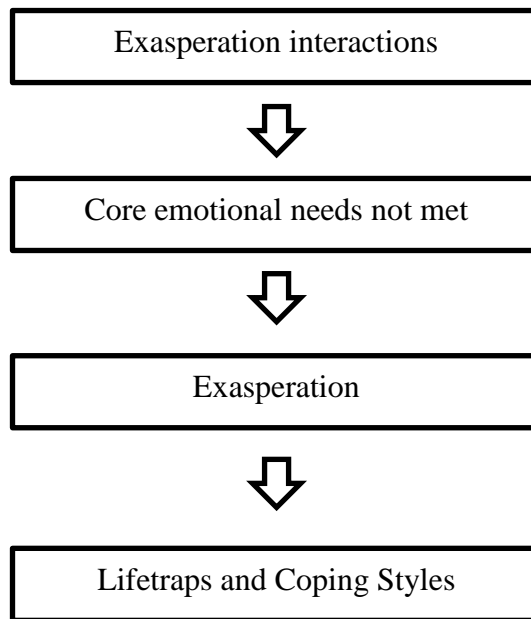


Figure 37. Example of *self-directed* change to manage students who experience negative parenting at home

Figure 37 highlights a scenario where a teacher can adapt and manage students' problematic behaviors from the angle of *self-directed* change. Undeniably, negative parenting is known to be a factor that leads to the portrayal of expressive or suppressive behaviors among students in the school (Yahaya & Ramli, 2010). Although this case study does not incorporate the view of parents and students, it is beneficial to highlight that negative parenting at home invites different problematic behaviors of children in school. Louis (2012) highlighted five core emotional needs that parents often overlooked while parenting their children. In essence, children should not be deprived by parents on providing: (1) *connection and acceptance*; (2) *healthy autonomy*; (3) *reasonable limits*; (4) *realistic expectations*; and (5) *spiritual values and community*. According to Louis (2012), *connection and acceptance* is making the effort and time to bond emotionally with children. Consequently, children will feel accepted, and learn to express their negative emotions into positive emotions. Ultimately, it is about the parent being there to listen and feel with their children while coaching them to cope with stressors of life.

In *healthy autonomy* and *reasonable limits*, parents are to manage and allow children to grow gracefully in their independence, wisdom and self-control so that they would eventually earn their total freedom from their parents one day. In *realistic expectations*, parents must not enforce their children with unrealistic expectations to perform at school or use guilt and fear to change them. Lastly, *spiritual values and community* support is vital to provide guidance and encouragement to change and progress in all aspects of a child's growth.

Because of the long hours spent in school with students, teachers' roles are synonymous to parents as described by Tie (2004) as '*in loco parentis*'. Similar to negative parenting, a problem persists when teachers unintentionally deprive students from any one (or more) of these five emotional core needs. Hence, cooperation and teamwork between parents, counselors and teachers are important in the upbringing of the child. Lockwood and Perris (2012) highlighted that meeting emotional needs could lead to a positive state of wellbeing and psychological functions of children. According to Louis (2012), if parents (or in this case teachers) deprive children from meeting these five core emotional needs in a long run, exasperations would occur and lead to life-traps and negative coping styles as illustrated in the exasperation pathway in Figure 38.



*Figure 38.* The Exasperation Pathway (Louis, 2012)

These life-traps and coping styles are almost similar to the expressive and suppressive syndrome, or the syndrome of fight-flight-fright (Cannon, 1967). At any point in life, children could be coping with stressors from their physical environment (school, classroom or personal space), or from the interactions with their friends, parents, teachers and other people. During adolescent years, students are still exploring their sense of personal identity, or trying to cope with cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1959). As for example, students' discipline cases could be caused by the lack of ability to understand self and relate with other people and their environment. Instead of responding proactively, they react through the fight-flight-fright syndrome and end up hurting themselves or other people (Covey, 2009). Therefore, it is recommended for teachers to incorporate plans that would cater the education, prevention and correction of students' beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors. Vitally, this is where teachers play more important roles to educate students about life and living, so that it would lead to the cultivation of positive emotional and intellectual growth in the classroom.

In aspects of personal skills to counsel students, Gottman (2011) believes that coaching a child to understand and express his or her emotions properly could help the child to deal with uncomfortable feelings like guilt, regret and sadness. A child that lacks the ability to understand and express emotions would usually avoid, blame, deny or challenge other people, authority or situation as a reaction to their negative emotions. A more stable child would learn to acknowledge, accept and alter their attitude to meet the challenging demands of their environment. In addition, the child will feel supported and eventually learn about self-soothing so that they can stay calm under stress, and less likely to misbehave. Even though Gottman (2011) was explaining from the perspective of parenting, teachers are not exceptional as they spend most of their time with students in the schooling years. Gottman's (2011) "emotion coaching" helps children to deal with emotions and promotes connection and healthy relationships not just with parents, but with their friends, elders and even teachers. Therefore, teachers' ability to guide and teach students to manage negative emotions is a bonus and yet vital skill for teachers to communicate and connect with students.

In retrospective, teachers as leaders in the classroom could also be the victim of their own life-traps and personal coping styles. Teachers who are likely to transfer cases to others portray symptoms of fright and flight, while teachers who handle discipline problems aggressively and emotionally could be portraying symptoms of fight. This is where the study of decision-making should not just address the organizational or technical process, but the cognitive, behavioral and affective process. Beyond the improvements of organizational SOPs, teachers could have experienced negative incidents and constraints that impacted them internally as decision-makers. However, it is much easier to explore and manipulate external factors. As Bandura (1996, 1999) explained, environmental or external circumstances can influence (or be influenced) by personal beliefs and behavior.

Thus, while the unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making were first uncovered as external factors, it would eventually lead to more understanding on the internal factors (such as the cognitive, behavioral and affective process or decision-making).

For this case study, issues of personal decision-making were viewed from teachers' point of view and centralized in the improvements for discipline management. Undeniably, even though there are other psychological aspects to consider, decision-making is viewed from the aspects of teacher leadership and personal management. The findings of this study were intended to contribute to organizational change from an *outside-in* approach, rather than an *inside-out* approach. For *inside-out* approach, the ability of teachers to meet the core emotional needs of students and helping them to escape from environmental life traps rests on their awareness, personal skills and experiences. Conversely for *outside-in* approach, the researched organization can change their environment and improve on their SOPs to groom teachers into better classroom leaders, coaches or counselors so that they can make rational decisions that meet the core emotional needs of their students. Ideally and rationally, when problems are rectified at the core level, there would usually be a decline in discipline case among school students.

