

A STUDY OF THE DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS AS PERCEIVED BY PRESIDENTS
OF PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE MIDWEST

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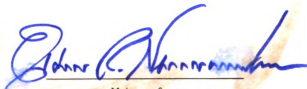
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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AS PERCEIVED BY PRESIDENTS OF PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE MIDWEST

By

Samuel Arthur Shellhamer

The status of the private liberal arts institution of higher education has received considerable attention in recent years. Responsibility for the success of the private college or university resides in the president's ability to provide leadership and direction for the institution. The effective leadership of the president becomes even more critical during this period of stress and transition. A central element which determines the president's success in coping with these impending crises is his decision-making ability. It was anticipated that this study might provide a better understanding of the decision-making process within private liberal arts institutions. Since the presidency is the pivotal office in the hierarchy of administration within the private college or university, this study was undertaken to gain the perceptions of the chief executive officer on the decision-making process.

The purposes of this exploratory study were:

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- (1) To determine the role of presidential decision-making in the private liberal arts institution and to study the hierarchial structure of decision-making to ascertain whether decisions are made individually or by consensus.
- (2) To determine the students' role in institutional decision-making in private liberal arts colleges and universities.
- (3) To determine the president's role in fund-raising and institutional development in the small private institution.
- (4) To determine the impact of the "accountability crisis" upon administrative decision-making in private liberal arts higher education.
- (5) To determine the role of institutional research and computer applications in the decision-making process.
- (6) To determine what types of activities the private liberal arts college president was participating in to enhance his knowledge of higher education and improve his executive decision-making skills.

The study included fifteen presidents from private liberal arts colleges and universities from a three-state region including Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. These institutions met the following criteria: accredited, co-educational, church-affiliated or interdenominational, and

enrollments between 750 and 2500 students. All of the fifteen presidents were interviewed in person and the interviews were tape recorded for posteriori analysis. An interview guide was used which consisted of questions based on the purposes of the study. A descriptive approach was utilized to analyze and present the findings.

The major findings of the study were:

- (1) Presidents had considerable experience in administration and teaching in higher education before assuming their role as chief executive. The average tenure of office for the presidents was 8.5 years.
- (2) Shared or consensus decision-making was viewed by presidents as being the most effective approach to decision-making in the private liberal arts institution. An administrative council or cabinet composed of the chief administrative officers of the institution was relied upon extensively by the president in making decisions.
- (3) Governing boards of private liberal arts colleges and universities were assuming a more active role in the affairs of their institutions and in the decision-making process.
- (4) Students were acquiring more representation in the governance structure and in decision-making at private liberal arts institutions.

- (5) The president of the private liberal arts college and university expended considerable time in fund-raising activities and was viewed as the key individual in obtaining outside funds.
- (6) Presidents believed they should be held accountable for their decisions and actions as chief executives, but also held students, faculty, and administrative staff accountable in the same manner.
- (7) Private liberal arts colleges and universities were in the initial stages of implementing programs of institutional research and there was limited use of the computer as a decision-making tool. There was a need for presidents to gain more knowledge of the capabilities and applications of institutional research and computer programs to management.
- (8) Activities sponsored by state or regional organizations identified with private higher education were viewed by presidents as being the most beneficial in enhancing the presidents' executive skills.
- (9) The success of the private liberal arts college was viewed by presidents as being contingent upon the institution's ability to emphasize human values and establish a well-defined institutional identity based on those values.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The plight of the privately supported colleges and universities has been a recurring theme in American educational circles in recent years. Upon the collegiate president falls the responsibility for the success of institutional goals and a quality educational program. The president is the focal point of institutional leadership and his ability to manage each crisis he encounters is vitally important to the continued life and vitality of the institution. Speaking on the college president, Bergquist (1974) notes:

The presidency, furthermore, is a leadership position of crucial importance, especially in this day of increasing public scrutiny where the efficacy of higher education is under considerable question. Under this kind of pressure, how the college or university president performs the job tasks of his office deserves increasing study (p. 315).

The problems of private higher education are numerous and varied, and many issues involve economic factors. Effective leadership of presidents becomes even more critical during periods of institutional stress and accelerated transition. Chief executives are required to make significant

decisions which affect the future and survival of their respective institutions.

Decision-making is an element basic and common to all levels of control, coordination, and organization of higher education. Concern and discontent with today's colleges and universities is leading to serious re-examination of decision-making processes in institutions of higher education. It has become apparent that college and university presidents can no longer function by the "seat of the pants" method. Institutional goals must be critically examined, and revised if necessary. The quality of the faculty and the curriculum must be continually re-evaluated. Fund raising and decisions involving fiscal operations demand time and priority of the small college president. The ability of a chief executive to make daily decisions is directly reflected in the overall educational program of an institution. The presidency is the "pivotal office" in the bureaucratic dimension of the university structure. Bolman (1970) affirms the need for study of the decision-making process within the college and university in order to gain a better understanding of the state of higher education.

Statement of the Problem

Much of the research and literature concerning college and university presidents has dealt with chief executives at public institutions. Few studies have

focused upon presidential decision-making at private institutions. The lack of information concerning presidential decision-making in private higher education coupled with an interest and commitment to the role of private higher education in America lead to the central question of the study:

How do presidents of private liberal arts colleges and universities perceive the decision-making process in executing their administrative responsibilities?

Significance of the Study

A study of decision-making as perceived by private liberal arts college and university presidents is important for a number of reasons. First, private higher education is in a critical period of transition, and executive leadership and decision-making are the keys to the future of private institutions. Knowledge as to how presidents of private institutions are making decisions in order to cope with institutional problems and responsibilities may certainly be considered of significance. It may also be of interest to study the hierarchy of decision-making within an institution and to determine whether decisions are made individually or by consensus.

Secondly, with such problems as declining student enrollments and escalating financial costs, it is important to attempt to determine the role of executive decision-making and the impact upon the goals and direction of the institution. Criticism of the modern day president has

focused very much on the fact that he is, more often than not, an administrative caretaker rather than an academic trail blazer in higher education (Dodds, 1962).

Thirdly, there are a number of factors, both internal and external, which affect the decisions of presidents in private institutions. The Board of Trustees, accreditation agencies, federal and state government, alumni, faculty, and students are a few of the forces which may influence decisions made by chief administrators. It might prove valuable to identify these factors and their impact upon the decision-making process.

A fourth reason reflecting the need for this study is related to the increased emphasis which accountability is having upon higher education. The president is held accountable by various constituents for virtually everything which occurs within an institution. As Mayhew (1971) observes, the traditional role of the American college and university president is changing. While some incumbents in the past have denied it, the president did possess considerable power over institutions, their finances, faculties, and students. It is vital for the chief executive to be cognizant of how and why he makes certain administrative decisions. The study will attempt to ascertain what role institutional research, computer application, and data gathering methods play in the decision-making process of presidents serving in private liberal arts institutions.

Finally, the study could provide useful results for presidents of private institutions. Another meaningful utilization of the study applies to the education of future administrators in higher education. The findings could serve as a source of recommendations for graduate programs in educational administration and could also be helpful in content formulation of an in-service training program for college and university administrators.

Approach to the Design of the Study

The study of presidents' perceptions of the decision-making process within the framework of their respective institutions may be characterized as being of an exploratory nature. The purpose of the study is to explore and analyze the decision-making process of small college chief executives, not predict results. While this researcher proposed no hypotheses to be tested, he did operate with the assumption that the presidents participating in the study would be concerned and involved with the study of decision-making in the area of private higher education.

The primary research tool utilized for collection of data in this study was the structured interview. After examining current literature and conferring with university administrators, the researcher isolated key areas to be included in the interview format. A preliminary pilot study was conducted to test the interview questions, as well as to provide experience for the researcher in executing the

interview. A final interview guide was established.

After soliciting participation from presidents and conducting the interviews, the results were analyzed according to several dimensions to seek clarity of the president's perception of the decision-making process.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to a sample of presidents of private liberal arts colleges and universities in a three-state region in the Midwest including Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. The sample consisted of presidents of private liberal arts institutions which are coeducational, fully accredited, and church affiliated or interdenominational. This study was further delimited by consideration of only institutions of higher education with enrollments between 750 and 2500 students. This range of student population was most representative of the institutions which the researcher was attempting to study since it excluded the very small colleges and the larger institutions which often tend to parallel some public colleges and universities.

It was previously noted that this was an exploratory study. With this in mind, and due to the nature of a study of decision-making, it appeared best not to employ statistical analyses in summarizing the findings. The methodology of an interview with posteriori analysis places great reliance on the perceptions of the individuals being interviewed in the study. This reliance on the respondents perception must be cited as a potential limitation, but it was deemed that the

benefits to be gained from the presidents' insights on the decision-making process outweighed the inherent bias of self-reporting. This means of data collection will be discussed and expanded in Chapter III.

The structured interview format cannot only be contaminated by respondent bias, but also requires the utmost in cooperation from the selected participants. This investigator, however, found that those presidents who were asked to participate in the study were very willing and cooperative in participating. Most of the presidents involved in the study agreed that there is a clear need for more research and evaluation in the area of private higher education.

The structured interview was limited to the investigation of seven critical areas of decision-making involving presidents of private liberal arts institutions. There were many areas which the researcher would like to have explored, but key parameters had to be established in order to delimit the study.

Assumptions of the Study

There were several assumptions and presuppositions concerning the study of private liberal arts presidents and their perceptions of the decision-making process.

1. The decision-making process as perceived by presidents serving in private liberal arts colleges and universities could be studied in a scientific manner, and the results of a

structured interview method could be utilized for analysis purposes. It was assumed that the random sample of presidents participating in the study would be representative of institutions meeting the parameters noted above.

2. The president, by virtue of his position as chief executive administrator of the institution, was the individual most qualified and capable to characterize and assess the decision-making process within the college or university.
3. Even though there is divergence in the institutional environments of the colleges studied, as well as variance in the uniqueness of each president's personality, it was assumed that there was sufficient commonality in the professional skills of each participating president and a similarity in the nature of the mission and educational goals of each institution to make analysis of research both possible and significant.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in accordance with their special use and meaning in this study:

President - The chief executive officer of a four-year college or university; the individual appointed by the governing board and charged with the overall administration and responsibility of operation of the institution.

Private Liberal Arts College or University - A privately owned and operated institution of higher education with an accredited academic curriculum in the liberal arts (as distinguished from a professional or technical academic program). As used in this study, refers specifically to a four-year college or university affiliated with a church denomination or an inter-denominational institution with an enrollment between 750 and 2500 students.

Decision-Making - A conscious process, involving both individual and organizational phenomena, which culminates with a choice of one behavioral activity from among alternatives with the intention of moving toward established goals or objectives.

Structured Interview - In this study denotes the interview technique utilized by the researcher to obtain the perceptions and responses of the presidents interviewed. Questions which had been previously researched and developed were presented to the respondent during the interviews. These questions provided a guide for the

interview and made possible the comparison and analysis of information elicited during the interview.

Interviewer - Refers to the individual who originated the study, conducted the research and interviews, and completed the written results of the findings. In this study the interviewer is also referred to as the investigator and researcher.

Respondent - The individual presidents who were interviewed by the investigator. May also be referred to as interviewee.

Interviewer Bias - Refers to the possibility that the interviewer might influence or elicit preferential responses by either verbal or non-verbal communication from a respondent during a structured interview. May also refer to contamination of data by inaccurately or inappropriately recording or interpreting responses.

Perceptions - A cognizance reflected in a particular view or attitude about specific persons, organization, situations, or concomitant factors. Perceptions may be influenced by one's knowledge, experience, awareness, and motivation.

Overview

The overall organization of this exploratory study includes six chapters. An introduction to the nature of the study, a statement of the problem, and an explanation of the significance of the study are presented in Chapter I.

The approach to the design of study and limitations of the study are also included, as well as definitions of terms pertinent to the study.

Chapter II contains a review of related literature. Research and literature concerning the college president, decision-making in higher education, and liberal arts education are reviewed in this chapter.

The study design and procedures employed in the research design are described in Chapter III. A discussion of the subjects in the sample and a description of the development of the structured interview are presented. The procedures followed in collecting the research data are delineated and the method of data analysis is explained in Chapter III. The basic questions which served as the foundation for the collection of data are also presented.

Remarks and observations as expressed by the study respondents regarding the president's role and the future of private liberal arts education (which have great significance and relevance but were not included in the analysis of data) are presented in Chapter V.

A summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for further research are contained in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature and research which has significant relevance to the president and his executive role in decision-making at the private liberal arts college. The first major section of this chapter deals with the literature on the college and university president. The second section is devoted to a review of literature concerning decision-making within the context of American higher education. Literature and research related to the private liberal arts institution of higher education is reviewed in the third section.

There are literally hundreds of books, monographs, periodical articles, and research studies dealing with the American college and university president. An exhaustive review of the literature on the role of the president would be impractical and too unwieldy. Therefore, the authors reviewed in this chapter were included because of their overall contribution to the understanding and original thought on the presidency in higher education. The views and findings reported in this chapter will also contribute to the basic understanding of the purpose of this study.

PART IThe Contemporary American College and University President

The role of the college and university president has undergone considerable transition in the last decade. The president in the early twentieth century was largely involved in academic concerns; the post World War II president found himself engulfed in institutional growth and expansion; however, the present-day president has become a "crisis manager" and may be struggling with survival (McNett, 1970). Stoke (1959) notes the change in the president's role:

The transformation of colleges and universities reflects itself in the position of their presidents, and has brought to that position men whose training, interests, and skills are far different from those of their predecessors. The college president as the Man of Learning has given way to the Man of Management, although the change has not taken place without strain and conflict (p. 3).

Kerr (1970), while affirming the transitory state of the presidency, still refers to the president as "the most important single figure in the life of the campus" (p. 137). Demerath, Stephens, and Taylor (1967) made the following reference concerning the president:

In the more bureaucratic dimension of university organization, the presidency is the pivotal office, . . . and is the university's principal link with the ultimate powers and resources of the larger society (p. 41).

The events of the last decade have had significant impact on the role of the president. Some writers express their concern and reservation on the state of the presidency.

Stroup (1966) calls for more delineation of responsibilities:

The president currently suffers from an unclear definition of his responsibilities . . . he has much that he is free to do. But he is not limited sufficiently as to what is expected of him. There are few standards to evaluate his effectiveness . . . (p. 81).

McGrath (1971) expresses his view on the loss of presidential power as follows:

Under existing circumstances the office of the president is the weakest element in the complex of organizational controls. The current status of the chief executive is an almost complete reversal of the position of his predecessors (p. 189).

The power and authority of the American college and university president have received considerable attention which is evident by the quantity of literature published on the subject. However, one finding in Hodgkinson's (1970) study on the college president is rather conclusive. "Changes in the internal governance and authority structure of the institution" were found to be the most important changes in American higher education in recent years (p. 3).

Management in Higher Education

Rourke and Brooks (1966) identify the changes that have taken place in the administration of college and universities as a result of a "managerial revolution" (p. 1). These changes have brought basic modifications in the administrative structure of institutions of higher education. It is difficult to assess the long-range influence of management

on higher education, but Rourke and Brooks indicate the changes may eventually be as significant for education as they have been in the past for industry and government.

In their study, Rourke and Brooks isolated several areas of change in university administration. The first is the shift from secrecy to publicity in the general conduct of administrative and academic affairs - a shift which has greatly altered the relationship between institutions of higher education and their environment.

Historically, the basis for secrecy rested essentially on the notion that certain kinds of university and academic practices could not be satisfactorily explained to the outside world. In recent years, however, there has been a persistent trend toward a much more "open" style of administration. Rourke and Brooks note that this has been particularly true with respect to both the disclosure of information to the outside world and the modification or elimination of some of the traditional "information screens" that have existed within the academic community (p. 105). The chief force for change has been the growing pressure from outside organizations for more precise data on the way in which institutions utilize their resources.

This change from secrecy to publicity has affected private institutions as well as the public colleges and universities. Private institutions are also subject to demands from agencies of the federal government and private donors and alumni. The new age of publicity is the product

of not only an increased demand for accountability, but also a result of the development of more efficient machinery and techniques for gathering information.

A second major shift has been the development of a cabinet style of governance system in place of the presidential system of executive leadership that has traditionally characterized higher education administration. Rourke and Brooks explain:

More and more the task of managing internal university affairs has been delegated to an assortment of vice-presidents in charge of such matters as business, student, or academic affairs. As a result a new layer of top-level officials has become firmly fixed at the summit of the administrative hierarchy. Where once he reigned in solitary splendor, the university president has now come to share responsibility for governing his institution with a variety of other executive colleagues (p. 109).

A third significant change in administration in higher education has been the introduction of new forms of decision-making which are considerably less subjective than the purely intuitive styles of the past. The area of decision-making will be reviewed in the next section of this chapter. However, it is worth noting at this point that new instruments and approaches of decision-making have had a profound effect upon the routine day-to-day organizational decisions in colleges and universities.

The traditional role of American college and university presidents is changing and its destination is unknown. As a result of this state of transition,

Mayhew (1971) has identified what he considers to be "emerging concepts of the presidency" (pp. 353-367). He observes that as presidents have become aware of changed conditions and mounting pressures they have attempted to adapt in a variety of ways. The most dramatic, of course, is to leave office or retire early. Another alternative is to try to slow the rate of yielding authority to new claimants. Mayhew illustrates how this approach is used:

. . . students' demands for participation in governance are met by allowing greater freedom in residence hall living. Faculty pressure for a greater role in the appointment process is relieved by a two-year study of academic governance. In a sense the creation of an ombudsman or the use of an outside consultant to help relieve tension is a technique of delay (p. 360).

Other presidents have adopted the technique of divesting themselves of many of their previously held prerogatives and then insisting that other groups assume responsibility and consequences. Some presidents have tried to create a dual system of administration on the ground that much power had been lost because the singular system placed an excessive burden on one person. The role of president at some institutions has been assigned to external affairs and a chancellor or provost has been placed in charge of internal affairs.

Many presidents, according to Mayhew, have become more politically active in their personal styles.

. . . they take pains to visit powerful professors in their offices, conduct many social events to build up rapport, cultivate previously

underrecognized groups in the campus community such as clinical and other non-professional workers, and of course, strengthen contacts with board members, alumni groups, and others who can become a governing majority (p. 361).

Mayhew concludes by stating that the first step in reasserting power to the presidency is to make the president supreme arbiter of the budget. If the president is to be charged legally and morally with the conduct of the institution, he must be allowed the powers to indicate possible objectives, allocate resources, and assess the outcomes (p. 367).