Fundamentally, SOPs for discipline management should be accommodative to allow teachers to use personal means that are practical and effective to address the core emotional needs of students, instead of controlling or punishing them through impersonal, rigid and standard processes. This additional idea expands the perspective on what was originally suggested in the Professional circular No. 8/2001(MOEM, 2001).

At the time of research, there is no platform or training for teachers to learn more about students' psychology, and further emphasis should be carried out to train teachers on how to understand students better and meeting core emotional needs that are often overlooked, but yet necessary. In other words, it is important to acknowledge the necessity to address the affective and cognitive aspects in students' behavioral management.

From data analyses, it is noticeable that SOPs and discipline management guidelines emphasized on guiding the behavioral aspects of teachers and students, but paid least attention to the emotional and intellectual challenges that teachers faced in the process of decision-making. During analyses, these emotional and intellectual challenges were portrayed in what respondents described as unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making. Therefore, it is rational to create more conducive environments to promote personal and collaborative decision-making. Indirectly, this would reasonably lessen the teachers' obstacles in personal decision-making.

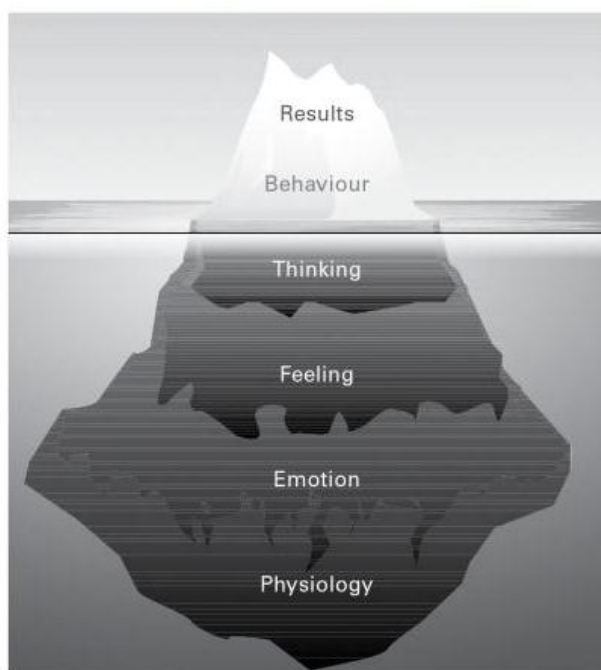
This explorative case study have also enabled the researcher to explain further on how decision-making should encompass the scope and depth pertaining to teachers as decision-makers, the process and issues related to decision-making. The future phase of intervention should be set out to improve the decision-making process, the decision-maker's cognitive and affective abilities and minimizing the level of obstacles and unfavorable conditions. Practically, more information could be added into the existing list of strategies, obstacles and conditions to effective decision-making when larger opinions and perspectives are gathered from other respondents. Based on the current data, the researcher could only conclude that respondents solved problems in an observable pattern of decision-making, but they differed according to personal styles, strategies and external obstacles to personal decision-making.



Under the setting of a natural environment, Pettigrew (1997) likened the studying of organizational change as “catching reality in flight”. Alternately, the researcher described it as a moment where people, situations and human interactions are captured as a cross-sectional frame (as in using a computed tomography scan on the human body) from other larger and continuous frames of time. Because of the change and unpredictability in human behavior, it is very challenging to generalize on the habits, tendencies or relationships between variables in an uncontrolled environment. Be it in their knowledge, exposure and experiences, teachers as decision-makers could mature in their cognitive and affective abilities eventually. When cognitive and affective matures, the obstacles and unfavorable conditions that previously dissuade them from personal involvements could decrease or become obsolete. Consequently, they could also portray new patterns of decision-making.

In another instance, some teachers may courageously try out new strategies to overcome their obstacles and unfavorable conditions first, before improving their cognitive and affective abilities eventually. In essence, there is no clear indication of which area would start to change first. Undeniably, personal change is due to differing situations, priorities, skills and abilities. Ultimately, the organizational vision, mission and goals should guide the necessary change needed for growth and development of its personnel.

On other methods to improve in *self-directed* change, the researcher would like to adopt some key ideas from Watkins (2013). Figure 39 is depicted from his book *Coherence: The Secret Science of Brilliant Leadership*. It is a picture of an integrated performance model where Watkins (2013) mentioned that human performance, effectiveness and results starts with physiology that is much deeper in the human system than behavior.



*Figure 39.* The integrated performance model (Watkins, 2013)

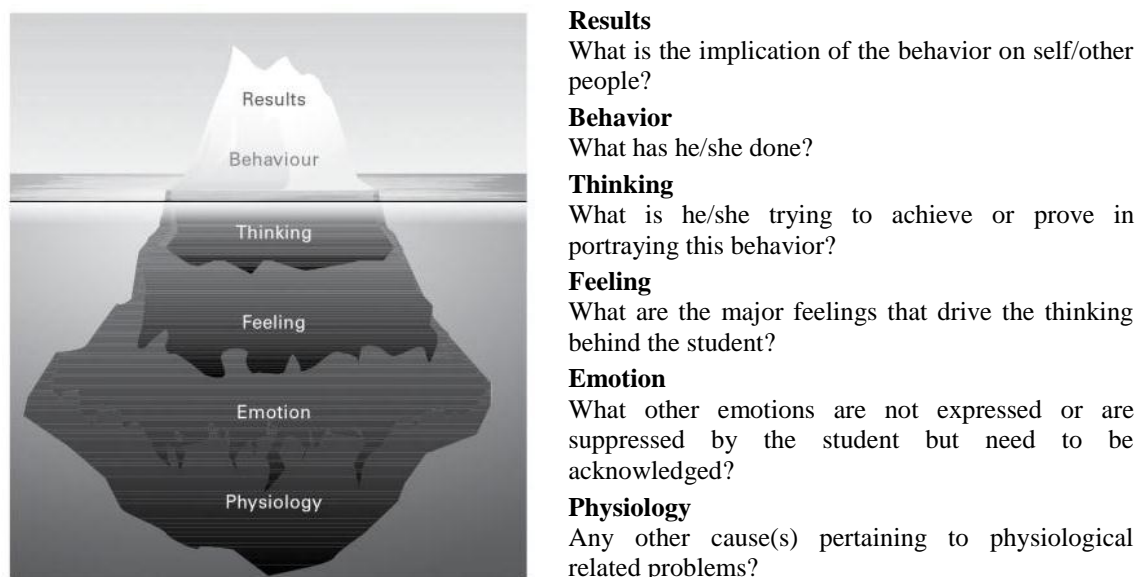
In essence, Watkins (2013) highlighted that thinking drives behavior, and that thinking has a reciprocal relationship with what people feel. Nonetheless, feeling is an active ingredient and wins over thinking most of the time. Beneath the feeling layer, there is the emotion, and Watkins (2013) defined emotion as “energy in motion” or raw emotion. Raw emotions occur in the body without much realizing it, and is exemplified by having large quantity of energy reserves to be contained, controlled or directed towards feelings, thinking, behaviors and finally results. Because of these raw emotions, it is difficult to tell people to not worry when their inner emotions are overwhelmed with anxiousness or suppression. Thus, it takes cognitive and affective skills to naturally understand, communicate and relate with the built-up of emotions (or energy in motion) within individuals and other people.

Beneath the layer of emotions are the physiological or the biological reactions and processes in the body. Watkins (2013) highlighted that physiology consist of data

and information streams that occur constantly inside the human body. He quoted, “Vast streams of data are being sent and received from one body system to another in the form of electrical signals, electromagnetic signals, chemical signals, pressure, sound and heat waves.” In addition, he highlighted that very few people understand its impact and learn how to master this traffic, or learn how to change the quality signals in the human systems.

In crystalizing cognitive and affective awareness, teachers can learn to communicate with students at a deeper level. Depending on personal objectives, the researcher suggests Watkins (2013) model be used together with following questions to identify the cause of the discipline problem, evaluate the degree of seriousness, and uncover the core emotional needs of the student before deciding on further actions.

Figure 40 shows a sample of questions that could potentially help teachers to crystalize their cognitive thoughts and affective emotions when investigating or interrogating students for suspected offence or misbehaviors.



*Figure 40.* Simple questions for teachers to reflect when dealing with students’ misbehaviors

In the thinking, feeling and emotion level, teachers may be playing the guessing game if they do not know how to read the non-verbal cues of students. Some students may not be comfortable in telling the truth about themselves, while others are unable to express their emotions due to weakness in communication skills or personality traits. An experienced teacher listens beyond the verbal words of students and matches their explanations together with their facial expressions and other emotional cues. If consistency exists between emotional, facial and verbal expressions, teachers would have been able to probe effectively, detect and ascertained the underlying cause behind the symptoms of the discipline problems. Otherwise, there will not be any breakthrough to meet the core emotional needs of students due to the lack of listening and observation skills during the phase of interrogation. Therefore, crystalizing personal awareness across the different layers from the physiology level to the behavioral level is important as prerequisite to personal decision-making.

As described by *Situational leadership* (Blanchard, Zigami & Nelson, 1993), both abilities and willingness are two key variables to be matched with the right strategy for leading. As far as self-directed change is concerned, teachers must be reflective to evaluate their level of ability and personal willingness. Despite personal abilities, teachers have to be willing to learn, cope with obstacles, adapt to changing environment, and assimilate with socio-cultural-economic differences toward a school identity.

### *Organizational-directed and Student-directed Change.*

For both students and the organization to change simultaneously, all forms of education, correction, prevention and punishment can be geared towards achieving the vision and mission of the organization.

From records, the school has five guiding principles in aspects of student development: (a) academic excellence; (b) sports and health; (c) character building; (d) language and communication; and (e) civic mindedness. Except for (b), many classroom decisions can be aligned towards meeting the four fundamental principles as the school intends to form a school culture that is positive and consistent with the vision and mission of the school. In essence, vision and mission driven solutions should be part of teachers' considerations for problem solving, particularly in the stage of decision-making. By constantly referring and working towards to the vision and mission of the school, school communities will promote a culture continuous improvement and consistent learning. In aspects of improvements to SOPs, they must be continually be evaluated, updated and communicated in consistently so that school communities can learn to look into the organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analyses) surrounding decision-making and change. The researcher suggests that SOPs are reviewed annually to be concise in the language, style and format to explain its procedures. A clear written description on organizational processes ought to provide sufficient information, to keep performance consistent and updating organizational data (or archive) from becoming outdated or impractical.

In essence, there is no best method or process to solve organizational problems that are situational, changing and unpredictable. Instead, there should be a real-time organizational databank to evaluate on processes and procedures each time a decision is made so that when any staff leaves the organization, the loss of expertise and

knowledge can be replaced with real-time information to help school leaders access, assess and improve on organizational strategies and policies. This is to avoid previous organizational mistakes when dealing with the similar challenges in the future. Thus, SOPs must not only be improved or discarded when ineffective, but be archived for teachers' access, evaluation and learning.

Beyond the application of reporting and writing in a discipline record book, the use of information, communication and technology (ICT) facilities would enable school communities to work faster and better than before. Therefore, the suggestion of creating an online discipline management databank is not just complimenting with the use of existing ICT network (particularly in cloud technology), but extending it with content and solutions that are valuable for teachers to refer instantly prior to decision-making.

In certain circumstances, teachers' personal choice of decision could end up to be more effective and practical as compared to organizational solutions. Nevertheless, their personal solutions have yet to be endorsed by the organization. For organizational learning, there should be a mechanism set in place to look for new ideas from collaborative or personal viewpoints in the process of refining SOPs. Similar to industrial manufacturing company, the school should have an allowance for "research and development in school leadership" so that proposals, initial ideas or drafts could be crafted and tested before a SOP is released for implementation.

In reality, more SOPs are required when the school operates with more decision makers and interactions among school communities. As a suggestion, shared decision-making is preferred as compared to resting on the principal's decision alone. Distributed leadership could improve organizational practices and commitment from school communities in achieving organizational goals.

### ***Situational-directed change.***

The *situational-directed* strategy is recommended as the fourth area of change for teachers. Teachers as classrooms leaders ought to consider personal strategies are targeted appropriately and effectively towards the right persons and situations. Ideally, when teachers focus on *self-directed* change, they should also consider for *situational-directed* change.

In terms of skills, teachers need to have the ability to interpret situations and anticipate positive or negative outcome from a personal decision. Both internal and external change influences each other bi-directionally and this understanding of human behavior is echoed from Bandura (1996, 1999) and Festinger (1959). Additionally, *Situational leadership* is useful for teachers to consider the willingness and abilities of students to change prior to determining the right approach to disciplining in the classroom. As discussed in the research findings, situations of discipline were interpreted in terms of seriousness and frequency of transfer. Nonetheless, it is vital for teachers to consider their students' psychological or emotional state, and other environmental factors surrounding their intentions to make personal decisions. Thereafter, they can use their skills to bridge between their intentions and the outcome of decision that they want to achieve.