The new role which is evolving for the college presidency has attracted attention from a number of authorities in the field of higher education. One of these is Keeton (1971) who presents the view in his study of campus governance that it is right and proper that presidents should lose power. He believes that in the end the loss may strengthen administration in its proper role. Keeton formulates his theory in this manner:

Three distinctions may be helpful in seeing why the sharing of some powers may actually strengthen the hand of administrators in their proper role. First, the sharing of legislative authority is not to be confused with a sharing of managerial powers, though legislative policy does set the purposes and policies within which management operates. Secondly, the management tasks in a college or university are partially carried by faculty and students, as in the faculty's management of instruction and students' assumption of some tasks of dormitory management or control of social life. A division of labor on these tasks may facilitate the performance of administrative functions rather than hinder it. Thirdly, the surrender or sharing of particular powers in policy making or management can strengthen the administrative leaders in other functions and in their capacity to achieve the overall goals of the institution (pp. 21-22).

The health of the independent institutions of higher education is considered by some authors to be one of the most important needs of our society. The private liberal arts college is capable of providing the diversity which is the single most important strength of our system of higher education, and this diversity is reflected in the fact that there are options and choices available.

Drucker (1967) notes the contribution of the small college and the crucial role which the president assumes in directing the institution. He suggests there are three things which impair and threaten the effectiveness of the small independent college and its president in particular. First, an institution must be able to attract the type of students and faculty which it needs. Drucker notes that there is a growing number of young people who are disillusioned by the large university and may seek opportunities at smaller institutions.

Second, Drucker purports that one of the most dangerous things for a president to do is to shift the center of administration from the main functions to the support functions. One of the president's prime responsibilities is to recognize how support functions can be organized economically and efficiently.

Finally, and most important as suggested by Drucker, the chief executive must not spend too much time on fund raising activities. If this becomes, as it is becoming, the first job and the most pressing of the president, then

the institution will suffer. Raising money makes it possible for the institution to operate, but it contributes nothing to the college's results according to Drucker. It often causes the good presidents to use their strengths to do the wrong things. The ultimate strength of the small independent colleges depends to a large extent upon the presidents who head them and their ability to meet the challenges and opportunities in American higher education.

Management Training for the President

One area of interest which the investigator is concerned with is the small college president's knowledge and use of management information systems. Presidents who enter office come from a variety of backgrounds, but few have extensive experience as professional administrators. Prator, in his book The College President (1963), notes the lack of adequate preparation for presidents. Henderson (1970) expresses this unique problem in the following manner:

A major problem in governance is that the persons chosen for high administrative office seldom have any training for their roles or any knowledge of sociological concepts relating to organizational and institutional processes. Inadequately prepared presidents assume too much detailed decision-making responsibility, become serious bottlenecks, and use authoritarian methods (p. 248).

The president who is an academician often has difficulty in solving the complex problems confronting him. Dr. Charles Fisher, program director for the Institute for College and University Administrators, American Council on Education, states that scholarship alone is not enough of a background for the presidency:

Recent years have seen a new administrative style emerging to meet the ever-mounting challenges to American colleges and universities - factionalism; discord; competition for resources, influence and power; and so on. Today's academic leaders must have more than scholarship. They must have an appreciation of the complex factors which enter into administrative decision-making and the formulation of academic policy. They must understand the basic principles of management by objectives, administrative efficiency and effectiveness, and personal leadership, and be able to apply these concepts with prudence and candor toward meeting the unique needs of each particular institution and of the distinctive enterprise of American higher education in general (1971, p. 28).

Grassell (1971) reports that scholarship and a charismatic personality are not enough for the chief executive of a college and university. When Grassell asked a small college president about how he viewed the successful management-oriented president of the future, he responded:

If management is defined as "getting things done through people" the college president of the future must be a more effective managerian in two respects. He must constantly work toward spending a higher proportion of his time doing those things which only he can and must do. At the same time, the president must more effectively delegate responsibility, authority, and accountability to his administrative officers with the provision for seminars and in-service training to educate them in their assignments (p. 28).

One organization which has responded to the need for presidential training is the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges. It has initiated Presidents' Management Seminars which are aimed at introducing college presidents to the basic principles and processes of planning, organizing, directing, staffing, controlling, and communicating. The seminars have also introduced the small college presidents

to styles of leadership and the art of decision-making and delegation of authority. Richard Whitter, assistant executive director of the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, believes the chief executive must have appropriate training and become a professional manager. He states:

For too long now the terms "management" and "manager" to refer to college administration have been dirty words in the lexicon of higher education. The chief executive officer of any institution of higher education today must be a professional manager. The crisis in which higher education finds itself today demands nothing less than our institutions being operated on the basis of sound management principles (1971, p.29).

After conducting his research on the management training needs of college and university presidents, Grassell concludes that by applying the principles of professional management, the president and his administrative staff should be able to:

1. Increase participatory opportunities within the traditional organizational model.
2. Tap traditionally untapped "people" resources by encouraging more participation and decision-making as close as possible to the level in which decisions are implemented.
3. Share the risks of decisions with those participating in the decision-making process.
4. Mutually establish result-oriented objectives that are realistic, obtainable, and measurable.
5. Hold the faculty, staff, and others accountable to the predetermined objectives.
6. Measure the true accomplishments of individuals rather than appraising people on the basis of their personalities.
7. Award salary increases according to results achieved (1971, p. 29).

It becomes very apparent from the literature that the college and university must equip itself with the appropriate management expertise in order to meet the impending administrative problems. The president must willingly initiate programs and changes to educate himself and his administrative staff if the overall operation of the institution is to become more effective and efficient.

Significant Research on the American
College and University President

The last decade has brought forth several significant research studies on the American college and university president. Nelson (1960) conducted a study in 1960 in which he identified and analyzed the role expectations of presidents and governing board members for the office of president. Nelson's comparison of presidents' and board members' attitudes was completed in state institutions located in New England.

Nelson identified 120 role expectations, and found that at the 5% level of significance, 19 of these expectation items were capable of producing conflict between presidents and board of control members.

Noted in Nelson's study, were findings which included recommendations for graduate programs in administration in higher education. It is interesting to observe that since 1960, the following recommendations are still applicable to graduate preparation programs today:

1. Graduate preparation programs for higher educational administration should include experiences in the development of adequate competencies in verbal expression. Board member and president majorities expected a president to be a good public speaker and able to express ideas clearly.
2. Graduate preparation programs for higher educational administration should aid the development of enthusiastic leadership abilities. They should also intensify their consideration of the area of human relations. Incumbent president and board member majorities expected a president to be a dynamic leader and able to work well with people.
3. Graduate preparation programs for higher educational administration should encourage interested students to pursue advanced degrees. Both board member and incumbent president majorities expected a president to have a doctors degree.
4. Graduate preparation programs for higher educational administration should promote the development of campus planning and educational planning skills. Board of control member and president majorities expected a president to have on paper a long range campus building plan and to have an educational development on paper.
5. Graduate preparation programs for higher educational administration should continue to emphasize the importance of a democratic philosophy of administration. Incumbent president and board member majorities overwhelmingly expected a president to be democratic and to not be authoritarian (pp. 128-130).

Corson identified six critical functions of the academic president in a 1960 study. He found that the president's responsibilities evolved essentially around student affairs, educational programs, faculty selection, finance, physical facilities, and public-alumni relations.

One of the first and most systematic studies of the contemporary college and university president was done by Hemphill and Walberg (1966). Their research was conducted

in conjunction with the New York State Regents Advisory Committee on Educational Leadership. Hemphill and Walberg focused upon the following facets of the presidency: allocation of time among activities; demands of the position; relative rank of important responsibilities; influence of the president on the institution; academic background; formal training; administrative and teaching experience; prior positions; roadblocks to most effective performance; and satisfaction of the position.

The occupational mobility theory developed by Warner and Abegglen was used as the basis for a study of career patterns of college and university presidents by Ferrari (1968). The findings were later published by Ferrari in Profiles of American College Presidents (1970).

Ferrari's study which included a national sample of presidents, included the study of such characteristics as age, tenure, previous positions, and time allocation. He developed several hypotheses on the career patterns of college and university presidents including such factors as the geographic origins of presidents in relation to their present location; the occupational status of presidents' wives; educational and occupational level of the presidents' parents; and the correlation of career patterns of presidents with those of business and government executives.

In 1970 Hodgkinson reported his findings of an extensive and comprehensive study of chief executives and their perceptions of changes in higher education. The study

was completed under the auspices of the Carnegie Commission.

Hodgkinson explained why presidents were surveyed in the 1,230 institutions participating in the study:

Presidents were chosen as respondents for two major reasons: first, it was felt they were in a position to be better aware of the changes occurring on their campus and of having a broader perspective of the institutional scene than the other top administrators; and second, there was an interest in developing a profile of college and university presidents - who they were, what their mobility patterns looked like, and how they viewed the importance of various changes on their campus (p. 37).

Hodgkinson postulated several assumptions on his findings of presidents in his study. He states:

One gets the impression from this summary of materials that presidents of public institutions are by and large more pragmatically trained and perhaps should have developed skills more directly relevant to their administrative tasks in the presidency. On the other hand, the private institutions - particularly in the sectarian area - have presidents whose academic work in the liberal arts should have inculcated in them a higher degree of responsiveness to humane values, to tolerance, and to understanding (pp. 274-275).

Hodgkinson did point out that these conclusions are assumptions based on his study, and that a separate study should be done to test the hypotheses.

Another noteworthy study was Alton's (1971) dissertation on the factors which motivated presidents to resign from office. Alton surveyed eighty-six presidents whose resignations were announced during 1969. He depicted the "average" president who resigned as follows:

Male, average tenure of 9.2 years, fifty-four years of age, holder of the earned doctorate, better than even chance to have earned all

three degrees from private institutions, having no one specific discipline in terms of undergraduate or graduate training yet with greater possibility that it may have been in the social sciences, having come to his position from college academic administration or teaching and when leaving, entering nonacademic college administration, teaching, or foundation or government administration (p. 84).

Alton reported that there appeared to be no common theme dominating the resignation of the presidents who cited twenty-one reasons motivating their resignations. He ranked the ten most prominent reasons in order of their importance. Reasons given for exiting the chief executive position were:

1. A new opportunity that appeared more favorable.
2. Completion of objectives.
3. Physical or emotional exhaustion.
4. Perceptions of filling the position longer than normal.
5. A desire not to remain past the point of effectiveness.
6. An evaluation in the presidential role since he took office due to changes in society.
7. Perception of his role differs from the president's role as perceived by his constituencies, including trustees, faculty, students, other administrators and alumni.
8. Political and bureaucratic stifling, such as budget cutbacks; limiting the kinds of actions he would like to carry out.
9. Tired of raising money to operate the institution.
10. Growing mistrust within the community environment hampering his freedom to function.

Alton also concluded that generally college presidents rarely feel anxiety about finding another position after resigning from the presidency. College and university presidents are very mobile and possess talents which are in demand and have no difficulty in finding other employment.

A study of incidents which new and experienced college and university presidents reported as having had an impact upon their effectiveness as presidents was completed by Peterson (1972). Each of the twenty-six presidents (twelve "new presidents" and fourteen "experienced presidents") were asked to report four incidents which affected their role as president. Staffing was found to have the greatest impact upon new presidents and campus unrest was identified by experiences presidents as having had the most impact upon their responsibilities. Financial considerations and governance ranked second for new presidents, and finance ranked second for experienced presidents.

Peterson reported the following observations concerning the state of the academic presidency:

1. Presidents see their effectiveness or lack of it as being determined in their own institutional setting.
2. New presidents are not afraid to take strong positive actions.
3. Presidents cannot be stereotyped easily.
4. Presidents are more involved in terminating than hiring faculty.
5. Presidents believe in what they are doing.
6. Presidents are both coping with and precipitating change (pp. 202-205).

One of the most recent and significant studies on chief executives was done by Bergquist (1974). He assessed the influence of certain variables upon how the president approached his administrative duties. For this study, the variables were the years of experience as a president; the position held by the president immediately prior to his appointment to his present post; the type of advanced degree

held; the type of advanced professional schooling achieved; and the size of the institution over which the president presides.

Some of the results of the Bergquist study were very revealing. In budgetary matters, 53% of presidents from a sample of 115 with at least ten years experience listed the budgetary tasks as a very great problem, while only 31% of presidents with the least experience responded similarly.

Another question considered was: What were the professional positions held by the presidents prior to their appointment? Of the total responses, 62% of the presidents had occupied a position as either a vice-president or as a college dean. Bergquist noted that a pattern did appear that grooming for the presidency occurred in other top-level administrative positions.

Bergquist concluded that the results of his study indicated that a college president can no longer rely on his years of presidential experience to assure the easy completion of defined job tasks. Regardless of the size of the institution or the type of advanced degree held, the president's responsibilities became increasingly complex, troublesome, and difficult to complete. Presidents who had specialized educational administration training, on the average, performed better on some crucial presidential tasks than their academic counterparts. Yet, the fact that presidents with advanced training in educational administration still had considerable difficulty in major job task categories may be suggestive of

the need for additional specialized training. Bergquist concludes that a presidential role change is taking place. He feels that the modern college president must first be an educational manager, then an educational leader.

PART II

Decision-Making in Higher Education

The colleges and universities in the United States have been experiencing a dual revolution. Internally, a new pattern of decision-making procedure has emerged. Externally, more and more authority affecting the operations and administration of colleges and universities has been exercised by agencies of state and federal government.

Historically, the patterns of decision-making in most American colleges and universities from the time of the Civil War until World War II were very similar and conventional. Millett (1968) depicts decision-making during this period:

The prevailing pattern of authority emphasized the special role of the president. To be sure, legally, the authority to make final decisions about matters of educational policy, financial management, appointments and other personnel actions, and physical facilities was vested in the board of trustees . . . Faculty members for the most part in these years had only modest influence upon the operations of the institution. Only gradually, as the concept of academic freedom developed, did some standards of conduct and procedure in these instances emerge. In this period before World War II, students were generally expected to abide by the rules of conduct imposed by their elders . . . Ideas about student government were limited, student publications were bothersome but carefully scrutinized, and student social organizations were mostly individualistic in orientation.

Student "power" was impossible to imagine under these circumstances (pp. 3-4).

However, patterns of decision-making in institutions of higher education have changed drastically since World War II. Institutional growth, student dissent, and the innovation of management information systems have been contributing factors toward an emphasis upon the decision-making process in higher education. Many colleges and universities have staggered through this period of transition. Moran (1972) made the following observation concerning the short-term ineffectiveness of many of our universities in dealing with change:

The difficulty in campus decision-making is simply that on one occasion the university is obliged to respond with the precision of a Panzer division while on another appropriate decision process may be a meeting of faculty and students not unlike a New England town meeting. It is possible for organizations to shift from one structure to another. In a modern university it is not essential for one of the structures ultimately to dominate the other. What is crucial is that the decision rules by which a university shifts from one decision structure to another - say, from hierarchy to faculty senate - should be well understood and agreed upon by most members of the organization. This is very close to the heart of the matter, and it is not simple to arrange (p. 8).

Decision-Making as an Administrative Tool

The increased emphasis upon the decision-making process in higher education has produced considerable literature on the topic. Gore (1964) sees decision-making as a tool to accommodate change. He writes that administrative decision-making becomes a strategy for:

1. Accommodating change within the limits of mission conception and instrumental goals.
2. Accommodating change beyond the limits of mission conception and instrumental goals by:
 - a. Diverting or dissipating the pressures for change through reinterpretations, aggressive attack upon sources, or waiting until conditions evolve.
 - b. Inducing changes, basic or otherwise, in structure as a strategy for attaining goals (p. 174).

The advent of management information systems has had a profound effect upon decision-making in higher education. The goal of the new techniques of management has been to enable colleges and universities to make more rational decisions about the use of their own resources and the direction of the institution's development. Since this process of implementing the systems approach to the academic environment is still in its infancy, it has been difficult to appraise its effectiveness. However, several authors have voiced their opinions.

Hammelman (1972) notes that the application of the systems approach to higher education and its usefulness as an administrative tool requires cooperation. He suggests:

A systems approach to planning the campus takes legislative and alumni bodies, and even townspeople, seriously. It means keeping them reasonably informed about campus plans and operations and even sharing the planning process (p. 10-11).

As stated by Hammelman, some very important steps have been taken in explaining institutional objectives and accounting for university resources:

Development of management information systems, standardized accounting procedures, space

utilization data, and comprehensive personnel information is taking place. This has come about largely through probes from the outside rather than through the anticipation of information requirements by campus leaders - but it is happening (p. 11).

There are many positive benefits of the management systems approach. Rourke (1966) points out that the new methods generate a good deal more information on university operations than was previously available, thus alerting administrators to critical situations where decisions may have to be made. Another advantage of using the quantitative methods is that administrators will have more time to devote to priority items. One interesting by-product of the changes in administrative operations has been that top-level administrators themselves have become more quantitatively oriented and knowledgeable in the area of management information systems.

There are, however, a number of factors which have adversely affected the decision-making process in many institutions of higher education. Kronovet (1972) purports four factors which have had an impact upon decision-making:

1. Sudden expansion without adequate planning. Short-term plans continue to evolve without sufficient reference to guidelines for long-range goals and planning.
2. Long continued practices of smaller institutions continue to dominate procedures and frequently become "tradition" when expansion takes place. There should be periodic analysis of office responsibilities and job specifications in relation to administrators and sub-administrators. Otherwise, patterns of decision-making and job-related behavior are perpetrated without reference to productivity and efficiency.
3. Many institutions in rapid change from college to university continue to apply unchanged

approaches to job responsibilities, problem-solving activity, and decision-making adequate for a smaller institution but out-moded in university functioning.

4. As new individuals with identical titles are brought into a rapidly changing scene at the same administrative level competition rises for authority and final decision-making power (p. 173).

If colleges and universities are to rescue themselves from such self-defeating practices, Kronovet views that it is imperative that academic priorities, management practices, and decision-making processes be examined. Such self-evaluation is difficult because of the need for objectivity, but due to the complexities of institutions of higher education today the need to assess administrative procedures is even more critical.

There are widely divergent views concerning the degree to which the management process can and should be applied in an academic setting. Brien (1970) suggests that much of the fanfare about management information systems is a myth:

There is an undeniable and perhaps unfortunate vogue in management terminology for attempting to make analysis more scientific by borrowing extensively from other disciplines. While the rate of change in fashionable phraseology may be taken as a crude index of the vigor of the discipline, the new terms often bring an intimidating mystique along with their fresh contribution (p. 275).

There has been a similar reaction to the concept of accountability. Cooper (1972) in his writing reacts to the emphasis placed on accountability. He feels that accountability is advertised as a "cure-all" for the administrative

problems of colleges and universities. He states that pre-occupation with detail and accountability take the vitality out of administration. Cooper supports the view that decision-making is the key to successful management and effective leadership.

The development of administrative theory in higher education, its concomitant decision-making models, and the growth of data production relating to college and university management have combined to increase the flow of routine decision-making. Meeth (1971) expresses the view that these developments have to some extent relieved the pressures upon central administrators, who in the past had to concentrate most of their energies on routine rather than on critical nonrecurring decisions. Routinizing much administrative decision-making has allowed major administrators to concentrate their energies on long range plans, formulation of institutional goals, and implementation of these goals in new programs and design.