### ***Other recommendations***

Knowing that change is inevitable and important for personal and organizational survival, it is beneficial for the organization to encourage action research for teachers. In general, there is no perfect timing to initiate for an action research, and all four directed strategies could be focused on independently or simultaneously depending on individual priorities, resources and timing. The researcher's conceptual framework had assisted this research particularly in contextualizing the personnel, process and issues of

decision-making. Parallel to Pettigrew’s (1987) conceptual framework, his context-process and content approach have yielded tremendous amount of research information for the researcher to enhance organizational knowledge and awareness for change. Figure 38 is an illustration to indicate where action research could be used to assist in continuous change for all the four-directed change related to personal and organizational decision-making. As highlighted, there are four areas of strategic change (*self-directed, organizational-directed, situation-directed* and *organization-directed*). Each strategic area portrays key elements for change that are essential for the organizational learning and change, and have been discussed in separately in the previous sections. Since all data analyses were derived from fifteen respondents, these areas of strategic change are most suitable to be implemented individually among them. Generally, action research could be implemented by anyone as long as they understand that purpose, focus and process of change. In essence, personal reflections are vital in the process of continuous improvements and teachers’ professional development.

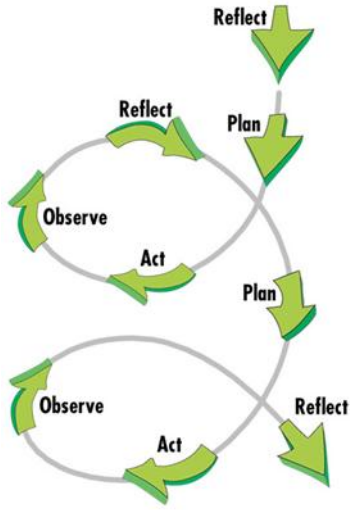
 <p>(Carr &amp; Kemmis, 1983)</p>	<p><b>Self-directed change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aware of cognitive and affective aspects in teacher-student relationships</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify and cope with personal obstacles (or lifetraps).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organizational-directed change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vision and mission driven solutions</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuously improve through consistent learning</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Situation-directed change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aware, adapt, anticipate and bridge decision-making between intentions and outcome</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student-directed change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting students’ core emotional needs</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specify and target problems appropriate and strategic interventions.</li> </ul>

Figure 41. Suggested key areas for action research



Carr & Kemmis (1983) model of action research highlights the key phases of change where teachers can use in their professional practice. Basically, there are four processes that are continuous in an action research: (a) plan; (b) act; (c) monitor; and evaluate. To improve personal and organizational decision-making, the decision-making guide was to encourage teachers' involvement in organizational decision-making. Inspired by key areas in Pettigrew's (1987), this initial plan is needed to guide teachers to understand the three key areas of improvements: (a) the decision-maker (the context, cognitive and affective aspects); (b) the process of decision-making (the strategies and behavioral aspects); and (c) the content (issues and obstacles concerned with personal decision-making).

To reiterate, all three key areas of improvements could be addressed simultaneously or independently depending on priorities and resources. When teachers are aware of their cognitive and emotional state, they would learn to capitalize on the strengths while managing their weaknesses by leveraging with other personnel. In addition, action research allows teachers to reflect, learn and improve in their own pace.

Symbolically, teachers are likened as sailors of a ship while the principal is the captain of the ship. While the captain steers the ship towards the organizational vision and mission, sailors concentrate on the operations of the ship with their own skills and specialization. To sharpen the decision-making skills, teachers have to ensure that they chart and implement a personal plan, reflect and evaluate, learn from their own experience and realign their personal goals with the organizational goal. In other words, action research would enable teachers to know and compare their personal results with the seven key values of change towards organizational growth. While doing so, they could match and map their personal improvements against the acceptable standards of the organization.

In aspects of organizational change through reflective learning, it is important to provide sufficient space and time for teachers to deal with their cognitive dissonance while changing their belief system and adapting to their environment. For instance, cognitive dissonance could appear as an internal conflict between outcome expectations efficacy expectations. Ultimately, teachers have carry to out tasks personally and believe that they are capable to solve complicated problems with the right process, without much assistance from the HOD (or other discipline teachers). Teachers with high PCI value (highly custodial) and low self-efficacy should spend more time to reflect and change the changeable areas personal decision-making, be it personally or by peer coaching. It was suggested in the earlier discussions that teachers should be paired for peer coaching according to their PCI and TSES scores. There are many other areas to consider for pairing for peer coaching. Fundamentally, Bandura (1977) had initiated the four basis of improving ones' efficacy (enactive experience, vicarious experience, persuasion and emotional arousal), and they should be used to encourage personal change, independence and interdependence with other personnel. Ultimately, a collaborative, progressive and continuous change of belief system allows teachers to understand why change is needed, and prepare them for situations that are increasingly demanding and challenging.

In political decision-making, most of the SOPs could be frequently implemented out of personal power and enforcement without much emphasis to explain the rationale behind a decision. Consequently, conflicts occur because of different expectations, unpredictability or personal shortfalls in achieving the standard of their superiors. Ultimately, classroom decision-making is also geared to manage conflicts that occur between teachers-students, teachers-teachers or teachers-superiors. While a decision may not always be favorable to all parties, the outcome of conflict management is to determine *what* is right, rather than *who* is right.

Therefore, personal and organizational vision and values must be defined clearly before a decision is considered. It is easier to deal with people and circumstances when they share common vision and values in perceiving and managing conflicts constructively. In essence, vision and values are the integral part of decision-making and should be made the heart in every organizational SOPs. Without vision and values, organizational processes do not carry meaning to school communities and they are merely implemented out of compulsion, fear and guilt instead of understanding, passion or sacrifice for a common purpose.

### **Limitations of Study**

Prior to conclusion of the chapter, it is necessary to highlight on several limitations that should be considered after a study is completed. As this case study was not intended to predict or generalize findings on the school population, its design could be repeated in the same setting, or on other schools with the same purpose of research. However, a researcher has to consider the following areas as limitations deriving from this case study.

### **Multiple Processes in the Research Design**

At the beginning, the role of the researcher was to become participant observer in order to build the foundations of this research. Inevitably, the initial twelve months were spent to observe, ascertain and establish the problem statement and purpose of research. In the following twelve months as a participant observer, the researcher concentrated on the selection, design and approval to use the right questionnaires to collect data from respondents.

As a preliminary approach to purposive sampling, the Head of Discipline assisted the researcher to identify teachers from a list of criteria drawn out for this study. The selection of respondents rested mainly on their abilities to provide personal viewpoints as well as historical viewpoints pertaining to their classroom control and decision-making. However, there were many other candidates who turned down the request for interview due to reasons like language barriers and the feeling of uneasiness in a voice-recorded interview. Eventually, fifteen respondents became the interviewees of this study. In essence, the analyses from all fifteen respondents were not considered as representing the views of other teachers, but rather, producing a collective view to highlight individual thoughts, processes and issues associated with classroom control and personal decision-making.

During the initial process to complete three questionnaires, each respondent were given ample time to reflect on the issue and write their feedbacks on the space provided. Not all respondents returned their forms within the stipulated time of 2 weeks, as some took up to six weeks to finally return the sets of questionnaires. The process of questionnaire development through the point of conducting the last interview had its own duration, obstacles and challenges to overcome. Simultaneously, months were spent on transcribing, coding and data reduction procedures for interpretive analysis. Nevertheless, the writing phase were done as per scheduled to its final completion. Besides the factors of finances, time and tasks, many processes that were initially planned in this case study was delayed due to respondents' personal circumstances.

Generally, most of these circumstances appeared in the form of respondents' unavailability and readiness to answer the questions because of their busy schedules. As this case study was merely conducted to explore circumstances and teachers' behaviors under a natural environment, it did not pressure respondents for submission. Instead, the researcher had to proceed on the next phase of research for each respondent as when

they were ready to progress. Strategically, it was important to give more room and space for respondents to reflect on the questions, recollect personal experiences and penned down their thoughts clearly on the questionnaires. The process was carried out because each individual were different, and it was important to gather as much as possible on respondents' feedbacks pertaining to the research questions.

### **Purpose and Scope of Research**

To ensure a reasonable ending in a qualitative research, it is important to set a clear purpose, scope and design for this case study. As indicated in the problem statement, it was observed that some teachers in the organization were in the dilemma of taking on roles as disciplinarians due to environmental obstacles and perceived risks personal decision-making. Thus, the ultimate goal of this case study was to enhance understanding on teachers' classroom control strategies in a bureaucratic environment, and uncover alternative solutions and suggestions to improve discipline management through organizational learning. Additionally, the case study was designed as to explore real case experiences among respondents and to suggest a decision-making guide for classroom control and decision-making.

The second aspect of consideration was the purpose of conducting a case study in a private school. Originally, the researcher wanted to explore how higher expectations and stringent operations in a private school setting affect teachers' behaviors in aspects of classroom control and personal decision-making.

Being a participant observer for a year enabled the researcher to notice several other reasons contributing towards teachers' behaviors in decision-making. With additional theories to support the foundations of this case study, the scope of the research was finally widened to explore further on the decision-maker, the process of decision-making and the issues associated with personal decision-making. Ultimately, the

researcher could contribute the findings of this research in manner where suggestions and solutions are personalized and contextual to the organization alone.

### **Limited Respondents**

In the future, many more teachers could be included under the same setting to enhance the purpose of this research. With more respondents, further interventions could encompass efforts of social experimentation under different controlled environments. In addition, this study provided a starting point for fifteen selected respondents to consider using action research for organizational learning. To encourage organizational change, action research would enable them to reflect, interact and integrate solutions at a wider perspective.

As initially explained, it was difficult to observe and document internal factors that motivate or inhibit teachers' behaviors in the classroom. Nevertheless, the identification of favorable and unfavorable conditions as external factors could only explain to a certain extent why some teachers prefer to transfer discipline cases, while others take on disciplining tasks personally. As these conclusions are preliminary and restricted to fifteen respondents, the strength of relationship between both internal and external conditions to personal decision-making could only be ascertained if there are future efforts to compare, rank or relate these variables through inferential analyses over a larger population sample. For the time being, no further conclusions can be made because of the qualitative approach and a limited sample in this study.

### **Perception and Interpretation of the Researcher**

In essence, there must also be an inclusion to highlight biasness in personal perception and interpretations of the researcher. From the analyses of data, it was evident that personal classroom control strategies and personal decision-making were

not consistent among and within respondents. Despite data showing differences in strategies and styles, there were other external factors that surrounded respondents as decision-makers, such as changing school climates (the establishment of the international school) and increase of student enrolments (inclusion of primary students into the secondary block). In the near future, more elements could perhaps be inculcated to describe teachers' behaviors in classroom control when more respondents could be involved in another study.

It is also important to note that the behavioral patterns of decision-making should not be equated with predictability. As for example, the pattern of decision-making was identified through a limited data of fifteen respondents, and should not be used as predictions for larger population of samples. While it was evident that all respondents chose to discipline students through the process of personal involvement, collaboration and finally transfer, a difference in terms of regularity and time taken for each process was observed.

In another aspect, data interpretation in the similar field of study could be limited by existing theoretical frames of mind. The researcher was acting from his best knowledge in theories that could be used to explain and support respondents' behaviors in the organization. Beyond the contextualization, conceptualization, and analyses of data, there could be a limitation of personal interpretation and preferences to explain reality. In other words, instead of concluding on data, the researcher could be concluding with his limited knowledge, assumptions or judgmental perceptions. Therefore, personal blind spots must be addressed in this section. To the researcher's best ability, personal measures were taken to lessen the impact of human error that included the use of triangulation and getting validation and acknowledgement from respondents over their feedbacks.