Administrative practices have a profound effect upon the learning environment of a college or university. If the environment is fragmented, characterized by suspicion and dissension, it is difficult for any part of the institution to function well.

In considering decision-making as an administrative tool, there are guidelines which can facilitate communication and decision-making. Pullias (1972) recommends several principles which if consistently applied can improve administrative operations and morale. First, in any decision-making

process, those who will be affected by the decision should be informed, and if possible, consulted. The goal is to help all who are involved in the institution to feel that the "institution's business is basically their business" (p. 95). Second, the faculty, the student body, and the staff - the campus community - should be the first to hear about important decisions and developments. Often information about significant decisions are presented via the news media, thus insiders come to feel alien and an atmosphere develops which is conducive to hostility and destructive dissension.

Pullias suggests a third principle in making decisions. The people who are consulted when a decision is being sought should be helped to understand the way in which their advice will be used. A failure to understand how the decision-making process works, who is involved, and who makes the final decision is a source of much misunderstanding.

Perhaps one of the key guidelines to follow is that generally the responsible person nearest to the situation should make the decision. Sometimes it is necessary to bring in more people and thus broaden the base, but in most cases, the person nearest the problem should handle it. The farther the decision is from the persons immediately involved, the greater the likelihood of error and poor decisions.

There is, however, an increasing tendency for joint decision-making and consensus resulting from administrators' desire to avoid final decision-making. While different perceptions and points of view on an issue are valuable, it

becomes impossible to consider each opinion and option as equal. Kronovet (1972) states very succinctly and simply how decisions should be made:

. . . a single administrator should make a personal decision if he has the necessary information and experience. His reluctance to act well may be a function of insecurity within his decision-making network, not infrequently perpetrated by lack of clarification as to decision-making responsibilities. The end result can be only inefficient use of energy, unnecessary time lag in decisions, and added cost to the institution (p. 174).

Student Participation in Decision-Making

As students have become more involved in academic concerns, they have become more interested in meaningful involvement in institutional governance and decision-making. Considerable literature has been written on the pros and cons of student participation in the decision-making process in higher education.

Taylor (1971) sees student participation in decision-making as a means of facilitating communication and thus reducing the probability of violence on campus. He believes that when students are in a position to see their ideas taken with the same degree of seriousness as those of the administration and faculty, strong-arm tactics become both unnecessary and undesirable because they interfere with the decisions and policies of students themselves.

Henderson (1967) claims that group participative theory seems to answer certain psychological and sociological needs. People like to have a feeling of belonging and to see

themselves as important members of a group. He believes that the morale of the total institution is affected by participation and that good morale is essential for securing the optimal results in education.

Katz and Sanford (1968) suggest several points to be considered in students' involvement in institutional decision-making. Colleges and universities should overhaul their decision-making machinery so the students can see the effects of their recommendations. Presidents need to be more sensitive to students and become more aware of student attitudes. Drucker (1966) also postulates the need for presidential sensitivity and argues that perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the present generation of presidents is the alienation of students.

McGrath (1970), who has done considerable study on student participation in academic governance, summarizes the arguments developed for giving students a formal role in institutional decision-making. Firstly, since education is essential to individual and societal well-being, higher education should reflect the social and political practices of the larger society where people involved help make decisions. Secondly, expanded social consciousness - a more serious and informed interest in societal problems - of contemporary students qualifies them for participation in the reform of higher education. Thirdly, the declared objective of colleges and universities to prepare students for responsible participation in a democratic society requires that the academy

open its own deliberative bodies to students as a means of preparing them for citizenship. Fourthly, students are as well qualified as faculty to correct deficiencies in current curriculum offerings by helping bring instruction closer to student interests and needs and the conditions of modern life. Fifthly, decision-making with respect to academic policies as well as personal conduct is an essential aspect of education. And lastly, McGrath states that students are uniquely qualified to render certain judgements about the teaching-learning process, particularly the quality of faculty classroom instruction.

Not all of the literature, of course, has been in support of student participation in decision-making. Stroup (1964) lists several reasons why it may not be desirable to involve students in decision-making. Included are: (1) student populations are continually changing; (2) the incompetence and lack of expertise of students; (3) the immaturity of students; (4) the limited free time of students; (5) the law often requires the trustees, administration, and faculty to take the responsibility for the operations of the institution; and (6) the student being a client not an employee. Foster (1970) found in a survey of college and university trustees that the concept of student power was generally disagreeable to them. Wicke (1969) purports that until there is more evidence regarding the nature of the student movement, it would be unwise to include students on the boards of trustees.

One of the most vociferous opponents of student participation in the decision-making process has been Kerlinger (1968). He states his views in very precise terms:

The answer is clear, simple, and direct: Students should be given no university or college decision-making power on educational matters . . . The final large consequence of student participation in educational decision-making is the most obvious: weakening of curriculum, programs, and courses of study and instruction . . . The university is not a political institution. To make it a political institution will deflect it from its basic goals and values. The inevitable result will be to undermine the integrity and professional competence of faculty, to create a dispiriting mediocrity, and to damage students and their education (p. 51).

As Mayhew (1969) justly notes, student participation is not an "intrinsic right." Students must be willing to work and become actively involved in the decision-making process. Eble (1972) observes, however, that some colleges and universities have experienced a lack of student interest and involvement in the decision-making process after they have won committee assignments and representation.

The area of student participation in decision-making and university governance has generated considerable interest in the last ten years. Although there is a body of literature presenting arguments opposing student involvement, the majority of the arguments published are in support of a broader role of student participation in institutional decision-making.

Models of Institutional Decision-Making

A number of models of decision-making and university governance have surfaced in recent literature due to the demands of increased efficiency in administrative practice. Three models of university governance have been proposed by Henderson (1967). The first model is a vertical hierarchy of power and authority. The second model is by mediation among subgroups. The third model, which Henderson recommends, is a model of governance through group participation. Sturner (1971) recommends a bicameral legislature, with students in one house and faculty in another. Deegan (1970) further supports a model in which areas of responsibility are more clearly defined or a model consisting of an all-college senate.

For the purpose of this research study on the decision-making process in private liberal arts higher education, there is one particular study which merits close attention. Helsabeck conducted a study in 1971 at four mid-western liberal arts colleges in which he examined the degree to which administrators, faculty, and students participated in institutional decision-making. A report of Helsabeck's study was published in The Compound System: A Conceptual Framework for Effective Decision-Making in Colleges.

It is crucial, first of all, to explain the conceptual framework which Helsabeck used to characterize the four institutions which he studied. Labels were used to identify these institutions. In order of their decreasing

participation in decision-making, they were labeled Political College, Consensus College, Brotherhood College, and Conservative College. Helsabeck describes the four colleges as follows to communicate a sense of the institution's character, which itself becomes a variable:

Political College

This highly political, highly participatory college demonstrates how conflicts in the allocation of authority can result in legitimacy problems; the advantages and disadvantages of high participation in decisions about resource allocation; and the institutional resources that are gained as a result of high participation in overall decision-making (p. 29).

In general, Political College exhibits a moderately high decision-structure variance and very high decision-structure clarity. Faculty satisfaction with performance under the constitution is low, although satisfaction with the constitution itself is high. Goal formation is weak, as evidenced by the continued discord over the future directions of the institution.

Consensus College

This college provides an example of a fairly high degree of participation in decision-making with one major difference from Political College: decisions here are made by consensus. One can see evidence that suggests both the importance of shared cultural norms for consensus decision-making, and the high degree of effectiveness of organizations able to operate on this basis (p. 30).

Consensus College exhibits high consensus and decision-structure clarity, and moderately high decision-structure variance. The faculty, students, and administrators are highly satisfied; resource acquisition is fairly high; goal

formation is excellent; and goal attainment is good.

Brotherhood College

This institution provides a graphic example of the effect of cultural homogeneity on both the decision-making structure itself and the effectiveness of cultural homogeneity on both the decision-structure itself and the effectiveness of that structure. Because of what is evidently the reciprocal trust of faculty, students, and administrators, institutional effectiveness is not strongly related to any formally prescribed manner of participation. Legitimacy is extremely high and clarity is not an issue (p. 32).

Brotherhood College exhibits high trust; satisfaction is quite high; and decision-structure variance is moderately high. The entire process of decision-making is highly legitimate; goal formation and attainment is high.

Conservative College

The evidence from this college suggests that certain benefits can accrue from a system of concurrent regimes; that oligarchic decision-making about resource acquisition has a mixed effect; that the control of information is an effective weapon in the struggle for decision-making prerogatives; and that the clarity of the decision-making structure affects members' satisfaction (p. 33).

Conservative College manifests a semi-legitimate structure with variable clarity - high at times, and low at other times. Decision-structure variance is low. Membership satisfaction is medium, but improved, and goal formation and goal consensus is medium low.

After constructing four conceptual models which served as a framework for the study of decision-making, Helsabeck reported several findings which emerged from his research. It is clear from his research that "participation", in the sense of including more people in existing

decision-making bodies, is a concept which does not adequately reflect the variations in the decision-making process. The centers of decision-making authority must be included, as well as the distribution of participation with these centers.

A second major finding of Helsabeck's study revealed that criteria such as external costs, decision-making costs, and the costs of ineptitude should be considered in determining the best arrangement for varying levels of decisions. In varying the decision-making arrangement for different types of decisions, priority must be generated in an attempt to minimize the costs imposed on those left out of the decision-making process, minimize the costs of time and energy absorbed in decision-making, and maximize the use of persons with relevant expertise.

A very crucial factor is the evaluation of the institutional environment and expectations that exist before a change in decision-making practices is contemplated, and the expectations that are likely to be engendered by a change in the decision-making process.

Helsabeck suggests an additional consideration is the necessity for balancing the multiple dimensions of organizational effectiveness which represent sometimes mutually reinforcing and sometimes competing values. In structuring a decision-making hierarchy for an institution, consideration must be given to the probable impact on resource acquisition, goal formation, goal attainment, and membership satisfaction. A final focus of attention must be devoted to institutional

members' attachment to groups outside the college or university. It would be impossible to fully understand the internal decision-making dynamics of an institution without an appreciation of collective bargaining, professional associations, and governmental agencies.

PART III

Current Status of Private Liberal Arts Education

The plight of the privately supported colleges and universities has been a recurring theme in American educational circles in recent years. Private institutions of higher education, especially the smaller liberal arts colleges, are experiencing increasingly serious problems as they attempt to mount viable programs in the face of rapidly escalating costs, competition from public institutions, and multidirectional pressures from high schools, graduate schools, and society at large.

It has been the custom to point to some future date when the private colleges and universities will have their moment of truth, although in the meantime most private institutions have continued to survive by gradually increasing their tuition and fees, by cutting back on maintenance and equipment, and by intensifying their efforts to raise funds from foundations and alumni.

It is now evident that the dark future so long predicted has finally arrived and has been intensified by economic conditions and declining public confidence in higher

education. American private higher education appears to be in a very critical period as evidenced by the volume of commentary in both the public and professional press dealing with some factors such as competition and finance. Jencks and Riesman (1968), for example, have noted that even prestigious private colleges are experiencing problems while the "real crisis in private higher education today is among those private institutions that cannot boast any more academic distinction than nearby public universities" (p. 289). The authors feel that over the long run these colleges have very bleak futures. Jencks and Riesman also point out that the small rural private colleges with no particular claim to distinction are in very serious trouble.

Chickering conducted a five year Project on Student Development in Small Colleges from 1965 to 1969, in an effort to discover what impact different kinds of colleges had on their students. Chickering (1971) offers some very revealing results from his study:

Although many undergraduate colleges no longer act "in loco parentis", for many of their students they still act "in loco uteri". Like wombs, most colleges, offer a warm and cozy setting where the organism can exist protected from outside influences until parturition sends him or her screaming into the world (p. 48).

This environment has been one factor leading to the demise of some private institutions. They neither accelerate nor retard the development of students. They simply provide a safe haven where it can occur, and do so in the name of education.

Writing in the press, Harris (1974) theorizes that the small private liberal arts institutions often seal their own doom. He states that many institutions have brought difficulty upon themselves by trying to be all things to all people, and by vainly competing with the larger and lavishly endowed colleges. Harris suggests that these institutions have thoughtlessly squandered educational resources. Vast sums have been expended for marginal and decorative activities, while such crucial areas as libraries and laboratories have been relatively neglected. Harris explains the problem in the following manner:

The school has tended to become a showpiece, a boutonniere for lapels of the administrators and trustees; and intellectual activity has too often been subordinated to physical grandeur. One melancholy reason for this is that it has been far easier to raise money for a second athletic field than for the first piece of expensive scientific equipment, for twelve tennis courts than for one comprehensive reference library. . . . Now all these academic chickens are coming home to roost. The schools can't pay their heating bills, much less replace the tattered tennis nets. Like the old English ducal estates of the late 19th century, they are land-poor and can't find revenues to keep up with their expenditures. It's a crying shame, but those of us who have been crying about it for years, never succeeded in shaming them into scholastic sanity (p. 19).

Businessmen and efficiency experts have been taking a hard look at liberal arts colleges, in an attempt to find out what is wrong with their operations and why they are so far in the red. A number of them have come up with the same conclusion: measured by business standards and efficiency

formulae, the liberal arts colleges are simply bad business operations.

Linowitz (1973) postulates that private liberal arts colleges have had the financial crunch coming for a long time. A lot of these institutions have regarded "economy" as a nasty word, and they have been reluctant either to tighten their budgets or to hitch up their braces. He goes on to state the only solution to this impending crisis is simply this: "If colleges want to make ends meet, they will just have to get on a sound, businesslike, efficient operating basis, precisely as in the case of any other organization which is having financial problems (p. 12)."

Jellema reports in his book From Red to Black? (1973) on the financial status of institutions of higher education. The total deficit reported by 507 colleges and universities in a study in 1969 was ninety-three million dollars. They expected to run additional deficits in the next two years totaling one-hundred seventy-three million dollars or roughly one-hundred four thousand dollars per institution. A study that followed in 1973, revealed that in actuality these same institutions had an average deficit of one-hundred thirty-one thousand dollars - twenty-seven thousand dollars (or twenty-six percent) worse than anticipated (pp. 11-13).

Some private institutions, however, continue to evade the whirlpool of current fund deficits. An attractive academic program, an identifiable constituency, favorable geographic location, good administration, and good fortune, all seem to

play a role in the precarious condition of these institutions. Similarly, those institutions that are making a comeback are working on as many of these fronts as possible. They are becoming better managers of both income and expenditures; they have attempted to identify specific student markets; and they are presenting attractive academic programs. They are achieving a balanced budget by some expenditure cuts combined with continuing income and stable enrollment.

After completing a follow-up study on his original sample of institutions, Jellema reports the following:

Numerous campus visits, spot checks, and regional meetings undertaken since the first of these data were gathered require this current appraisal: while finances appear generally better in the short run, the prospects show no significant improvement in the long run. A few institutions that rode above the sea of current fund deficits in the late sixties and beginning of the seventies are now experiencing their first deficit years. These are not badly managed institutions; their administrations, moreover, looked carefully at the assigned courses of the plight of their neighbors. But they have still been unable to avoid experiencing the same difficulties . . . As a reviewer of the financial status of private institutions, I feel most uneasy about their financial prospects when looking at current and anticipated enrollments (pp. 28-29).

There are other problems concerning private liberal arts education which are noted in the literature. One author proposes that there is a "myth of smallness". Poston (1972) expresses the view that "uncritically perpetrating the view that little colleges are better colleges ignores a less than idyllic reality (p. 12)." He purports that small institutions are financially strapped; at many the numbers of faculty have been frozen or reduced; salary lines are

being abolished at the upper levels upon retirement and at the lower levels upon nonreappointment of the nontenured. The result is a frightened faculty, a defensive administration, and a demoralized student body. And in some private institutions where there is a lingering but still potent denominational influence, the environment is one of paternalistic meddling.

In the past half dozen years, some private institutions have resorted to promotional gimmicks in an effort to attract money and students. One of the less imaginative but immediately effective remedies for a drop in enrollment is to reduce the standards for applicants. As noted in an article in the National Observer (1971), with this approach affluence or privilege are the deciding factors rather than merit, and the college has eroded the ideal of quality education. There have been "drummed up programs" for minority and disadvantaged students, which often are a subtle attempt to emulate special programs at large universities.

Geiger (1971) mentions that even more serious in its consequences for the private colleges in the long run is a proposal now gaining attention that undergraduate programs be reduced from four years to three. This type of approach would reduce much of the emphasis in curriculum to the liberal arts tradition and turn to increased vocational and professional studies. Subsequently, the private liberal arts colleges will have lost their main reason for existence. Geiger also notes that irregardless of the phenomenon at

Parsons College, there are still some institutions attempting to use some of the gimmicks applied there.

Mayhew (1962) identified some of the problems facing the smaller liberal arts college over ten years ago. We are still witnessing the results of some of the following factors:

1. Few alumni and therefore restricted alumni financial support;
2. Alumni who tend to enter service professions and thus are not in a position to contribute substantial funds to their alma mater;
3. Small endowments which tend to lead to a hand-to-mouth existence;
4. A lack of a "critical mass" of not only dollars but also of trained and inquisitive scholars who inspire the students as they intellectually "catch fire" from each other;
5. The need for the president to spend his time fund-raising and being unable, therefore, to provide the necessary educational leadership;
6. Inability to afford the necessary trained personnel, especially in financial matters;
7. Geographical location which has changed from a frontier area to a "cultural cul-de-sac" no longer attractive to students;
8. Old and often badly maintained buildings;
9. A need to offer scholarships of increasing size and number to attract students, and a corollary need to charge ever higher tuitions;
10. The inability to attract significant foundation support;
11. The lack of funds which might allow the college to invest in personnel or technological devices which might help take up the slack and thus free teachers and counselors for more effective work with students;
12. The factor of competition from the state-supported institutions of public higher education (pp. 93-96).

The Future of Private Liberal Arts Education
and Reform

Although much of the literature reflects an attitude of pessimism toward the present status of private liberal arts education, there are those who feel very positively about the contribution of private higher education. Many authors have also made recommendations to improve the effectiveness and success of the liberal arts institution. Many private institutions are responding to the forecasts of doom and gloom, and are demonstrating that they have the resourcefulness to cope with their problems.

Gaffney (1974), who is the president of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Michigan, writes that "In an age when bigness, anonymity, and dehumanization aggravate our social tensions, the independent college offers a learning environment in which the individual is still the highest priority (p. 11)." Gaffney feels the current predicament of private colleges calls for a new public awareness of their problems and their possibilities. The American public can reaffirm the importance and recognize the contributions of private higher education to society.