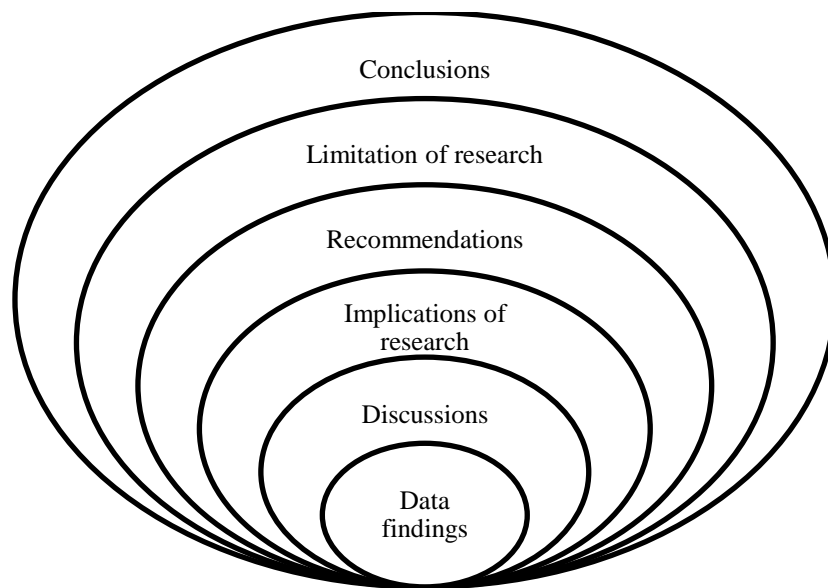
As a closing, nothing is permanent and predictable about organizational behavior when catching “reality in flight” as mentioned by Pettigrew (1985). Nevertheless, this research has contributed strategic procedures and recommendations in which this case study could be carried out in the future. In addition, questions on the organizational setting, respondents’ classroom control strategies and styles, favorable conditions and obstacles to decision-making were all ironed out as the study progressed towards completion.

In this research, it is an inherent challenge to ascertain if the opinions provided by the respondents were truthful. For example, even though respondents acknowledged that they knew how to identify, trace and differentiate discipline problems, the limitation of data lies in the confirming if respondents were truthful or practicing exactly what was being said. In addition, things could also go in a way that respondents were cautious in the voiced-recorded interview and only provided opinions to suit what they perceived the researcher wanted to hear. Nevertheless, such problems were mitigation by addressing questions in four separate approaches: (1) having respondents to reflect and complete three questionnaires; (2) corroborating facts with the Head of Discipline; (3) conducting a voice-recorded interview with the respondents; and (4) getting their responses validated. Thus, every transcript was returned to the respondent for reading, acknowledgement and approval prior to the phase of writing in chapter four. As the researcher played his role as the living instrument of research, it is hoped that personal limitations associated with investigative and analyses skills could be improved to better understand organizations with the same cause. In addition, only training and repetition of studies could effectively enhance the researcher’s abilities to reduce personal bias or error (Flyvbjerg, 2006).



## Conclusions

In this concluding section, the researcher will summarize all the aspects of the context, process and content of decision-making as discussed throughout the study. While doing so, it is worth reiterating the sections of this chapter briefly. Fundamentally, this chapter has discussed all areas and aspects associated with respondents as decision-makers, their process of decision-making and obstacles encountered as decision-makers. In addition, the researcher has also presented a model of decision-making, the implications of research and the four areas for organizational change to support the model of decision-making. As a summary, Figure 42 recaps all the sections of researcher's writing that were presented throughout this chapter.



*Figure 42.* Summary for all sections written in chapter five

Initially, the researcher's interest to conduct this case study was primarily driven by a need to understand how teachers behaved and make complicated decisions when constricted by internal and external obstacles. In discussing the context of the study, respondents as decision-makers were initially exploring in aspects of pupil control ideology and personal efficacy. As mentioned, the evaluation using the PCI and TSES

form could only yield data for comparisons among the fifteen respondents, but not to generalize the rest of the teacher-population in the organization. On a separate note, a case study was chosen as the approach to uncover aspects at a personal and deeper level because there were not many local evidences to describe the process of decision-making. Additionally, this research incorporated the use of participant observation and models of decision-making as paradigms to explain social reality.

The second area of findings concentrated on respondents' process of decision-making. With all the respondents coming from the same school (under a common setting), it paved way for the researcher to understand: (1) how similar problems can result into different perceptions, expectations, strategies, styles or actions to classroom control; (2) how teachers decide to solve discipline problems that were escalating from less serious to serious; and (3) teachers' extent of personal involvement prior to transfer.

As content became the third area of research, respondents highlighted their unfavorable conditions that inhibited personal involvement in decision-making. Subsequently, six major obstacles were highlighted by respondents: (a) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); (b) parental involvement; (c) negative teacher-student relationships; (d) negative work culture; (e) managing students with learning disabilities and; (f) socio-cultural differences.

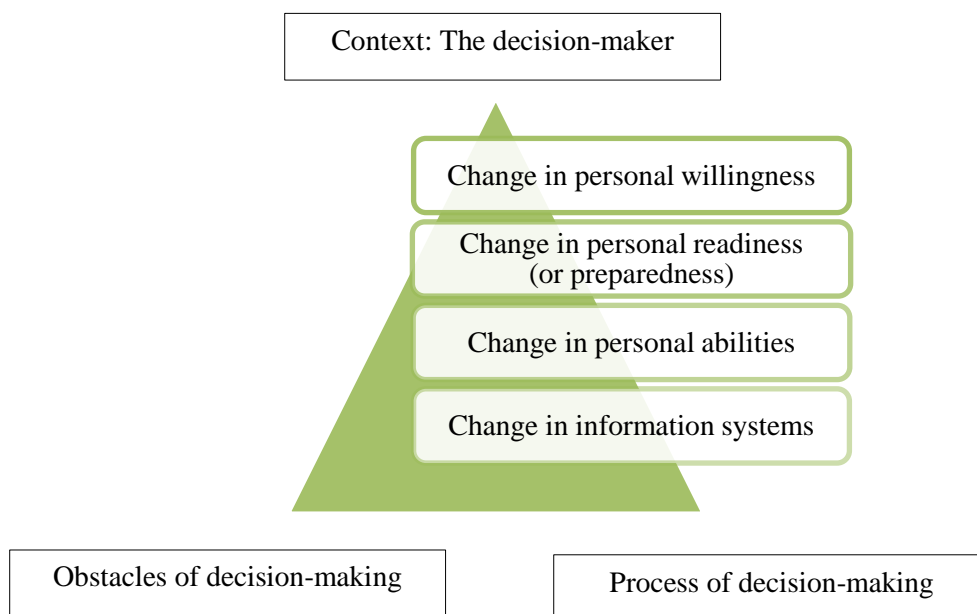
As this chapter discusses the findings in chapter four with other related theories, new paradigms of explanations were derived from *Situational Leadership* (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993), *Cognitive Dissonance Theory* (Festinger, 1957), *Integrated Performance Level* (Watkins, 2013), the *exasperation pathway* (Louis, 2012), and the difference between leadership and management (Covey, 2005). As a result, the researcher critically analyzed respondents' classroom control strategies, process of decision-making and how their personal obstacles could be alleviated through the four

directed strategies (*self-directed, student-directed, situational-directed* and *organizational-directed*). Further discussions pertaining to teachers' process of decision-making had also incorporated the discussion on decision-making models that were presented earlier in chapter two.

Following the compiled a list of suggestions from respondents to improve personal involvement and collaboration in organizational decision-making, the researcher highlighted some vital areas in their organizational reporting system for discipline management. Findings from this case study supported the need of some inclusion of details pertaining to report-writing and reporting. At the very least, the Head of Discipline would benefit by knowing teachers' extent of personal involvement and their obstacles to personal decision-making. Prior to these changes, their existing forms do not contain any information pertaining to teachers' interventions prior to transfer. Therefore, the HOD is aware of his teachers' abilities and commitments in managing discipline matters collaboratively. This is one the implication of the case study where it has yielded some positive benefits for the researched organization.

In essence, discussions on unfavorable conditions and obstacles to personal decision-making were oriented towards recommendations for organizational change. Because change is inevitable for organizational survival, the researcher related and conceptualized the four-directed strategies (*self-directed, student-directed, situational-directed* and *organizational-directed*) into *self-directed* change, *student-directed* change, *situational-directed* change and *organizational-directed* change. Fundamentally, it is hoped that teachers in the organization could find relevance, urgency and importance to be involved in a much larger part of organizational learning. Even so, change must be accompanied by informed decision and actions that are evaluated occasionally to chart progress.

From respondents' feedbacks on negative work culture, much organizational effort is needed in the area of changing the mindset and attitudes of teachers to participate in decision-making. Unfortunately for most instances, data findings are useless if they are not accompanied with appropriate plans and actions to rectify organizational problems. In order to encourage collegiality and commitment in discipline management, the researcher recommends four areas of considerations to overcome personal problems in classroom control and decision-making: (a) focus on personal willingness; (b) focus on readiness (or preparedness); (c) focus on personal abilities; and (d) focus on Information Systems (IS). As illustrated in Figure 43, these conclusions are derived from the researcher's personal insights, work experiences and further readings associated with the problem, scope and theme of this study.



*Figure 43.* Concluding thoughts for the improvements of the decision-maker, process and obstacles to personal decision-making

## **Change in Personal Willingness**

The subject of personal willingness in motivation studies has long been associated with the feeling of pleasure versus pain. Also known as the hedonic motivation (Woodworth, 1950), it is theorized that people are generally willing to move towards a goal that rewards them with pleasure, while in contrast, move away from threat that causes pain. In terms of reward, people could be asking the question “what’s in it for me?” before a change could occur. It was known that SOPs produce the pushing factor for respondents to act and comply with organizational expectations without much reward. In addition to SOPs, the principal becomes the central figure to direct, influence and change teachers’ behaviors in the organization. Other than direct authorization, principal can empower people with specific roles so that organizational objectives are carried out. Be it expectedly or unexpectedly, respondents have reported that they would normally change as they carry out personal tasks as summoned by the principal. Thus, the willingness to change is seemed to stem from avoiding pain initially, rather than gaining reward. Nevertheless, teachers are rewarded through non-monetary means such as encouragement, compliments and acknowledgements for their accomplishments. As a result, most teachers also reported that they are happier when their efforts and contributions are appraised and appreciated by the principal. At the same time, they would also feel more confident in carrying out the same task in the future.

## **Change in Readiness (Or Preparedness)**

In the second subject of readiness, respondents have reported that they were unprepared to handle serious discipline problems personally due to the obstacles and reasons that inhibit further involvement. By far, the findings from this study are important as an initiative to understand the problems within classroom control and

personal decision-making. Regardless of minor or serious discipline problems, teachers ought to be ready to act as discipline teachers and be consistent in their expectations on students. Even though personal solutions, strategies and style may be different among teachers, they must be competent to educate, prevent, correct or punish students when unwanted situations occur in the classrooms.

In the near future, it is a matter of aspiration that education lawmakers can one day decide that physical forms of punishment are no longer needed for disciplining in Malaysia. As reported in the local newspapers, situations turned awry when punishment were done inappropriately on students. Other problems associated with punishments included conducting corporal punishments (or any other physical punishments) at the wrong time, by the wrong people and at the wrong place. The MOE's instruction to execute corporal punishment was addressed in Ministry Directive 7/2003 (MOEM, 2003). In an extension of research, not all fifteen respondents were aware or ever read about this directive because their source of information only came from the principal or the Head of Discipline. Therefore, they highlighted the problem of not ready to deal with situations beyond their ability to control.

In terms of teachers' strategies, many documented tactics were classified under four-directed strategies with multiple purposes of prevention, correction, education and punishment. As a result, further analyses should be carried out to interpret teachers' classroom control strategies, and how to institute purpose-driven change programs for teachers to practice in the organization. It was recommended that *self-directed* and *student-directed* strategies should concentrate on improving the affective and cognitive aspects between teachers and students, while *organizational-directed* strategies and *situational-directed* strategies should concentrate on improving the technical and communication aspects between school communities. Practically, all four directed strategies (*student-directed*, *situational-directed*, *organizational-directed* or *self-*

*directed strategies*) could be deployed at different timings in accordance to organizational goals, resources and priorities.

The other benefit of the classifying strategies is to help the Head of Discipline to segregate tasks and responsibilities within the school's bureaucratic system. Therefore, the HOD could plan for better strategies to avoid overlapping or repetition of work. With different emphasis, teachers could be led to integrate and synergize to achieve a common purpose and minimize the wastage of resources. As for example, teachers could emphasize on support for correction and education, while the discipline coordinators can emphasize on enforcement for punishment and prevention. In both ways of enforcing and supporting students with school rules, students would "feel" the warning as much as they "know" the warning.

### **Change in Personal Abilities**

The third subject is on teachers' personal abilities. In essence, this research was important to uncover how cognitive state and personal judgments were made within the stage of personal involvement. Data has revealed that respondents could gather evidences, differentiate the seriousness of problem and identify the cause of the discipline problems. However, one of the limitations of study was to prove that respondents were honest to acknowledge that they carried out such measures habitually. If all teachers could be taught to conduct and implement these personal measures diligently, this would shorten the time frame for decision-making when facts are readily accessible and available by teachers' own efforts. Thus, teachers can collaborate with the Head of Discipline more effectively prior to fully transferring matters to him.

Other than cognitive abilities, communication and conflict management skills are necessary for teachers in classroom control. With continuous action research, training and coaching, teachers can concentrate to improve at each level within personal

involvement. As highlighted in the findings, respondents were able to gather evidence, differentiate problems or identify causes of discipline problems.