Hughes (1972) holds firm the conviction that the key to survival of the private college is "individual uniqueness". He offers the following points as suggestions as to how this might be accomplished:

1. Schools must clarify and reaffirm a commitment to the distinctive qualities which have been their particular areas of strength.

2. Private schools must refuse to become all things to all people.
3. Administrators and faculty members should be utilized in cross roles whenever and wherever possible.
4. Faculty members who are "empire builders" at the expense of the rest of the institution should be curtailed in their endeavors.
5. A continual evaluation should be made of majors within a college in respect to their ability to hold and turn out effective persons from their field.
6. Faculty members should expect and be required to take on larger teaching loads.
7. Students should be totally familiarized with the cost of running a particular private school.
8. Every private institution, by its own uniqueness, has built a reputation and resulting supportive clientele in the outside world. The economic realities of the times makes it mandatory that students bear a responsibility to maintain the unique features of a particular private institution which they have elected to attend (pp. 243-244).

Self-reliance and a careful inward examination, according to Hughes, may be the only real key to survival for the private colleges of the country. He believes that those institutions which have been able to maintain a unique sense of direction will find the road to preservation much easier than those which have lost or abandoned their traditional focus for existing.

Will private colleges survive the 1970's? Eddy (1972), who is president of a private institution, responds by saying that ". . . posting a death notice for all of private higher education is like shooting all the horses because some have the wheeze (p. 12)." He believes that the great majority of the institutions will survive. Despite the many

predictions of their demise, surprisingly few have closed their doors. Eddy is convinced that private institutions of higher learning have the persistence and tenacity to survive; however, their survival does not necessarily guarantee a quality academic program.

Eddy proposes three tests of vitality for the private institution of higher education. First, to be vital, the private college or university must be adaptable without losing its integrity. The private college of integrity which wants to be alive must plan carefully. The right approach is a combination of solid integrity without compromise in standards, with flexibility which meets the needs of students. This is no small challenge for private higher education: to adapt, to meet the needs of an ever-changing student milieu, but to continue to maintain a sound academic program.

Second, to be vital, the private institution must take an honest look at its own values and place its dollars where its true values lie. Colleges and universities cannot continue to pretend to be all things to all people at a time when they should concentrate on doing an excellent job with "some" people. This is where strength and quality lie.

A third test of vitality according to Eddy is that the private college or university must care deeply about the person of the student if the student is expected to care deeply about his or her education. Colleges must be more honest with students. Today's student is tired of "going through college" without knowing what he went through. Eddy

predicts that there will be a return to the idea of educating the "whole student" whose life style and philosophical basis may be just as important as the completion of curriculum requirements. He summarizes his attitude on the future of private higher education by writing:

The real question, however, is not one of survival but whether there remains in the less portly body the desire to live. When one finds a private institution with a gleam in its eye, despite its sometimes beleaguered budget, one will discover not just survival but an important and distinctive contribution to American education (p. 12).

Another viewpoint in the literature is reflected through Averill's (1973) analysis of the problems facing private liberal arts education. He feels that the difficulty does not lie where it is commonly reputed, in shrinking budgets and enrollments. It lies, rather, in the loss of a liberating vision in education. Averill characterizes the problem in the following manner:

The lack of resiliency that liberal arts colleges regularly display in dealing with current crises results, in part at least, from permitting ourselves to become locked into the academically doctrinaire notion that liberal education is synonymous with some particular curricular arrangement, most commonly including a standard and wide-ranging set of discrete academic disciplines, through which students are expected to pass according to some distributional scheme . . . the liberal arts college is an educational strategy for enlarging and enhancing the human. To engage in a process of liberal learning is to undertake the practice of those human and humane competences which free men and women to live life rather than to be lived by it; and to grow that integrity which draws varied competences together and makes life both single and singular (p. 10).

In the private liberal arts institutions, Averill urges that there must be a new and growing commitment to make room for the human in its divergent philosophies, predispositions, and aspirations. The most urgent task is to rebuild the college in the image of man.

Another authority in the area of private higher education, Jellema (1973) recommends several basic steps of reform to regain solvency. An institution's first and primary concern should be an attractive academic program. College is no longer the automatic route to be followed by every student continuing education beyond the high school. The liberal arts institution must redefine its educational program in a way that is more responsive to the contemporary student's quest for relevance and meaning. Since there is no absolute formula for achieving this, each institution must shape an academic program that is appropriate to its own constituents and that is informed by its own value commitments (pp. 162-164).

Jellema also recommends that for the small private colleges facing rising costs and declining enrollments, the possibilities of merger or consortia should be given serious consideration. Only a merger or a strong federation will be able to effect the kinds of changes that might permit efficient operations for some of the smaller institutions.

As noted above, the private institution's top priority should be its academic program; however, there are also management improvements that could make significant changes in the economic health of the institution. One of these

recommendations for reform is put forth by Bowen and Douglass (1971). They suggest the use of a wide range of instructional methods that would raise the productivity level of the institution. Unfortunately, it is much easier to implement these changes in a period of expansion and not retrenchment. The very institutions in greatest need of instituting changes are the same institutions that find it most difficult to affect the changes. These institutions must take the approach of implementing changes over a longer period of time.

Significant Research in Private Liberal Arts Education

As noted earlier in the study, there seems to be a minimum of research conducted which might provide a basic and collective body of knowledge in the area of private higher education. However, there have been a few significant studies completed which deserve some attention.

Ruml and Morrison wrote the book Memo to a College Trustee: A Report on Financial and Structural Problems of the Liberal College in 1959, and it received some attention in private higher education. The authors presented a series of variations of a model which was developed to alleviate the problem of low faculty salaries. According to their report this could be accomplished by an adjustment in instructional programs through a straightforward allocation of tuition income to faculties and a realignment of some courses with large lecture sections. Naturally, this proposal was received with mixed reactions.

Tickton (1959) recommended that private colleges use the management technique of long-term projection. The Tickton approach is based on the preparation of a detailed ten-year budget which requires an institution to engage in long-range planning and use the budget making process as a tool in decision-making. Tickton called for the appropriate use of this technique where it would prove helpful in determining the future of the institution. His plan was based upon the assumption that "precision of projection is not as essential as is the reasonableness of the estimates and the following through of the process at all points where there are budgetary consequences (p. 139)."

McGrath (1961) produced a study titled Memo to a College Faculty Member, which closely resembled the Ruml and Morrison study. Hungate, Meeth, and O'Connell (1964) conducted a follow-up study on McGrath's 1961 study. Both of these research studies rendered similar results. It was found that the factors of proliferation of small courses and a large number of small courses in an academic program are economically draining to the small institution. McGrath and his associates, who did the follow-up study, contend that they are in no way advocating placing economic factors above educational goals. Rather, they argue that the private liberal arts institution which gives serious attention to its academic program from an economic perspective will be in a better position than the institution which ignores such economic factors.

A study by Pattillo and Mackenzie (1968) for the

Danforth Commission focused upon church-sponsored institutions of higher education. One question they pose in their report is critical for the church-related college:

How can a college do justice to its avowed purpose as a Christian institution, a purpose which carries with it a commitment to a set of beliefs, and at the same time maintain the freedom of inquiry which most academic people think is necessary for good education (p. 204).

The authors call upon the church-affiliated institutions of higher education to view themselves as scholarly forces for assessing the role of the Christian Church in an everchanging society by providing Christian leadership. Pattillo and Mackenzie believe that it is essential for the church-sponsored college to identify the type of institutions they wish to be, such as "defender of the faith" or "non-affirming", and then to vigorously pursue their goals.

Noted earlier, Chickering (1969) conducted a comprehensive, five year study in thirteen small colleges titled The Project on Student Development. He studied institutional characteristics, student characteristics, attrition, and student development. The study was done under the sponsorship of the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, and Chickering published his findings in Education and Identity.

Chickering reports a number of interesting findings, but the following statement reflects his attitude toward the task facing higher education:

The major task confronting higher education is not to generate new, complex, and subtle understandings, but to act on knowledge already available, to recognize principles of learning

and human development already clearly established. The gap between what is known and what is done must be narrowed. Educational problems are outrunning solutions, not so much for lack of relevant principles, and not because useful steps are obscure, but because implementation is occurring at a snail's pace, because basic concepts are disdained (p. 280).

A dissertation by Smith (1969) entitled "Factors Related to Survival and Progress in the Smaller Liberal Arts College" identified the critical role of presidential leadership. Smith investigated thirteen small private liberal arts institutions who were members of the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges. He reports that eight of these colleges moved forward significantly in erudition, student development, faculty salaries, doctorates on the faculty, and building endowments. The remaining five institutions that remained static were compared to the eight according to isolated variables.

The most important variables isolated by Smith were the control and mission of the college and the leadership ability of the president. The presidents who were relatively new in the chief executive position were described by Smith as follows:

The developing college presidents are relatively young men who are (1) knowledgeable about what the theorists in higher education have to say about college management and the future of the small private liberal arts college in America, (2) eager to see their colleges move forward on a number of fronts, (3) concerned lest their colleges drift into an eddy apart from the mainstream of American higher education, and (3) possessed by leadership ability which is evidenced in a variety of patterns (p. 133).

From his study, Smith develops the hypothesis "that not only is presidential leadership associated with the more successful colleges, but that it may well be a basic and even the prime force behind such success (pp. 133-134)."

Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter has focused on three key areas relevant to the study: the college and university president, decision-making in higher education, and private liberal arts education. The literature on the presidency has reflected the changing role of the American college or university chief executive. Despite some concern over the loss of power and authority, the president was regarded as the single most important factor in the success of an institution. With the emphasis upon finances, budgets, communications, and accountability, the literature clearly urged that presidents be trained in the area of management techniques. The role of the contemporary president was viewed being first an institutional manager, then an educational leader. Although there have been some intensive and comprehensive studies conducted on the president, the literature supported the need for increased study of the presidency and its many faceted responsibilities.

Decision-making is reported in the literature as being one of the most vital tools of the successful administrator in higher education. Much literature has pointed out the factors causing ineffective and unsound decisions. Numerous authors recommended the implementation of various

management systems in higher education in an effort to allow the administrator to make effective and rational decisions. Considerable debate has been reflected in the literature as to the student's role in institutional decision-making. The majority of the authors, however, supported a broader role of student involvement in institutional governance and decision-making than has been traditionally practiced. Several models of decision-making have been proposed in the literature recommending various theoretical approaches to the process of decision-making.

Much of the literature on private liberal arts education focused upon the future of private higher education. Some literature presented a picture of "doom and gloom"; however, several notable writers have made recommendations for reform in private liberal arts institutions in the areas of finances, curriculum, administrative practices, fund raising, and quality faculty. Generally, the significant research completed on private higher education purported that the private institution cannot maintain a position of attempting to be "all things to all people". The literature beckoned the private liberal arts institution to evaluate its goals and mission, and then accentuate its individual uniqueness in the quest of providing quality higher education.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the decision-making process in private liberal arts colleges and universities as perceived by the chief executive. Methodology was developed to accomplish this objective. The purpose of this chapter is to present the research design employed in the completion of this study. Included are (1)the procedures used to identify and select the sample in the study, (2)the research technique, (3)the procedures used to develop and refine the research instrument, (4)the method of data collection, and (5)the methodology used to analyze and present the findings of the study.

Selection of the Sample

The initial step in selecting the sample was to establish criteria which would be used as the determining parameters. Such factors as time, traveling distance, costs, the nature of the research method utilized were all taken into consideration. In order to investigate the decision-making process of private liberal arts institutions, it was essential that a sample be developed which was representative, yet did not cover such a wide geographical area as to make personal interviews an impossibility.

The institutions of higher education from which the presidents were selected for the study met the following criteria:

1. The institutions were private liberal arts colleges and universities.
2. The institutions were accredited and offered a four-year baccalaureate degree.
3. The institutions were coeducational.
4. The institutions were either church-affiliated or interdenominational.
5. The institutions had an enrollment between 750 and 2500 students. (This range was used to avoid the very small and the larger private liberal arts institution.)
6. The institutions were to be located in a three-state area including Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

The Education Directory, 1972-1973, Higher Education, was used as the primary reference source in delimiting the sample. Forty institutions met the above criterion. From these forty colleges and universities, a sample of fifteen institutions were randomly selected by arranging them alphabetically and using a table of random numbers. The sample of fifteen institutions comprised almost forty percent of the forty institutions meeting the determining parameters, and the researcher, with the approval of his Research Committee, determined that the sample should be representative of the

larger group from which the sample was drawn. Five institutions were also randomly selected as alternates in the event that any of the original fifteen presidents could not participate in the study. Due to the nature of the study, it was necessary that the participating presidents and the institutions in which they served remained anonymous; therefore, they were not identified in the study.

The Research Interview

The personal interview was utilized to obtain data for this study. This technique was selected for several reasons. VanDalen (1962) notes that, "Many people are more willing to communicate information verbally than in writing and therefore, will provide data more readily and fully in an interview than on a questionnaire (p. 258)." This belief was supported by the investigator's Research Committee. For this reason, the use of the questionnaire as a tool for data collection was deemed to be inappropriate. Particularly college and university presidents are deluged with questionnaires and do not have adequate time to complete them.

Kerlinger (1965) describes the research interview as follows:

The interview is a face-to-face interpersonal role situation in which one person, the interviewer, asks a person being interviewed, the respondent, questions designed to obtain answers pertinent to the purposes of the research problem (p. 469).

Borg (1965) states the interview technique provides the interviewer the opportunity to follow up leads and secure

more depth than is possible in some other research methods (p. 224). Hyman (1954) also notes some of the advantages of the personal interview:

A variety of gains result from the fact that the interviewer, while he might be a biasing agent, might conceivably be an insightful, helpful person. He might be able to amplify a given question, probe for clarification of an ambiguous answer, or elaboration of a cryptic report, or to persuade the respondent to answer a question that he would otherwise skip. All such advantages involving the insightful and resourceful interviewer are lost in the self-administering situation where mistakes of the respondent have a quality of finality (p. 16).

There are, however, several limitations which any researcher must consider in using the personal interview technique. The major disadvantage is the possibility of inducing greater subjectivity and possible bias into data collection. Described by Borg (1965):

The very adaptability gained by the interpersonal situation leads to subjectivity and possible bias. The interactions between the respondent and the interviewer are subject to bias from many sources. Eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer, a vague antagonism that sometimes arises between the interviewer and the respondent, and the tendency of the interviewer to seek out answers that support his preconceived notions are but a few of the factors that contribute to possible biasing of data obtained from the interview (p. 221).

Bingham, VanDyke, Moore and Gustad (1959) point out that the interpersonal situation is precisely the element which makes the interview such a valuable tool. They state:

Sources of unreliability inhere in the interviewer, in the person interviewed, and in the relationship between the two. Paradoxically, it is precisely these same elements which make the interview a valuable instrument. The difference lies in the conduct of the interview and the quality of the relationship (p. 9).

The interview situation must be carefully structured and conducted to minimize the problems of interpretation and biasing factors. The interviewer's behavior is a determinant in the respondent's willingness to answer questions. Probably the most important element an interviewer can possess is the ability to listen. Fenlason (1962) notes that the interviewer listens by exercising concentration, active participation, comprehension, objectivity, and by being observant during the interview.

All of the above factors were taken into consideration during the developmental stages of formulating an interview guide. In planning and developing the interview format, the researcher attempted to eliminate those factors which would bias the collection of data.

The Instrument

The interview guide was used as a structured format during the process of conducting the interview with each respondent. Standardized questions were used in an effort to reduce contamination and bias in the interviewing technique. Kerlinger (1965) notes that, "Standardized interviews use interview schedules that have been carefully prepared in advance to obtain information pertinent to the research problem (p. 469). Since the standardized questions incorporated in the interview guide were based on the purposes and premises of the study, the interviewer did exercise judgement in asking probing questions when the respondent's answer seemed incomplete or vague. A copy of the interview guide is located in Appendix A.

An important consideration in the development of the interview instrument is the method of recording the responses of the participants. The method used in this study was the tape recorder. This method was selected for several reasons. First, the entire text of the interview could be recorded so that total recall was possible by replaying the tape. Second, the use of the tape recorder afforded the researcher the freedom of concentrating totally on the interview itself without being hindered by taking notes and recording responses on paper. Third, tape recording made the posteriori analysis much easier and systematic.

Borg (1965) has noted some of the following advantages associated with the technique of tape recording the interview: (1) the tendency of interviewers to select data favoring their bias is reduced; (2) a thorough analysis of responses can be made during several tape play backs; and (3) the interview process is speeded up since note taking by the interviewer is not necessary (p. 225).

It should be noted that it is essential to gain the permission of the respondent to record the interview prior to conducting the interview. Fortunately, all of the presidents participating in this study granted such permission and several commented on the applicability of the tape recorder in conducting a research study.

The Pilot Study

During the genesis stage of conceptualizing the purposes and objectives of this study, a small-scale pilot

study was conducted. Numerous authors and researchers have strongly recommended conducting a pilot study prior to undertaking the actual research study (Whyte, 1960; Hyman, 1967; and Borg, 1965).

The pilot study was utilized to accomplish the following objectives: (1) to provide interviewing experience for the researcher; (2) to determine if it was possible to study the decision-making process in a systematic manner; (3) to refine the interview process and techniques; and (4) to refine the posteriori analysis procedures.

The pilot study involved the interviewing of top-level administrators at five private liberal arts institutions in Michigan. None of the five administrators participating in the pilot study were respondents in this research study. The interviews were tape recorded and the tapes were analyzed. Revisions were made in the scope of the study and in the questions used in the interview. The original direction of the study dealt with administrative responsibilities of chief administrators. After completion of the pilot study, the scope of the study was delimited to the study of decision-making as it relates to the administrative responsibilities of chief executives. The participants in the pilot study were helpful in suggesting possible parameters and guidelines for further research. The pilot study also provided very valuable experience in the post-interview analysis of tape recordings. The researcher was able to determine categories and classification systems for data analysis.

The Collection of Data

After the random selection of the fifteen sample presidents, an initial letter of contact was mailed to each chief executive (Appendix B). The letter had several objectives: to introduce the researcher to the presidents; to state the purpose and nature of the study; to state the reasons for the need of such a study in private higher education; and to elicit the cooperation of each president to participate in the research study. Since the personal interviews necessitated considerable traveling distance and time, a suggested date and time was included in the contact letter. A reply form and a stamped self-addressed envelope were enclosed for the individuals to indicate whether they would be (1) willing to participate in the study at the suggested time and date, (2) willing to participate in the study but unable to meet at the suggested time or date, or (3) unable to participate in the study.

The reply forms were returned within fourteen days and thirteen presidents indicated their willingness to participate in the study. Two presidents returned forms stating that due to commitments and scheduling problems they would not be able to participate as a respondent in the study. Contact letters were then mailed to the first two alternate presidents, and they responded positively and agreed to participate. Of the fifteen presidents in the sample, eight indicated that they could meet at the suggested meeting

time. The remaining seven were contacted by phone and an interview time was re-scheduled. The personal interviews were conducted between April 13, 1974 and May 3, 1974. The average time for all the interviews was fifty-six minutes.

It should be noted that the sample presidents were exceptionally cooperative and considerate. Each president was very cordial and generous with his time. Several of the respondents altered their calendars in order to meet with the investigator. Since the identity of each president and his respective institution remained anonymous, the chief executives responded very openly and honestly during the interview. Several, in fact, reflected insights which were shared in strict confidence and naturally could not be recorded in the findings of this study.

Although the researcher was at times weary from traveling long distances, each interview was unique and afforded an opportunity to meet with presidents who exhibited a variety of personality dynamics. It was an invaluable learning experience and provided insights into the role of the college and university president. The visits to the various institutions also provided opportunities to meet and talk with other administrative executives. The opportunity to meet so many chief executives was one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of the researcher during the completion of the doctoral program.

The Method of Data Analysis

The approach to this study was descriptive in purpose. Best (1959) states that descriptive research:

. . . involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the present nature, composition, or process of phenomenon. The focus is on prevailing conditions, or how a person, group, or thing behaves or functions in the present (p. 12).

The study was also exploratory in nature. A review of the literature revealed that very limited research had been carried out which involved the study of decision-making in private liberal arts colleges and universities. Good and Scates (1954) characterized the exploratory approach:

General description is characteristic of the early stages of work in an area where the significant factors have not been isolated, and where perhaps one would not have the means for measuring them if they were identified. It is, therefore, a method of exploration (p. 275).

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the investigator believed the descriptive technique was the best method for presenting the findings. VanDalen (1962) has suggested several advantages of descriptive research. Studies of a descriptive nature frequently: (1) provide practical and useful information for planning; (2) alert educators to future trends; and (3) facilitate an understanding of the current status in areas where procedures are perpetually in transition (p. 184). This study was undertaken not only to do research in an area where little research has been done, but also to provide useful insights for the enhancement

of decision-making in private higher education. The descriptive approach seemed best suited to meet the needs and objectives of this study.

It should be noted that content analysis of the research interview demands the utmost objectivity of the researcher. It is impossible to eliminate all subjectivity from the analysis process, but this investigator has attempted to conscientiously employ procedures to eliminate bias and contamination. One source has noted the purpose of data analysis.

The purpose of analysis is to summarize the completed observations in such a manner that they will yield answers to the research questions. It is the purpose of interpretation to search for the broader meaning of these answers by linking them to other available knowledge. (Sellitz, et al., 1962, p. 386).

A statistical treatment of the data was not utilized due to the exploratory nature of the study. Extensive notes were made from each tape according to a classification structure on each question area. Frequently, quotations were transcribed and reported in the analysis of data to present an accurate account of an individual president's response. When responses represented a divergent range of opinion, the different perceptions were noted in the findings. Likewise, wide or universal agreement to a particular interview question was reported to present an accurate interpretation of the views expressed.

Summary

In summary, the study sample included fifteen presidents of private liberal arts colleges or universities which were church affiliated or interdenominational, four-year degree institutions and accredited, coeducational, and had a student enrollment between 750 and 2500. All interviews with the responding presidents were conducted in person and recorded on tape. An interview guide was used which consisted of questions based on the purposes of the study. The data was collected and analyzed following a descriptive approach. The analyzed data and the subsequent findings are presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The present study was designed to collect, analyze, and compare the perceptions of private liberal arts presidents on the dynamics of decision-making within their respective institutions. The data was obtained through personal interviews, and was then analyzed on a posteriori basis.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of this study. Initially, the administrative experience of the fifteen participating presidents is described. This is followed by an analysis of the presidents' responses to the questions stemming from the interview guide (See Appendix A).

Experience and Tenure of Participating Presidents

Table I presents a summary of data regarding the fifteen presidents and the type of experience they represented. It shows the diversity of positions held by the chief executives. Thirteen of the fifteen presidents had previous experience in teaching at the college or university level. Eight presidents were ordained ministers or priests and had served in the church for varying periods of time. Since all of the institutions in the sample were either church-affiliated or interdenominational, this was not surprising to

find more than half of the presidents with some experience in church work. One president had been a practicing lawyer, and another had been involved in public relations work for a large industrial firm.

The following table represents the total number of previous experiences as reported by the chief executives; therefore, there are multiple responses recorded.

TABLE I - - Distribution of Presidents by Previous Position and Experience Level

Position	Number of Presidents having Previous Experience in the Position
Academic Dean	6
Assistant to the President	3
College Professor	13
Dean of College within a University	1
Departmental Chairman	4
Denominational Conference Superintendent	1
Director of Public Relations	1
High School Teacher	2
Lawyer	1
Minister or Priest	8
Public Relations in Industry	1
Vice President	1
Vice President for Academic Affairs	3

Although the presidents were engaged in a variety of positions, fourteen of the presidents were in positions in higher education immediately prior to being appointed to the presidency. It is also interesting to note that none of the presidents had served as a chief executive at another institution before moving into his present position. However, three respondents had served as assistants to a president, and ten had been employed as either an academic dean or as a vice

president. One respondent had moved directly from the position of a faculty member to the presidency. Another president reported that he ascended to the presidency as a direct result of an internship program sponsored by the American Council on Education. He stated that a group of individuals in higher education were selected to participate in a program which focused on preparing administrators for the responsibilities of the presidency.

The extensive experience and background in higher education among the participating presidents supports the findings in recent literature. Hodgkinson (1970) found this to be the case in his study of college and university presidents.

There was also a divergency in academic backgrounds as reported by the presidents. Three of the fifteen presidents had graduated from the institution in which they were serving as chief executive. The respondents had attended graduate school at such institutions as Harvard University, Stanford University, Syracuse University, University of Michigan, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Washington, University of Pittsburgh, and University of Kansas. Two of the participating presidents did not have "earned" doctorate degrees.

One area concerning the college and university president which has received considerable attention is the tenure of office. However, there appears to be some difference in the results reported in major studies. Selden, in Demerath, Stephens, and Taylor (1967, pp. 46-47), found that the

tenure of 1300 college and university presidents he surveyed was 8.1 years. Ferrari (1968) found the average tenure for presidents of Protestant-related institutions was 11.8 years. Hodgkinson (1970) concluded from his study that a presidential "life expectancy" was only four to five years. And Alton (1971) reported in his research of forty-four chief executives who had resigned in 1969 or 1970, that the average tenure was 9.2 years at resignation.

The average tenure of office for the presidents participating in this study was 8.5 years. The time in office ranged from two to twenty years, which reflects a marked contrast in presidential experience of the participants in the study. The tenure of 8.5 years seems to follow the general range of previous studies, with the exception of Hodgkinson's study. Although opinions and editorials as expressed in many journals suggest the college and university president is remaining in office for a shorter period of time, the findings in this study suggest the presidents in the private liberal arts institutions surveyed are remaining in office for a period of time comparable to the findings reported in past major studies.

Two of the participating presidents were planning to retire from office and informed their respective governing bodies. Neither of the two were facing compulsory retirement, but had decided that they were ready to relinquish their executive responsibilities.

The Decision-Making Process
within Participating Institutions

Gaining knowledge as to how decisions are being made in private liberal arts institutions in an effort to cope with institutional responsibilities and problems was regarded as one of the primary purposes of this study. One of the areas which the participating presidents responded to was the institutional structure of decision-making. The presidents were asked to describe the hierarchy of decision-making and describe what individuals were involved in the decision-making process.

As would be expected from fifteen different institutions, the presidents reflected a variety of decision-making practices which were operational within each college or university participating in the study. The process of consensus decision-making was found in almost every institution. Several responding presidents noted that the day is gone where the president sits in his office making all decisions, and literally "runs the institution."

While all the presidents reported varying degrees of "shared decision-making", two chief executives stated very clearly how they saw their role as the chief decision-maker within the institution. One of these presidents reflected his position in the following manner:

One of my responsibilities is to be the place where the buck stops. I have the authority to veto any decisions or actions from within the college. One of these had to do with a request of the faculty for membership on the Board of Trustees. I just don't think people

who work for you ought to be able to tell you how to do your job. And I don't think students, for example, should be on the Board. How do you make a decision which may involve a student who is a member of the Board of Trustees?

The other president stated:

I believe there needs to be fairly narrowly defined authority, with accountability attached to it. While I also believe very strongly in maximum input into the decision-making process, I think it has to be understood that the president has to end up making most of the decisions. Somebody needs to be held accountable.

Every one of the presidents interviewed reported that he met regularly with an administrative council or administrative cabinet. This body was regarded as the key decision-making group in terms of major policies and operations. One president described this body at his institution:

The day-to-day administrative problems are handled by what we call the Administrative Council. The president of the college serves as chairman of the Administrative Council. We have a very carefully drawn administrative line of responsibility. The decisions regarding the governance of the institution are made by this Council. I exercise final veto power, if need be. Ultimately, I am the corporation officer responsible to the Board of Trustees.

Other presidents noted that they rely very heavily on their chief administrative officers in making decisions. As a president reported, "I would never think of going out on a limb by myself without the support of all four principle staff people."

Several presidents regarded the size of their institutions as being an influential factor in the decision-making process. The smallness was seen as a very positive asset.

A president explained how the uniqueness of each individual is important and can have an impact upon the institution:

I believe that in this institution major changes have come about more through individuals than through the bureaucracy that an institution always has. This is a place where an individual can get an idea and can get a hearing and can watch something happen. It is not an institution where a lot of people are defending territorial rights. We work for each other. The changes that have come about on this campus have come through vigorous leadership.

The same president noted an illustration to support his view. The academic calendar was changed through the efforts of students, faculty, and the academic dean. The idea was initiated by students, then handled through administrative channels. This chief executive stated that since the idea was conceived by students, it was not automatically "put on a shelf" and forgotten.

Still another president stated his views on the attributes of the smaller college in terms of decision-making and administrative responsibilities:

I think one of the virtues of a small college is that you can have what I call a "country store" kind of management, a kind of casual management. It fits my personality very well. It has some drawbacks, too.

Several presidents were very explicit in describing the manner in which they delegated authority and decision-making power to their administrative staff. One interviewee described his views on this area:

We follow the theory in decision-making that every decision should be made at its lowest possible level. I have attempted to surround myself with the most able, best, smartest men I know, and I

place in them full confidence for the operation of their division. If they do something I don't agree with, we talk about that. If they are not making decisions that they ought to make, we talk about that. It's important that my time be used in general directions to move the college forward. Very early in my administration we cleared the lines. We have a good flow chart for administrative decisions. I work with the theory that I make only those decisions which only somebody else can't make.

This president's remarks are in agreement with many theorists approach to decision-making. Another president explained his approach to the delegation of authority as follows:

Under my system of management, I'm a strong believer in delegating as much as possible. This is particularly true in the academic area. I try to stay out of academic affairs. The academic dean is responsible for that area. I have seen some presidents who get uptight because the dean is going home at five o'clock every day or is coming in at nine-thirty. Frankly, I don't give a damn. I try to recruit people who are conscientious enough to know that they can go out in the afternoon and play golf, and when they come in the next day that work is still going to be there. Sometimes this is very difficult. If one of your people makes a bad error, it's awfully hard to stand out there and take it as your decision. But that's what I'm paid to do.

The one area of decision-making which all presidents explained in length was the role which the board of trustees exercised in institutional decision-making. The presidents emphasized the legal position and responsibility of their governing boards. Numerous presidents noted a change in the active role of the boards of trustees in the last five years. Prior to that time, the operation of the institution was largely turned over to the president. However, recently the

boards have become increasingly involved in the affairs of the institution. One factor has been the economic and fiscal problems facing many of these private liberal arts institutions. Two of the institutions have had deficits in the last five years, and several others have been struggling financially.

Communication was regarded as being the most significant factor in the presidents' relationship with the boards of trustees. As one president stated, "The name of the game is to keep the board informed." Every president reflected the need to communicate with board members outside of executive sessions. In order for the board to play a more active role in governing the institution, they must be better informed of programs, problems, and general operations. Another president noted the board's expectation on this matter by stating, "As one of my trustees told me, 'Your job, Mr. President, is to educate your bosses.' And I have got forty-five bosses." Another president's comments on the board of trustee's major concern is indicative of all the responding presidents: "They're primarily concerned, as I imagine a number of boards are, with the financial stability of the institution. So I would say in that area they probably exert their greatest influence."

The decision-making role of the boards of trustees, as viewed by their presidents, is one of policy and decision approval, not policy formulation or original decision-making. The chief executives indicated they were responsible for recommending policies or major decisions to the board, and

the board would then act upon their recommendation.

There were, however, contrasting opinions as to the board's attitude toward the general operation of an institution. For instance, a particular chief executive stated, "By in large, they remain aloof from the mundane, everyday administration of the institution." However, another president expressed his dissatisfaction with the Board of Trustees' activities: "The Board of Trustees in this institution plays a different role I'd say. They, in some ways, get into some rather 'picky' things. For example, the Board here has to approve every secretarial appointment. This seems to be a waste of time to me."

One president characterized his relationship with the board of trustees as being similar to a corporation. He stated:

In essence, if you try to chart out the power play here, the responsibility ultimately resides in the Board of Trustees. In actual practice, they are almost in a position of ratification of programs. So in a sense, they consider me the manager of the plant and they are the board of directors. Essentially, their job is to hire and fire me, and support me.

The quote of the president above refers in part to the concept of power. Several presidents commented on the effect of informal political dynamics upon the decision-making process. One interviewee remarked how some presidents will use the board of trustees as a screen without the board's knowledge:

There is a tendency on the part of some presidents to hide behind the board by saying to a faculty committee, "We can't do this because the Board won't let us." Well, if I don't think this is what we ought to do, I'll tell the faculty, rather than hide behind the Board.

Another president made the fact quite clear that the Board of Trustees at his institution had vested considerable power and authority in him. He explained as follows:

Our situation is a little unique to many college situations, in that the Board of Trustees vests in its president considerably more authority than many institutions would. For example, the president of the college is not only a voting member of the Board of Trustees, but also is chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees by virtue of his office. So you can see the vast powers available to the office."

The same president also pointed out that there must be a mutual trust and faith between the president and the board of trustees so as not to abuse the authority granted by the board.

Another chief executive participating in the study expressed his views on making political decisions as follows:

One of the real tasks is to promote a rational decision-making process, and not a political decision-making process. I don't mean to say that one has to be blind to the political realities, but if you always try to make political decisions, I don't think you can necessarily always make the best long-range decisions. And the hard decisions, which the president has to make, are not always the most popular. Yet, you make them for the long-range welfare of the institution.

The investigator attempted to probe into the area of the internal politics, but found a reluctance on the part of most

presidents to discuss the matter. Most presidents readily admitted that there was considerable politicizing involved in decision-making, but did not refer to it in specific terms.

The size of the boards of trustees included in the sample of fifteen institutions ranged in size from twenty-three to fifty-four members. Most of the boards met once or twice a year, with the executive committee meeting on a quarterly basis. The presidents interviewed, almost without exception, noted how the composition of their boards has changed in recent years. Since the institutions in this study were either church-affiliated or interdenominational, they have traditionally had church dominated governing boards. However, this is not necessarily true today. In an effort to obtain boards who have both the expertise to deal with current problems and who have the resources to bring in outside funds, many of the boards now have a preponderance of business and community leaders. In fact, one of the institutions legally severed its affiliation with the church.

Two of the institutions participating in the study did have a large number of clergy and denominational representatives on the board of trustees. In both cases, there was a very vivid and clearly stated position as to the relationship of the institution with the supporting church.

The presidents clearly stated that they can no longer afford to have "dead wood", as one president called it, on the board of trustees. With the many faceted problems

facing private colleges and universities, the governing board must have the membership to cope with the crisis it faces.

In discussing decision-making within the context of an institutional environment, one president noted that at his particular institution there was a problem with decisions getting "hung-up" with the committee structure. This institution has a very elaborate governance system, and the president was concerned with the problems of time-lag and too much fragmented decision-making. There were so many committees that no one knew what else was being done in other committees, and the president wanted to gain some closure and avoid overlap of decision-making. Therefore, he was assuming a more active role in coordinating the various activities of the committees.

As noted earlier, several presidents stated that the decision-making process was in a state of transition at their institutions. One president appraised his situation as being one of being a decision-maker in a time when growth and expansion is not taking place. He stated his primary task was the "management of stability, not expansion." He remarked how difficult it was to develop vitality within an institution when student enrollment had leveled off, faculty had to be reduced, and no new facilities were being erected. He acknowledged that morale was a significant problem at his institution. This is a syndrome which has been continually expressed in the literature as being the "plight of private higher education."

Due to the lack of foresight of many colleges, one president regarded planning as the single most important element in decision-making. Another president stated: "The budget is the principle decision-making instrument at any institution." He suggested that there are two key elements in formulating a budget. First, an institution must know on an accurate basis how it is both allocating and expending its resources. Secondly, funds must be appropriated for the improvement of staff and faculty. The quality of institutional personnel must be maintained and upgraded.

Student Participation in Institutional Decision-Making

The views as expressed by the participating presidents in this study, affirmed the position that students should be involved in the decision-making process. Some of the literature has accused private liberal arts institutions of assuming a role of "in loco parentis", where the student's life style is dominated by the institution. Subsequently, students are not afforded either the voice or the vehicle to become actively involved in decision-making. This was found not to be the case in the institutions in this study.

Each of the fifteen institutions, as reported by their respective president, had student representation on faculty committees. Involvement in the decision-making process beyond faculty committees varied greatly among the sample institutions. Four colleges had a community system of governance in which both faculty and students held positions of equal status. Although each chief executive recommended

student participation, some presidents felt there were some areas within the institutional governance structure where students should not become involved.

Explaining what he considered to be the most favorable approach to obtaining student input, one chief executive made the following statement:

The most expeditious method we believe is through the close rapport we have with student government. The student body president has frequent conversations with me. We have a good working relationship with student leaders. Our institution is small enough where we can talk with students and have this kind of rapport.

Commenting on an "open door" policy, one president clarified his position on accessibility to students:

Any student can talk to me if he wants to, so in that sense it's an "open door" policy. All he or she needs to do is come in here and make an appointment with my secretary, or if I'm here and I'm not up to my ears in work, I'll talk to the student. But I don't sit here with the door open every day and let the students stream in and out. I couldn't do that. It would be good P.R. (public relations) on my part, but not very practical. Plus the fact, if that kind of situation should exist, a good share of the things the president is talking about with people who drop in, he will have to talk to other personnel before he arrives at a decision anyhow. In other words, some students will go around a faculty member or a department chairman who is not answering their request in the way they want it answered. It's like they're saying we don't have any communication. But sometimes what they really mean is that the faculty member has said "no" to their request. You can't undermine the people who work for you.