In another aspect, respondents are also aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses to investigate on problems that persist in their classrooms. Through collaborations, they could study a problem from multiple viewpoints and decide on a strategy that manages the weakness and threats of a bad decision. In addition, collaborations uncover opportunities for synergy.

From data analyses, it was observed that some respondents were good at doing investigative work, while others were good at supporting the psychological aspects of the students. Regardless which is important, it would be better if teachers look for the strengths of others to compensate for the skills in which they lacked. Thus, personal involvement need not necessarily involve the individual only, because personal decisions can be made through synergy, or consultation with others due to combination of strengths and compensation of weaknesses.

When referring to organizational learning, it is important to evaluate on teachers' level of personal knowledge and use organizational data to assist teachers making decisions. There are many ways and means to evaluate teachers' level of knowledge especially on SOPs. The use of the PCI and TSES form were merely a simple guide to collect and describe respondents' state of perception on pupil control and confidence as described in the purpose of the study. As suggested in the section of discussion, PCI and TSES evaluation allows individual teachers to be profiled and matched with others through peer coaching. This allows an indirect form of learning and synergistic approach for organizational change.

In addition, some scholars used the term EQ (emotional quotient) to suggest that is it useful and important for people to be calm when dealing with stressful situations



and circumstances. Other management scholars like Covey (2009) suggested that people have the choice to be proactive, a term coined to describe the ability of humans to deter in reaction but instead, be able to respond to negative circumstances. Logically, better decisions are made when cognitive thoughts are clear and emotional disturbance is managed. In addition, premature decisions can be avoided when people are proactive and undisturbed by the pressing need to hurry up a solution.

Notably, it is advisable to look at discipline problems synonymously to the paradigm of time management (Covey, 1995). For situations that are urgent and important, it is vital to revert to SOPs strictly or refer to the principal for decision. For situations that are important and not urgent, teachers refer to their own strategies and filter through the organizational SOPs so that they do not over-react on the problem. For situations that are not important but urgent, teachers can immediately refer to the existing SOPs, and add on with personal leadership to think of the right strategy. Lastly, for situations that are not important and urgent, teachers can use their full authority and personal leadership to deal with the matter. Ideally, teachers should concentrate on issues that are important but not urgent when it comes to learning and training of personal decision-making. This initiative is to increase the competency and involvement of teachers in organizational decision-making, and ultimately towards organizational change.

### **Change in Information Systems (IS)**

Information System (IS) is defined as a system composed of people and computers that processes or interprets information. With reference to this study, archiving a record of previous discipline cases should include more details that involved the extent of teachers' personal involvement and obstacles to decision-making so that

interventions can be made in areas of training, mentoring and instituting change that are helpful for teachers' own professional development.

In areas of student affairs management, data from previous discipline records can be made accessible and immediate for teachers to refer and make wiser decisions. Teachers can also access real time information (such as SOPs and important updates) that is vital for their personal assessment prior to decision-making.

Within every discipline problem, the knowledge about the student, parent or any other circumstances surrounding the child is important for teachers to make decisions especially when concerning punishment and justifying for the right action to be taken. With the use of the Internet and cloud computing, it is important for the private secondary school to consider improving their information systems in students' affair management.

Additionally, it is vital for the researched organization to set up a data bank on students who are suspected to portray symptoms of learning disabilities (LD). Teachers need to be taught to record and communicate with parents (or LD specialists) who may be more aware to identify the appropriate types of accommodation, services and support for the child. Notably, it is best to intervene as early as possible so that students' LD can be corrected during their critical times of development and not beyond their schooling years. At most, teachers must do their part by writing and reporting to parents for early detection and prevention from further deterioration.

In certain circumstances however, teachers have to depend on their own abilities and sense of awareness to determine their choice of decision in areas where information is lacking and SOPs are unclear. This is where *Satisficing*, *Incremental*, *Political* and *Garbage can* decision-making models take precedence over *Classical* (or *Traditional*) model of decision-making. Some would also use a combination of different methods

such as *Mixed-scanning* methods to assess and decide on the best course of action. On discipline matters that require urgency to resolve, teachers are usually plagued with the stress of containing, alleviating and solving the problems that may affect the safety of school communities. Some of the major threats of discipline problems that require urgency for intervention are fights, bullying, sexual misconduct and possession of prohibited items (or substances).

When these incidents happen, it is not advisable for teachers to act alone by merely relying on their personal experience or strategies to solve the problem. As discussed earlier, the extent of personal involvement is dependent on their confidence, preparedness, willingness and ability to make a difference in the way the problem is solved. In other words, the decision-maker, the process of deciding, and the issues surrounding a decision to be made occur simultaneously when teachers are confronted with matters of urgency. Be it knowingly or unknowingly, these three dimensions are so important for the consideration of an ultimate decision.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

As this case study concludes, it is vital to reiterate that organizational decision-making ought to have its references to the organization's vision, mission and objectives. This case study have taken place in an environment where the context, content and process of decision-making has been explored, analyzed and described qualitatively for the benefits of the organization and particularly for the discipline management team of the school. Each decision that has been taken by teachers is meant to change students nearer to the goals of character development, academic excellence and civic mindedness as stated among the five guiding principles of the school.

For the researcher, the understanding on how personal decisions took place among fifteen individuals in the school was a glimpse on what could be done in the

future, or be carried out on other respondents within the same organization. Ultimately, data saturation was reached even though the researcher had a limited resource of time and money. The findings have enabled the researcher to amend on the weak areas of future research, including intervention and evaluation of programs for teachers' learning and training in organizational leadership. As for readers, the methods of this research could assist in the planning or repeating of study in the settings of other schools, and compare the findings of this research with their own findings to understand the subject further and deeply.

Even though discipline is a universal issue among schools, a continuous effort is needed to relook and reconsider how better decisions can be made in the future to face the challenge that the millennial generation face. Due to generation gap and increasing demands teaching and learning, teachers have to take on more roles to mentor and counsel students who are affected psychologically and emotionally by their environment. Having a continuous and changing mindset to learn of new skills will facilitate in personal willingness, preparedness and ability to deal with different types of classroom problems.

Lastly, the need to ensure that teachers comply with SOPs or decision-making guide is dependent on organizational support and the availability of resources to change. It is vital for the school management to train teachers to overcome their personal obstacles to decision-making. Establishing a common vision and synchronizing with personal values can solve most interpersonal conflicts pertaining to decision-making. In essence, change can only be sustainable and continuing when individuals can overcome their lack of confidence and their dependence on others for decision-making. Fundamentally, this can be achieved with good leadership and sound management of organizational resources.