One president expressed his dissatisfaction with student participation in decision-making. He was not concerned about whether students should or should not be

involved, but rather, expressed a disappointment with students' lack of participation once they had acquired the right to participate. He explained:

This is an inexact kind of thing. I'm not satisfied with it, and I don't know anyone who is honest that is satisfied with it. We have had student membership for years on every one of our major faculty committees, with the exception of our personnel committee. In some ways, it's a comment on faculty attitudes. This type of participation is cyclical. For example, right now there are two areas in which the students are actively participating. One is in the area of selecting visiting speakers. The other is an "ad hoc" committee which is now looking into the visitation program. We do have two students elected as Fellows to the Board of Trustees. That again, in all candor, has not worked very well. The people who aspire to the job generally are not truly representative of the student body, and have not really felt their responsibility to be representative. As a result, in my opinion, the student body has not been fairly represented in a number of issues.

Students had elected representatives on the board of trustees at two of the institutions included in this study. Six institutions had students serving on sub-committees of the governing boards, or liaison committees. The issue of student representation on the board of trustees evoked some very strong reactions from some presidents. Most presidents were very much in favor of student participation in decision-making; but, as they expressed, the students' demands for representation were often excessive and irresponsible. The following are examples of presidents' views on student representation on the board of trustees:

We have no students who are voting members of the Board of Trustees. We have taken the

position, I think justifiably so, that students are transients in the sense that they are here four years and gone. We do have a student liaison committee with the Board of Trustees.

You see one of the problems of putting students on the Board of Trustees is you really ought to have the faculty on the Board of Trustees. If you have the faculty on, you really ought to have the secretaries on. If you have the secretaries on, you really ought to have the maintenance staff on. If you begin making the Board of Trustees a really representative group, then where do you draw the line? So we have attempted to have liaison committees to report to the Board of Trustees.

The president of another college which also did not have students on the Board of Trustees explained his rationale this way:

We have no students who are on the Board of Trustees. Last year we did a careful poll of institutions, because I thought maybe we needed to consider this, but frankly, we could find no good reason to put students on the Board of Trustees. We do have a committee of five trustees and five faculty who talk about faculty concerns and report to the Board of Trustees. We have a similar committee for student activities. So one method of getting matters of concern to the Board of Trustees is through these committees.

The president's remarks of a different institution reflect a similar structure for student input:

Student opinion on matters having to do with student life and all kinds of things are channeled into the Faculty Council through student membership on that body. Now if there is a matter that the students want to talk to the Board of Trustees about, we have a Trustee Standing Committee on faculty-student affairs. There are two students on that committee along with two faculty and two administrators.

Another president remarked very openly, "We don't have faculty or students on our Board because there is no indication of competence." This same chief executive went on to explain his philosophy toward student participation in the decision-making process:

I've said to our students that I'm as little interested in acting "in loco studentis" as I am in acting "in loco parentis". The students have to learn to do things for themselves that they ought to be doing rather than have us do it for them. I feel the same way about faculty. So until faculty and students can get their own organizations in shape and develop adequate and responsible mechanisms of self-governance, they have little to contribute to the institution in a participatory sense.

The following view expressed by another president represents a different perspective: "I think the administration has a responsibility to make sure all students are served and listened to." He went on to say that "An institution should have a commitment to the personal growth and development of the student. This means providing vehicles and a structure through which the student can become involved in governance and decision-making. This participation can be an educational experience for the student and for faculty as well."

Another president said that students had requested to be represented on the board of trustees. He stated the reason that they were not included was that legal counsel had advised the president that it would be a "conflict of interest" to have students on the board.

The investigator noted with some interest that at three institutions, students were involved in the faculty selection process. And at two of these colleges, students had representation on faculty personnel and tenure committees. This is in marked contrast to most of the presidents' views on student involvement in the area of faculty affairs.

A view held by one president on student leadership and involvement in policy change seems to reflect the nature of the problem. This president stated during the interview:

We make no attempt to dominate student leadership. Not every proposal that students make to us do we readily accept. There are numbers of students who would like to have twenty-four hour a day open dormitories. Well, you know in my book, hell will freeze over first.

The issue of student involvement in institutional decision-making is a very emotional and precarious one. Administrators want students to assume responsibility and become active. Often when students become active, they do not approach the situation in the appropriate manner and they are called "irresponsible" by faculty and administrators.

One president noted how society in general has had an effect upon student participation. He stated:

I think student involvement goes in cycles. We had an apathy cycle before the Kent State days. Then suddenly you see a negative attitude. It's a combination of Watergate, gas rationing, air pollution - all these things. An incessant pounding all through the media. It's a terrible time to be a young person. It really is. And most of them are withdrawing. In talking to the student personnel staff, they feel there must be another way of approaching the problem. What they really want is small group activities.

Several presidents made suggestions as to their approaches in coping with this dilemma. They stated that first it was necessary to have qualified and competent staff people in the area of student affairs to work with students. Second, a sense of trust and respect had to be developed with students. The same two presidents met regularly with student leaders to gain a perception of their concerns and problems. They admitted that their contact with students was limited, but the nature and quality of the exposure they did have with students, made a significant difference in students' general attitudes toward the institutional administration.

Role of Presidential Decision-Making
in Institutional Fund Raising and Development

One of the most critical areas demanding both time and energy of the private liberal arts president is raising the necessary funds to operate the institution. Without exception, all fifteen chief executives reflected this position. The following comment typifies the president's task in securing funds:

I have often maintained that an institution sells itself. If you have a good institution, you really don't have to worry about fund raising. But more realistically, everybody is competing for a limited number of dollars, including the state universities. So we do have to get out and beat the bushes. . . . Though while most presidents like to think of themselves as academic leaders, they're probably as involved, if not more involved, in fund raising than they are in the academic leadership of the institution.

The presidents were asked to estimate the amount of time spent in fund raising. Most of the presidents stated that they spent twenty to thirty percent of their time in activities geared toward obtaining financial resources for their institutions. Two presidents estimated that fund raising comprised approximately forty percent of their time.

Fund raising activities require that a president often has to leave campus. As one president noted, " Anybody who gives a big gift expects the president to come and see them." Another president reported, "I'm the primary salesman for the college. If the president isn't, he's a dead duck." The president has no choice or option when facing budgets; he must raise funds.

Some of the presidents approach the task of fund raising in slightly different manners. One chief executive responded this way:

I believe very firmly in philanthropy. When I ask someone to invest in our institution, I'm doing them a favor. That's the way I look at it. Otherwise, you're just a huckster. It's just part of the job. I work very closely with the Director of Development. As a matter of fact, he tells me what to do, where to go, and who to see.

Another president reflected his attitude on fund raising by saying:

I probably spend forty percent of my time strictly in activities of fund raising. You have to get people to give money who have never given money before, so it will be easier to get money from them the next time.

Quite often the time spent in securing monies does not always pay big dividends initially. The following remark

by a president explains the long-term nature of fund raising:

I give about two days a week to fund raising. The major gifts usually, if not the results of my efforts in initial cultivation, require my involvement somewhere along the line. Major gifts come about as a result of maybe months and years of intensive conversations with people about what is happening in our institution.

When the investigator asked the presidents about their role in fund raising, one president responded by explaining his approach to prospective donors. He felt it was exceedingly important that the person first understood the nature of the institution. He explained this way:

We take our church-relatedness very seriously. We want to promote an atmosphere of openness, and yet be a Christian liberal arts college. What's unique here is that you take it seriously, but not solely in an official, ecclesiastical sense. We want this position to be presented to people who are interested in giving money to our type of institution. We are appealing to a particular clientele.

Although the colleges and universities were affiliated with some denomination, most did not receive substantial financial support from the church. Most presidents indicated that they received between \$20,000 and \$40,000 from their respective denomination. One institution did receive \$300,000 a year.

The financial support of the institution is also directly related to the governance of the college or university. During prior years when many of these institutions maintained a strong identification with the church, they received substantial funds from the church for the support of the institution. But as some of the colleges moved away

from guidelines and parietal rules often upheld by the church, the financial base was reduced considerably.

During the late sixties and early seventies when the institutions of private higher education were beginning to feel the pains of financial shortages, they attempted in numerous ways to meet the "battle of the budget". One president commented on this as follows:

I think we have seen a switch recently. There was a time when colleges attempted to seek out businessmen as presidents. There were some disastrous results of that. There seems to be a swing back to selecting individuals from the academic community.

This president went on to say that he had known presidents from the business sector who were fairly proficient at fund raising. However, they tended to spend too much time in this activity and neglected the academic program of the institution.

One president pointed out that he had spent considerable time in obtaining a substantial grant from one of the large foundations. He stated that he became involved because no one else in the institution really knew too much about the process of applying for a grant. Although the funds from the grant were not channeled directly into the operating budget, the money was used to support one phase of an educational program.

Two presidents cited that they encouraged and expected their faculty to become involved in raising funds for the institution. One of the presidents said that several faculty members came to see him and expressed their dissatisfaction with the presidents' expectations and declared that

it was not included in their contract as an expectation. The president stated that he informed the faculty members that they could look elsewhere for a job if they weren't interested in the financial stability of the institution.

Fourteen of the fifteen presidents interviewed reported that they had staff personnel in the area of fund raising and development. In the remaining institution, the president was solely responsible for fund raising and development. Interestingly, this particular college was in an excellent financial status. The president had been in office for sixteen years and had an established clientele which financially supported the college very generously.

The individuals who were in charge of development and fund raising in these private liberal arts institutions, were relied upon very heavily, according to their presidents. They did much of the initial contacting of prospective donors and coordination of activities for the president in the process of procuring outside funds.

One president conveyed a situation in which the person who was the chief administrative officer for fund raising had to be relieved of his responsibilities. This particular individual was not bringing in the necessary funds and was speaking negatively about the president to parties both inside and outside of the institution. The president stated that after the staff member was replaced, it took about two years to recover from the harm and poor public relations which resulted from the individual's actions.

In one institution a re-examination of the role of fund raising brought about a change in the top-level executive management of the institution and the hierarchy of the decision-making process. The president of this institution was spending considerable time out of his office engaged in fund raising and public relations work for the college. The decision was made to move the academic dean to the position of provost. Essentially, this meant that the president was responsible for external affairs, and the provost would serve as the chief executive officer for all the internal affairs of the institution. This transition had been in effect for about six months according to the president, and seemed to work satisfactorily. He noted that naturally there were internal matters which required the president's involvement, but the two individuals had worked together for nine years and were able to handle any overlapping areas of responsibilities.

Impact of the "Accountability Crisis"
upon Presidential Decision-Making

The so-called "accountability crisis" has received a great deal of attention in the literature. The findings of this study, as reflected by the views of the participating presidents, revealed that most chief executives regarded the concept to be over-emphasized and somewhat distorted in its scope. Several respondents noted that much of the clamoring about accountability was nothing more than rhetoric.

One president gave the following opinion on accountability:

It is evident that the private college presidents have had to wrestle with accountability a long time before the state university presidents. The financial crisis hit the private colleges first. The private colleges have, by in large, two sources of funds - fee structure and endowment sources. As a result, the private college presidents have been concerned with accountability for a number of years. In fact, I would suppose we are veterans at it; whereas, some of the state universities are just getting to the point of making decisions that the private college president was making in the late sixties.

Most presidents agreed that accountability affected them most significantly in their relationship with the board of trustees. A responding president stated very simply:

The one group I am responsible to is the Board of Trustees. I will do anything they tell me to do, or if I cannot in good conscience do it, I will resign. It's just that simple.

Another president described how he felt accountable to the board of trustees: "The best way to keep the Board of Trustees off your back is to run the affairs of the institution exceedingly well." A slightly expanded view of accountability is expressed by the following president:

There is the legal aspect that I am accountable to the Board of Trustees for whatever goes on. That is a very real responsibility that I feel. In a broader sense, I feel this institution is accountable to society of which it's a part. We have an obligation to meet the educational needs of today's youth and to prepare them for coping with society's problems.

Accountability signifies different things to different people, as noted by a president. He regarded the concept

of accountability to have the following personal implications:

Strictly speaking, I'm not accountable to faculty, students, and alumni, but I have the responsibility to certainly be very sensitive, understanding, and supportive of them. You're essentially accountable to yourself. You have to be true to yourself. My view has great stress on integrity, openness, dealing with information accurately and completely. And what I'm really searching for in terms of accountability is to make good rational decisions.

Often accountability is viewed only in a singular fashion in that one person is being held accountable for his particular area of responsibility. One chief executive declared that this is a misconception evolving around the concept of accountability. He explained this way:

Accountability is a two-way street. I think I have tried to make it very clear to both faculty and students that in cases where I exercise my right to make a decision, my accountability is fairly well identified. I hold the people who are trying to press me for action for the same accountability. So that if a student or faculty group comes to me with a proposition that demonstrates that they have not accepted that same standard of accountability, I have very little patience with them.

The same president indicated that he held himself accountable to groups beyond the board of trustees. He stated, "You are accountable to various groups. As the number of constituencies increase, your accountability is multiplied because your responsibility to each constituency varies in a slightly different way."

Accountability is meaningful, according to one responding president, if it incorporates some form of evaluation.

At his institution, faculty members are held accountable for their performance in the classroom. Each faculty member is evaluated within his department and the salary raise is dependent upon his merit to the institution.

Administrators in the same institution are held accountable on a different basis. The president made the decision two years ago to employ all administrators without a contract. The president said he did this for two reasons. First, he felt the contract agreement was one-sided. If a person was not performing satisfactorily, he or she had to be carried for the entire academic year. Secondly, this president also felt the individual had the "upper hand" by looking for other jobs and being able to leave without being held to the contract. Now, no administrators have a contract, and they will be given a thirty day notice if their employment is terminated. The researcher had the opportunity to talk with one top-level administrator employed at this institution, and he did not reflect favorably on the policy. His perception was that the president felt he needed some additional leverage to hold people accountable for their performance. He also noted that during this two year period, no one had been dismissed under this policy.

Use of Institutional Research and Computer Data System in Administrative Decision-Making

As reviewed in the literature, management information systems and computer applications have had a tremendous impact upon higher education. One of the purposes of this

study was to determine the extent to which private liberal arts institutions were using the computer and some form of institutional research program. The interviews conducted by the investigator revealed some very interesting findings, as reflected in the views of the participating presidents. Initially, some general findings will be presented, then more specific information on the presidents' comments and the various programs will be given.

Twelve of the fifteen colleges and universities involved in the study had their own computers. Most of these computers were owned by the institutions and not leased. The remaining three institutions either shared a computer in a business or "farmed out" any data processing which they might need. So therefore, those institutions which did not have their own computers were using retrievable data in the decision-making process on a very limited scale. In fact, one president noted that "decision-making was a humanistic process and the computer had no place in it."

Three of the institutions surveyed had implemented some type of a management information system and were using it administratively. Four colleges had a designated area of institutional research with staff personnel. In three of these four institutions, the person responsible for institutional research was also responsible for other administration of the computer operations. Four presidents noted that they had a computer or data processing major in their academic curriculum.

One president stated what he considered to be two of the key problems in acquiring and implementing a computer program. He explained:

There are two things which are necessary in deciding to obtain a computer for an institution our size. First, you have to have the financial resources and be able to justify the expenditure. There are a lot of areas in which we need to expand, so you have to establish priorities and decide if the investment in hardware is really worth it. Second, the computer is no better than the people who run it. It's just like a typewriter; it puts out what you put into it. You have to have capable people heading up a computer operation. And it's hard to find those kind of people without paying big money.

Another president expressed a similar view, and he also noted the cost factor. This president stated:

We're right on the verge of getting into a major computer program that will enable us to have both the academic and administrative sides of things. Up to this point, we have not been able to justify the expenditures because we had not synchronized the academic and administrative use. We're in the process of selecting the hardware now.

The president at one of the institutions which did not have a computer gave his rationale for not using one. He declared as follows:

I feel there is a distinct advantage in the smallness of our institution. I have executive officers who know their areas. I can go to my chief financial officer and ask him how much money we spent on a certain activity and he can tell me. It just isn't worth the investment for us to go out and buy a highly sophisticated computer which we really don't need.

Another president commented that private higher education is relatively inexperienced in the area of computer

applications and techniques. According to this chief executive the following problem ensued:

Institutional research is not a matter of hardware, but an organizational matter. So we have tended to put ourselves in the hands of hardware salesmen, when we should have been talking to management people. I know of several institutions which purchased a second generation computer which was pawned off to them by some salesmen, and then they really couldn't use the thing after they bought it. So you must start with programs, then obtain the hardware.

Stated in a precise manner, another president conveyed the approach his institution had taken in implementing the decision-making process with a computer program. He stated:

It's clear that we have not been as self-conscience about this as we should have been. So we are trying to undergird the decision-making process with data instead of hunches. There's a three-step process involved here. First of which is to identify the areas in which you need planning and therefore data. You need to be able to determine the consequences of fiscal decisions. The second is an organizational question - "Are you going to have one information system or is everybody going to keep separate records?" We have resolved that, and there is going to be only one information system. And thirdly, do you handle the information mechanically or manually? Naturally with one information system, we have used a computer to centrally handle all of our data.

This same institution had just hired a management specialist who was to be Director of Institutional Research.

One chief executive explained that the computer was a very valuable administrative tool, but was not necessarily the panacea it was built up to be. His institution was attempting to tie into the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). His reaction

was:

We're not enthralled with NCHEMS, but we're trying to get with it and participate in getting some data lined up for it. Frankly, I have to tell you that sometimes these systems take you all around "Robin Hood's barn" to give you something that's pretty obvious.

Another experienced president stated that, "The role of the computer in this institution is the role of a slave, and we have very competent people managing it. I don't want to learn to use the computer. All I want is the information." This same executive leader went on to say that his Academic Dean and Vice President for Finance were very much computer oriented and made extensive use of it in their operations.

Of the institutions owning their own computers, most had implemented a program of registering students for classes each term. In one of these institutions, the Director of Computer Operations had developed a packaged registration system which he had placed on the market to sell to other colleges and universities.

Generally speaking, most of the institutions visited utilized the computer for student records, alumni records, fund raising and donor records, grades and payroll, and a few had budgets on the computer. However, only the three previously noted had any type of systematic program which involved the total institutional structure.

One of the most sophisticated systems was found in an institution where budget-making was run on a simulation model and projected over a thirteen month period. The

president of this institution was one of the few who had an in-depth knowledge of management systems. In fact, he told the researcher, "I have learned more about these things than I have wanted to know." He did respond in some detail as to the procedures followed in their budget-making model. This chief executive also noted that the question posed to him dealt with decision-making and he indicated that formulating budgets must consist of sound decision-making principles.

As described by the president, the basic planning cycle of the budget was to develop a five year plan in which the annual budget was up-dated thirteen months ahead of the next fiscal year. It also required that a half-time planning assistant to the president or dean be employed to coordinate the budgeting process. The president also mentioned that it took about two years to gear-up for the budget model and to educate the faculty and staff as to the actual mechanics of the operation.

The chief executive gave the investigator a written statement describing the planning cycle of the thirteen month budget projection model. The eighteen-step plan is as follows:

1. Examine institutional goals and objectives.
Propose any new goals and objectives.
2. Examine and revise "environmental assumptions" - best estimates of the state of economy, support for higher education, etc.

3. Get faculty action on any new goals and objectives.
4. Take any new goals/objectives to the Board. Report on planning and budget projection. Action on tuition.
5. Academic Dean requests academic plans from department chairmen, divisional covenors, Librarian.
6. Departments and divisions prepare program plans.
7. Provost and Academic Dean review academic program. Consult as needed with (Faculty Council.) Faculty action needed.
8. Review of academic plan summary by Administrative Council. Take anything necessary to the Board.
9. Request support program plans - dean of students, counseling, supportive services, cormitories, food service, etc.
10. Responsible parties prepare support program plans.
11. Review of support program plans by responsible administrators. Consult with appropriate administrators, faculty committees; seek faculty action if necessary.
12. Review of support summary by Administrative

Council. Take anything necessary to the Board.

13. Prepare estimate of revenue - Preliminary report to the Board.
14. Budget Committee analyzes total program plans and proposes modification.
15. Proposed modifications reviewed by Budget Committee and Administrative Council together.
16. Confer widely on proposed modifications of program before final decisions.
17. Include final program plans in updated long-range plan.
18. Report final plan and budget to Board for approval.

The chief executive felt the implementation of the budget cycle had been fairly successful and that they had attempted to involve each unit or area of the institution in the planning cycle. A Board of Trustee member made the following comment on the objectives of the long-range budget plan:

. . . Management is merely the process by which we seek to meet our obligations and achieve our goals with a minimum of waste of both human resources and material resources. It is the exercise of more rational judgement based upon more reliable data. It is administration by perspective rather than by panic.

Another institution, as reported by the responding president, had instituted an informal Management By

Objectives (MBO) approach among administrative staff. The president noted that no attempt was made to follow any "high powered" format, but that the basic principles of MBO were being followed. This was done to establish both personal and area objectives and to synchronize the decision-making process. He stated that the results of this approach had been quite successful and that the participating administrators were highly supportive of the MBO plan.

One president expressed some disappointment with the lack of input the computer was having upon decision-making at his institution. His views were:

Frankly, the effect upon decision-making so far has not been too great, because we still maintain priority time on the computer for educational and research purposes. The input for administrative decision-making has been probably more at the point of being able to put together much information quickly that has to do with unit costs, budget proposals, and records.

From all the interviews with the participating presidents, there emerged two central problems common to almost all of the institutions involving the computer and institutional research: internal resistance and lack of competent personnel.

Several presidents indicated that they had problems in obtaining the support and cooperation of faculty in utilizing the potential of the computer. One chief executive summarized the situation this way:

You see, you have to remember that the small private college has a great deal of tradition and quite often faculty, as well as administrators,

are resistant to change. They either don't want to have anything to do with systems or the computer, or they just feel it's out of their area. It's a slow process in educating many faculty as to the potential use of the computer, both administratively and educationally.

Another president highlighted the problem of obtaining personnel to head-up a program in institutional research for a small private college. He remarked:

We do not have the personnel for a program in institutional research who can make good use of the computer's capabilities. Our budget won't stretch that far. But we are developing the basis and the memory collection data for management information systems. We are beginning to develop our own RRPM (Resource Requirement Prediction Model) and ICLM (Induced Course Load Matrix) models. One of the big problems is education of our own personnel.

All of the presidents involved in this study who were from one state did mention that they were involved in a statewide study of private institutions which focused on budgeting, finances, and computer applications. This study was being coordinated by William Jellema, a leading authority on private higher education finances, and was being funded by a grant from a large foundation in the state. Not all of the presidents seemed to be sure what the possible benefits of the study would be, but they did not want to be excluded for fear that they might miss out on something.

By in large, the researcher found the presidents to have a general, cursory knowledge in the area of management systems and institutional research, with a small minority having both experience and expertise in computer applications. However, there were several reasons for this.

First, the whole concept of management systems and computer technology is still in an evolutionary state. Private institutions have been one of the last sectors of higher education to become involved. Second, the costs of machinery and personnel are high and often exceed the means of the financially-troubled college. And finally, the heritage of the liberal arts tradition as evidenced in the private institutions has not always had its arms wide open to change and innovation.

Presidential Professional Self-Enhancement

In following the interview guide, the last area in which the presidents were asked to respond dealt with professional self-enhancement. The intent of the inquiry was to ascertain the types of activities chief executives engaged in to keep abreast of the field of higher education and to improve their decision-making skills as chief administrative officers of the institutions.

Most responses were brief and somewhat generalized. The activities which were reported by the presidents are shown in Table 2. Every president noted that reading current literature in the field of higher education was important, but very hard to adequately achieve with any measure of success. As exhibited in Table 2, some presidents noted sources which they considered to be necessary reading. This list was by no means complete, but only those reported by the responding presidents. There was also total agreement that the only time when personal reading could be

accomplished was on weekends or evenings while at home. As one president remarked, "If a president has time to read in his office, then he's really not doing his job."

Several presidents commented on the volume of literature that is sent to them. They indicated they must choose what they feel is relevant and discard the rest.

A number of presidents still taught classes to remain in contact with students and the classroom. They considered this a priority, and an educational experience. One president had taught a seminar overseas. Most presidents noted that they were constantly engaged in speaking before various groups. It was indicated that to be an effective speaker, one must thoroughly research his topic. Several chief executives stated this was a source of learning for them. Two presidents had authored books, and one clearly remarked that this was therapeutic for him.

The one area which elicited the strongest response was attending conventions. At the very most, conventions were regarded as a "necessary evil." Several presidents explained why, such as the following:

I attend no more of those than I have to. Most of them are "gloom and doom" sessions where the boys get together to share the "weeping towel." So you go with your problems, and you come home with yours and theirs; and you've got more problems than you went with.

Another chief executive with a similar view stated, "The last time I went to (convention name deleted,) I just came home disgusted. I said I'd never go again. I don't go to those big meetings anymore."

TABLE 2. - - Activities Presidents Reported They Engaged in
for the Purpose of Self-Education

Reading Current Literature:

American Council on Education Reports
Carnegie Commission Reports
Change
Chronicle of Higher Education
Intercollegiate Press Bulletin
Journal of Higher Education
Liberal Education
Wall Street Journal

Authored a Book

Classroom Teaching

Teaching in Seminar Abroad

Speaking Engagements

Attending Conventions:

American Association of Colleges
 American Association of Higher Education
 North Central Association

Executive Offices in State and Regional Associations

Member of State Commission on Higher Education

Attending Presidential Management Seminars

Attending IBM Computer Seminar for Administrators

Another president declared, "I go to the conferences to see old acquaintances, but you might as well stay home if you go for the meetings." These responses reflected the composite attitude of the participating presidents. They were not very positive about the benefits of national conventions. In fact, one president declared that they had withdrawn their institutional affiliation with the American Association of Colleges.

However, there was a different attitude expressed toward state and regional organizations. All of the presidents were actively involved in the state associations including private institutions. The North Central Association was mentioned most often as being the most beneficial. Several presidents held executive offices in these bodies. One president expressed the benefits of such experience:

In terms of the opportunities and the responsibilities that I've had in organizations of private higher education, both in the state and region, I've just had a natural frame of reference which has been necessary to keep up to date. It has taken me far beyond what would ever have happened had I not found myself in those positions.

Another president had been a member of the North Central Accreditation Association, and found his involvement in accrediting private institutions to be very valuable. Two presidents were members of the State Commission on Higher Education in their respective states. Another chief Executive was an Executive Board member of the Christian College Consortium.

About half of the presidents interviewed reported that they had attended seminars held for presidents dealing with management and administrative concepts. Two presidents had been involved in executive seminars under the leadership of Earl McGrath. Another president attended an IBM Computer Seminar in California for administrators, in an effort to enhance his knowledge in the area of computer applications. Two presidents stated that they had recently attended a seminar in Chicago for midwest presidents which

was sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation.

In responding to the interrogative posed by the researcher, one president responded in the following manner:

That is one of the most difficult parts of this job, trying to keep ahead of the game. One of the things we need desperately is more communication between presidents. Unfortunately because of the image we must maintain, we can't cry out for help, or admit that we need help. The average president works seven days a week for fifty weeks a year.

Finally, one last president responded with tongue-in-cheek when asked what activity he considered important in helping him to become a more effective executive. He stated, "I can answer that with one word - rest."

A summary of the findings and general conclusions drawn from the study will be presented in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER V

THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS INSTITUTION IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

This study has focused upon the decision-making process within private higher education. The findings are the results of personal interviews with fifteen presidents of private liberal arts colleges and universities. These interviews have provided insights into both decision-making and the executive role of the presidency.

In twelve of the fifteen interviews, there was sufficient time for the investigator to ask the presidents to give their appraisal of the role of private higher education. Although these responses were not a specific part of the study on institutional decision-making, they did focus on private higher education and are of sufficient interest to devote a chapter to them.

The Liberal Arts Approach

The question the presidents were most commonly asked was usually phrased as follows:

What role should the private liberal arts college assume in American higher education, and what is your institution doing to accomplish that role?

There has been much literature on the viability of a liberal arts approach to higher education. One president mentioned that large sums of government funds are now being channeled into vocational and career-oriented programs. He stated in the following manner how he felt the private liberal arts college was meeting the challenge of preparing students for a vocation:

There are two dimensions of a college education. One is preparation for a career or vocation. The second thing is development of the total range of potentials and development of a value system. I think the two are closely related. In that sense, the liberal arts experience is a tremendous base for this total development. . . But even with this vocational emphasis, what are some of the things important in vocational preparation? - skills in communication, skills in relating to people, being able to think critically, being able to read intelligently. So that in a sense, the liberal arts education has some vocational components. So if one does a good job in liberal arts there is a sense in which it is career preparation.

Another president reiterated the skepticism found in the press toward the liberal arts tradition. This chief executive had been in office over fifteen years and felt that there would eventually be a swing away from the heavy emphasis upon vocational training and a return to the liberal arts approach to education. He explained his views in this manner:

The liberal arts are much in disfavor right now. I think this represents much of the anti-intellectualism of our time. Now the question is, are we in a cycle or are we, in fact, developing the American version of the liberal arts? I have a feeling that we are in a cycle. One of these days we're going to go back and the liberal arts will

once again be respectable and sought after. So I think there will be this return. When and if this happens, I think you'll see a renaissance of private schools. The question is, will it come soon enough, or will some of them pass out of the picture? There are several colleges that have gone the way of the "dodo bird". Philosophically speaking, I think it would be a horrible thing if all of higher education comes under the control of the state. That kind of homogeneity and institutional style would be terrible I think.

The dominance in higher education of the large state universities was mentioned by several of the responding presidents as being a real problem. However, one president felt the relationship should be one of mutual cooperation and assistance, not complete competitiveness. He defined the role of private education as follows: "The quality in the private institutions is an important leaven in the total lump of higher education."

The preparation of people for public and government office is an area in which one president felt that private institutions needed to assume more leadership. Again, he was concerned with the dominating role which the large, public universities have played in preparation for public affairs work. This chief executive explained his concern as follows:

There is a definite need for public affairs programs in private higher education. I'm convinced that unless colleges like ours are doing something about it, down the line, all of our governors, mayors, councilmen, secretaries of states, political party leaders, are going to be graduates of state universities because they have programs in public affairs and political science. If we are not careful, the pendulum is going to swing completely that way, and private,

independent, church-related schools like ours are not going to have graduates where we ought to have them.

Many private institutions have adopted programs utilized at the public universities in an effort to attract students. The results have not always been successful. The consequences, as purported by one interviewee, have precipitated a struggle with institutional identity for some private colleges. This president explained:

I think a private college has to solve its identity crisis. If we're all going to emulate the large institutions, there is really no need for the continuation of our institution. We have a unique clientele. So I see us functioning within an atmosphere of Christianity, but even that sounds a little smug.

Another president supported this view and held the position that an institution must decide who it is going to serve and establish a specific clientele. He commented on the subject as follows:

I think you'll find private colleges, especially church-related colleges, while they're not "out of the woods" yet, are probably beginning to realize that to survive they are going to have to serve a certain constituency. It's going to have to be a constituency that developed and supported them in earlier years. There is a great deal of print recently. I think the church-related colleges have had a little more of a challenge. There is a growing realization that you can't be all things to all people. It's unfortunate, but we've had I think in excess of 100 colleges close in the last three years. Most of them church-related, small liberal arts colleges that were just no longer viable for a variety of reasons.

One president had just returned from a three month leave in which he had visited private institutions on the east and west coasts. His primary interest was in identifying

factors in those institutions which appeared to be stable in terms of student enrollment and financial status. He declared what he discovered from his visits:

Two very strong impressions emerged. One, those institutions that were doing liberal arts and were doing a really conspicuous job in career preparations were flourishing. Their enrollments were either holding their own or advancing. Secondly, those that were doing a distinctive job in the line of values were also prospering. Some students are getting tired of all this liberalism and are looking for a college which has some definite standards.

According to another president, if the private liberal arts institution is to have an impact upon society, it must be sensitive to the needs of the community in which it is located. He stated that too often the private institution does not go beyond "the hallowed halls of ivy", and consequently there is no strong community identification with the institution. He explained how he saw his institution and its role in the community:

There is a definite need for both institutional identification with the college and a need to meet the educational needs of the community. I see our college in a kind of broker relationship, bringing to the community whatever the community needs, either from our own resources or resources from the community which we pull in to help the community.

In responding to the above question posed by the researcher, several chief executives responded by stating that one of their primary goals in the role of their institution was to maintain a good, quality academic program. They pointed out that it requires qualified and competent faculty to achieve academic excellence.

One president remarked very candidly about the problems of faculty recruitment in a small liberal arts college. He stated:

One of the things I find when recruiting faculty which is very upsetting to me is that we have a whole generation of "takers" rather than "givers." I had a philosophy that we couldn't afford to go out and compete for the top professors, so we raised our own. So we figured in a three-man department, you'd probably have to run twenty people through there over a period of fifteen years before you hook two or three who would stay with you and develop into the "Mr. Chips." We haven't had anyone leave voluntarily in the last three years. So that means we have to do something to keep them alive and upgrade them from within. We've got sixty-eight percent tenured faculty The other devastating thing is the self-image that some faculty have. A man who is not very confident in the first place, and a lot of intellectuals aren't, then has the feeling that he's expendable. It's a devastating thing psychologically. I think morale here is as low as it's been in ten years.

Another president expressed concern in finding faculty who were not only capable, but also who would be supportive of the mission of the institution as a church-related college. He explained his position in these words:

We are a value-oriented institution. Our inheritance is from the Christian tradition, and we stand for certain values. In recruiting faculty, we ask prospective candidates, "Can you in good conscience become a part of our community?" We don't ask them to sign a pledge or anything, but we do want faculty to be supportive and committed to the role of this institution.

The Role of the Church
in Private Liberal Arts Education

The responding presidents had very interesting reactions to the role of the church within their respective institutions. This is an area which has caused some consternation and grief for institutions who have been unsure of their relationship with a supporting church. As one president so ably stated, "Private colleges and their supporting churches are nearly always in a state of ambiguity. There is a stage of uneasy ambiguity. That is the normal state of affairs in most colleges related to the church." Another president affirmed the delicate relationship of the college and the church by saying, "The relationship is like kissing your own sister. You feel close to her and love her, but are afraid to embrace her and kiss her."

Another president when asked about the role of the church in his institution made the following distinction:

We are a college related to the church, rather than a church-related college. The church does not govern or maintain our college. We choose to be affiliated with the church, but we do not see the church dictating to us what standards and rules we should impose on our students. Our relationship is distant, but healthy.

The president of an institution which legally severed its affiliation with the church expressed a similar point of view. He said, "We continue to think of ourselves as operating within the organ of church-related colleges without all of the legal paraphernalia. But that's simply a conviction on our part that we should do this."

Speaking from a philosophical perspective, one president questioned the position of church dominance within the framework of the liberal arts approach to education. He stated his position in this fashion:

A prescribed theological position imposed upon an institution is antithetical to the liberal arts. The liberal arts, after all, is a liberating experience and ought to be carried out in the context of freedom. But it also means freedom to present the Christian tradition, the Mohammed tradition, the Jewish tradition, or what have you. The issue is whether those positions are presented. In too many darn institutions they are not. In too many institutions people don't care, but we do.

Another chief executive related his perception of what a church-related college should be as follows:

A church-related college, if it is truly a church-related college, takes seriously the idea that the dimension of the Christian religion has some very important things to say to the mind as well as to the emotions of people being educated. It's the responsibility of the church-related college to see to it that the student is exposed to what religion has to say about this. The student then can decide what is relevant and meaningful to him. We insist that every student be directly exposed to this.

The need for Christian higher education was voiced by a president, and he explained why:

I am strongly committed to the fact that one of the areas the church needs to move significantly forward in in society is the area of Christian higher education. We simply need, I feel, as a church to be influencing the way people think and act and behave. The best way to do this is in a university setting in my judgement.

This same president then went on to explain how he as the chief executive officer attempted to establish such

an environment within his institution.

First, we're not a giant Sunday school class. I don't see our role as a church-related institution as necessarily being synonymous with a church Sunday school class. As a matter of fact, I think we would have difficulty conveying what I consider to be our impact upon society if folks regarded us as pious, puritanical, or parochial. I simply think our role in the twentieth century is to be a little different than the in-grown church group. Secondly, what we do hope-fully begins with the president and administrators. Many people have said an institution is ultimately the shadow of its chief administrator. I doubt that. I hope this institution isn't my shadow only, but I hope it is the shadow of the people I select to surround me. Next, it begins with division chairmen, department chairmen, and faculty. And it is found in the people who work here - the secretaries, the maintenance staff, the bookstore manager. All of these people are made to be very sensitive about the fact that we are a community of people. . . . Another area is in student recruitment. We say very candidly to prospective students that there are some who are going to like our institution. There are others who are going to be turned off and think we're square. You know, we tell them that if they don't like what we're doing to go somewhere else. Choosing a college is like picking a pair of shoes. You have to get what fits you.

In a very unapologetic manner, a president made the following statement on the role of the church in his institution of higher education:

We're an institution that has done everything wrong in the last twenty-five years. We have not tried to imitate the state institutions. We have not tried to throw our church relationship overboard. We have tried to preserve our root system in the church rather than cut it off. We have not tried to be all things to all people. We have tried to define our clientele to serve them well. We have not tried to be as big as we could be. We have tried to recruit faculty members who

are deeply committed to this type of institution, instead of building a broad general base.

Despite the magnitude of the problems facing private higher education, one president expressed an optimistic attitude toward the future for the church-related institution. This respondent exclaimed:

I have never been more optimistic than I am now. I believe sincerely the Christian college, because of its emphasis upon values and meaning, has the best chance of all the colleges to survive significantly. I have never really been more optimistic than I am now. That is in light of a pretty clear knowledge of the tremendous and complex problem that we now have in private higher education that nobody ever anticipated ten years ago. That's how I feel about it.

The Presidency of the Private Liberal Arts Institution

Finally, several presidents gave brief remarks on their perceptions of the presidency of a small private college or university. The first president had been in office for two years and said that he had felt the emotional stress and pressures of his responsibilities. He also noted the demands that are often made of a president's wife, and that many of her efforts go unappreciated. He expressed his feelings this way:

I can see why presidents don't stay in the presidency too long at a college. You get in so many cross-fires and pressures. In a sense, the good things you do don't get acknowledged - the mistakes you make are always made public. And sometimes you hardly have anyone you can talk to or confide in.

A second president, also gave some interesting insights into his personal feelings about the presidency. This chief executive, who had been in office for eighteen years, very openly stated:

If I had known what I know now, I would have run this shop a lot differently in my earlier years. In my earlier years, it was basically a one-man operation, but that has certainly changed. I am persuaded that one of the principle professions in America for a man to rise according to the "Peter Principle" in a hurry is the college presidency. The way I have to do business now compared with the way I did business a few years ago is so different that I have to tell myself practically every day that 'you're in a different ballgame.' It is very difficult. I'm sure if my profession had more real gut-level discussions about our problems, it would be helpful. But I don't mind admitting to you that more and more I question whether I am able to be the academic manager that I ought to be.

Summary

A number of the college and university presidents who participated in the interviews on decision-making, also shared comments on the role of private liberal arts education as they perceived it. This chapter has been devoted to presenting their views, which were often very candid and introspective.

The presidents generally agreed that private liberal arts institutions have a unique role to fulfill in American higher education. Many declared their concern over the dominance of the large, public universities, but felt that more cooperation between private and state institutions was needed.

It may be concluded that one of the major problems that many small private colleges are wrestling with is an "institution identity crisis". Some presidents stated they knew what direction they wanted to move as an institution, but were less sure about how to accomplish those goals. However, several institutions have maintained a very distinct and clearly defined identity in order to appeal to a specific clientele. It is also clear that many institutions have placed heavy emphasis upon values and their applicability to today's society.

Several presidents noted that the private sector of higher education must reach beyond the walls of the college campus and meet the educational needs of communities in an effort to "practice what they preach". Most presidents were sensitive to the "town-gown" relationships and attempted to institute programs which would induce a sense of community identification with the college.

Concern over recruiting faculty was expressed. Although there is supposedly an over-supply of available faculty on the market, it is difficult to obtain faculty members who are both competent and committed to the goals of Christian higher education.

As one president noted, the relationship between the church and the private college is often one of ambiguity. Most of the institutions involved in the study did not receive substantial financial support from the churches, but the heritage of the Christian tradition was often upheld

and maintained. The emphasis has moved away from traditional parietal rules and shifted to a focus upon values and human integrity.

Finally, several views on the role of the presidency reflect the nature of the position and its impending demands. There appears to be a need for presidents to be more open and realistic with one another in discussing mutual problems. Essentially the college president has to learn to live with the daily pressures of the office without internalizing the stress. And one president has noted the evolutionary change in the presidency in the last fifteen years, and expressed his personal concern about his ability to cope with the demands of the job.

Generally, the presidents' comments tend to reflect the experience they have had within their own institutions. Therefore, some caution should be exercised in making any large-scale generalizations for all presidents. The researcher felt that overall the chief executives he interviewed reflected an attitude of optimism in regard to the present and future status of private liberal arts education. Most presidents were realistic in appraising the role of private higher education and were, of course, very much aware of the impending crisis facing them every day. As one president remarked, "If I didn't believe in what I'm doing, I would get out today."

In the final chapter, a summary of the study will be presented. Conclusions drawn from the findings along with recommendations for further study are also presented.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purposes of this chapter are: (1) to summarize the study, (2) to present findings and conclusions, (3) to state implications of the study, and (4) to recommend further areas of study and suggest possible modifications in the methodology of the study for future research.

Summary

The plight of the private liberal arts institution of higher education has been heralded in recent years. Factors such as declining enrollments, escalating expenditures, and intensified competition for students from state universities and junior colleges have precipitated concern over the viability and the future of the private sector of higher education. Responsibility for the success of the private college or university resides in the president's ability to provide executive leadership for the direction of the institution. The effective leadership of the president becomes even more critical during this period of stress and transition. A central element which determines the president's success in meeting these impending crises is contingent upon his ability to make decisions. The institutional

structure of decision-making is a critical area which deserves examination and study.

It was anticipated that this study might provide a better understanding of the decision-making process within private liberal arts institutions. Since the presidency is the pivotal office in the hierarchy of administration within the private college or university, this study was undertaken to gain the perceptions of the chief executive officer on the decision-making process.

The purposes of this exploratory study were:

- (1) To determine the role of presidential decision-making in the private liberal arts institution and study the hierarchical structure of decision-making to ascertain whether decisions are made individually or by consensus.
- (2) To determine whether students are participating in institutional decision-making in the private liberal arts colleges and universities.
- (3) To determine the president's role in fund raising and institutional development in the small private institution.
- (4) To determine the impact of the "accountability crisis" upon administrative decision-making in private liberal arts higher education.

- (5) To determine the role of institutional research and computer programs in the decision-making process.
- (6) To determine what types of activities the private college president was participating in to improve his executive knowledge and skills.

The study included fifteen presidents from private liberal arts colleges and universities from a three state region including Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. These institutions met the following criteria: accredited, co-educational, church-affiliated or interdenominational, and had an enrollment between 750 and 2500 students. All of the fifteen presidents were interviewed in person and the interviews were tape recorded for posteriori analysis. An interview guide was used which consisted of questions based on the purposes of the study. A descriptive approach was utilized to analyze and present the findings.

Findings and Conclusions

The following are the findings and conclusions of this study.

Experience and Tenure of Participating Presidents

The findings revealed that the fifteen presidents participating in the study had widespread experience in the area of higher education. Thirteen presidents had experience in teaching at colleges or universities. Thirteen chief

executives had administrative experience as either an assistant to a president, as a vice president, or as an academic dean. Eight presidents were ordained ministers or priests and had served in church work in varying capacities. One of these chief executives ascended directly from the clergy to the presidency. Another president had moved directly from the faculty ranks to the presidency within the same institution. Yet another president had been groomed for the chief executive role by participating in an internship sponsored by the American Council on Education. None of the presidents had served as a chief executive at another institution prior to being appointed to his present position.

There was a wide divergency in the academic backgrounds of the sample presidents. Three of the fifteen presidents had received their bachelor's degree from the institution in which they were serving as the top-level administrator. Two of the presidents did not have "earned" doctorate degrees. Although the presidents were in institutions located in the Midwest, the chief executives had attended graduate schools virtually all over the country.

The average tenure of office for the presidents involved in the study was 8.5 years. The range of time in office was from two to twenty years. Although some of the current literature purports that college and university presidents are remaining in office for a shorter period of time, there was no indication of this trend as revealed in the findings of this study.

The Decision-Making Process
Within Participating Institutions

One of the major findings emerging from the study concerning the process of institutional decision-making was the universal practice of consensus decision-making. There was a heavy reliance upon an Administrative Council or a cabinet composed of the chief administrative officers of the institution. Most major decisions culminated in these bodies. Several presidents, however, did emphasize their role as the chief decision-making officer of the institution and were very cognizant of their ultimate responsibility to the board of trustees for virtually all decisions and actions within their college or university.

The size of the private liberal arts institution was regarded as an influential factor in the decision-making process. The smallness was seen as a positive asset and afforded more of an opportunity for the individual to have input into decision-making at various levels.

There was general agreement among the responding presidents that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level, and that commensurate authority and responsibility should be delegated to the individual making the decision.

Another principle finding was the increased role which the boards of trustees assumed in final decision-making. Responding presidents noted in the last few years that governing boards were becoming more involved in the affairs of their respective institutions. Several factors

have precipitated a more active role on the part of boards of trustees. One factor has been the economic and fiscal problems facing many of these institutions. A second reason has been a change in the membership on governing boards. There has been a trend to move away from a preponderance of clergymen on the board of trustees to an increased number of trustees who represent business and industry. The need for expertise in the area of finance and management, as well as attracting more outside funds, has precipitated the change in membership.

Since the board of trustees has become more actively involved in the affairs of the institution, they are also demanding that the president of their institution keep them informed on all matters of importance. Several chief executives regarded the heightened involvement as being a positive measure, but also felt there were some areas in which the board became overly concerned.

Two key problems were noted by the presidents in the process of institutional decision-making. First, some concern was expressed that in "shared decision-making," decisions and corresponding actions were delayed within the committee structure of the institution. Secondly, presidents were no longer making decisions in a time of institutional growth and expansion as they were during the sixties. The primary task was viewed as the "management of stability, not expansion."

Finally, planning was deemed to be a central element in decision-making, and as one president stated, "The budget is the principle decision-making instrument at any institution."

Student Participation in Institutional Decision-Making

The findings of this study revealed that students were becoming increasingly involved in decision-making at private liberal arts colleges and universities. Of the fifteen institutions studied, all fifteen had student representation on faculty committees. Four institutions had a community system of governance in which both faculty and students held positions of equal status. Students were involved in faculty selection and appointment at three institutions. Two colleges had student members on the board of trustees, and students had membership on sub-committees or liaison committees with the board of trustees at six institutions as reported by their presidents. This type of student representation, as compared with the dominance of "in loco parentis" during the sixties at many of those institutions, demonstrated the increased level of student participation in institutional decision-making.

However, there was still evidence of some dissatisfaction with students and their role in decision-making. Some dissatisfaction was expressed by presidents over the failure of students to act responsibly once they acquired the right to become involved in institutional governance and

decision-making. Some presidents regarded students as being apathetic and "issue oriented" in that they only became involved when a major issue surfaced.

Although two institutions had students on their governing boards, the presidents had strong opinions about such representation. Generally, chief executives felt students were not qualified to be on the board of trustees, as such representation would result in a "conflict of interest."

Presidents did regard the maintenance of communication with student leaders as being one of the best methods of obtaining student opinion. This also afforded students the opportunity to have input into the decision-making process. The importance of a competent Student Personnel Staff was noted as having significant impact upon the level of student involvement in decision-making.

Role of Presidential Decision-Making in Institutional Fund Raising and Development

There was uniform agreement among responding presidents that fund raising was a priority activity in the execution of their responsibilities. Chief executives estimated that they expended twenty to thirty percent of their time in fund raising activities, with one president indicating he spent forty percent of his time in seeking outside funds.

Fourteen of the fifteen institutions had staff personnel working in the area of fund raising and development.

The president assumed all responsibility for fund raising at the one remaining institution. The chief executives reported that they relied very heavily upon their staff in this area to coordinate fund raising activities and make initial contacts with prospective donors. Since the public often viewed the president as the spokesman for the college or university, he was required to meet and speak to many groups in an effort to obtain funds.

Several presidents emphasized the importance of decision-making in determining what type of clientele should be solicited in fund raising activities. Initially, there had to be a definition of institutional goals and identification with certain values as expressed by these chief executives. Then the public would have the knowledge of institutional priorities, thus appealing to a particular clientele.

One institution altered their executive organizational structure in an effort to intensify fund raising activities. The Academic Dean was elevated to the position of Provost and was essentially in charge of all internal affairs. The president centered his efforts in the areas of fund raising and public relations. It could not be assumed that there was a trend toward this type of organizational structure, but it is an area which would merit closer attention in the future.

Impact of the "Accountability Crisis"
upon Presidential Decision-Making

The majority opinion, as expressed by the presidents interviewed, revealed that the concept of accountability has been over-emphasized and distorted in its application to private higher education. Essentially, the presidents of private institutions have had to wrestle with accountability a long time before the public college and university presidents.

As previously noted, presidents have realized an increased demand of accountability to their respective boards of trustees in recent years. Presidents reported they were being held responsible for all decisions being made within the institution. They also noted that they were accountable to various constituencies such as alumni, faculty, students, and parents, and society at large.

One president stated that accountability involved a reciprocal relationship. The president's accountability has been fairly well defined. However, this chief executive applied the same sense of accountability to those constituencies which held him responsible for decision-making and commensurate action.

Another president had incorporated faculty performance and merit pay into a model of accountability at his institution. He declared that since academic excellence was a major institutional goal, faculty were being evaluated and held accountable for their performance as educators.

Those whose performance was appraised as being superior were rewarded financially through a "flexible merit pay" system.

Use of Institutional Research and
Computer Data System in
Administrative Decision-Making

As reported by the responding presidents, twelve of the fifteen participating institutions had their own computers. The remaining three either shared a computer with a business organization or had their data processing needs done by an outside firm. Three institutions had implemented some form of a management information system. Four colleges had a designated area of institutional research with staff personnel. In three of these four institutions, the person responsible for institutional research was also the chief administrator for computer operations.

Since the areas of institutional research and computer science are relatively new phenomena to higher education, many presidents conveyed an attitude of reluctance and skepticism toward its applicability to private liberal arts institutions. This is reflected in the limited use of computer data information in decision-making as reported by the chief executives.

The computer was used largely in the areas of student records, alumni records, payroll, and a few institutions were using the computer for budget projections. One institution had developed a budget planning cycle and involved a large number of individuals within the academic community. This plan was explained in detail in Chapter IV.

One president reported that an informal Management By Objectives (MBO) program had been implemented by his administrative staff. His perception of the effectiveness of MBO within his institution was very positive, and he indicated that decisions were being made in a more rational and efficient manner.

A number of presidents consistently mentioned two areas involving the use of the computer which caused some consternation: internal resistance of faculty and administrators, and difficulty in obtaining competent personnel in the area of educational computer applications. Also the costs of hardware and staff are great and often exceed the budget of the finance-conscious private institution. Finally, the private liberal arts institution has not traditionally initiated change and innovative techniques on a large scale.

Presidential Professional Self-Enhancement

One of the purposes of the study was to determine the type of activities presidents were engaged in to keep abreast of the field of higher education and to improve their decision-making skills as chief executive officers. The presidents reported the following list of activities as being meaningful for them: reading current literature and publications, teaching, presenting speeches, attending conventions and management-oriented seminars, and involvement in state and regional associations for private higher education.



Probably the most revealing finding was the great disdain which presidents expressed about attending national conventions. There was consensus among chief executives as to the lack of significant content in meetings and their absence of applicability to private higher education. Participation in state and regional organizations involving institutions of private higher education was regarded by the responding presidents as being very beneficial. About half of the presidents had attended seminars which focused upon executive management concepts, and these, as a whole, were evaluated as having meaningful content since they concerned problems common to the private liberal arts college and university.

Conclusions have been drawn from the principle findings of the study. The following are of particular significance for those concerned with the role of the private liberal arts president, decision-making in higher education, and private liberal arts higher education in general.

1. Presidents of private liberal arts colleges and universities have a deep sense of committment to the goals and purposes of their institutions.
2. Presidents declared a clear need for faculty who were not only competent, but also dedicated and supportive to the role of private liberal arts education.

3. Governing boards of private liberal arts institutions are assuming a more active role in decision-making and in the affairs of their institutions.
4. The role of the church in the church-related college is in a state of transition and does not appear to have as strong an influence as once evidenced.
5. Presidents believe they should be held accountable for their decisions and actions as chief executives, but also hold students, faculty, and staff accountable in the same manner.
6. There is a need for presidents of private liberal arts institutions to gain more exposure to the use and capabilities of institutional research and computer applications in the area of management.
7. Students are acquiring more representation in the governance structure and in decision-making at private liberal arts colleges and universities.
8. State and regional activities of organizations identified with private higher education are of great benefit in enhancing presidents' executive skills.

9. Shared or consensus decision-making is viewed as the most effective approach to decision-making in the private liberal arts institution.
10. Presidents of private colleges and universities feel they should exert more leadership in the areas of public affairs and should become more sensitive to the educational needs of the community in which they are geographically located.
11. Private liberal arts presidents feel the need for more communication and cooperation with public colleges and universities.
12. Presidents believe the private liberal arts institution should place institutional emphasis upon human values and establish a well-defined institutional identity based on these values.

Implications

A clear implication of this study is that the private liberal arts institution of higher education must carefully re-examine its institutional goals and objectives and establish an "institutional identity" based on those goals and objectives. This identity should reflect the uniqueness of the institution and its educational program. A decision should be made as to what type of clientele the

institution desires to attract and serve. Essentially, the private college or university must void itself of a philosophy of attempting to be "all things to all people."

A second implication is that a uniform and rational process of decision-making should be established within an institution of higher education. The students, faculty, and staff should all be educated as to the framework of the decision-making process to allow maximum input and participation by all constituencies. The total university community should be informed of all major decisions and commensurate action.

A third implication is that the president of a private liberal arts college must possess a multitude of talents in providing the executive leadership needed to maintain a program of academic excellence. He must be both an educational leader and an administrative leader giving direction to the institution.

A fourth implication for presidents, is the need for training in the areas of executive management, fiscal operations and budget formulation, and decision-making.

A fifth implication is that since it is unrealistic to assume that the president has all of the necessary skills to manage the institution at maximum efficiency, he must have both the freedom and the ability to select and develop administrative staff who can carry forth the goals and objectives of the institution. There should also be a sensitivity to meeting the needs of staff in terms of

improving their administrative skills.

A final implication of this study is that the private liberal arts president must maintain a sensitivity to all of the various constituencies, such as students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, financial donors, and trustees; but, at the same time remain his "own boss." The president must have the freedom and latitude to make decisions independently and follow the course of action he deems most appropriate.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following are recommendations for future research and suggestions for possible modifications in the methodology of the study if it were to be used for future research purposes.

1. The study should be replicated in four or five years using the same presidents, where possible. This would provide a longitudinal study and serve as a basis for measuring change in the decision-making process according to the variables investigated in this study.
2. The study should be replicated in a different geographic region or on a national scale so that the findings could be analyzed and compared with the findings of this study.

3. Research is needed in which the total institutional community involved in decision-making is studied. This would involve the interviewing of students, faculty, administrators, and governing board members to gain their perceptions of institutional decision-making.
4. There is a need for the study of the role of institutional research and management information systems in private liberal arts institutions. Since this is a relatively new phenomenon in higher education, it will merit close attention in the future.
5. A study is needed in which the executive leadership role of the private liberal arts president is investigated. It would be valuable to identify those factors which characterize "presidential leadership qualities."
6. The role and influence of the church in the church-related, private liberal arts college or university should be studied.
7. Another area which should be studied is the organizational structure of the student affairs division within private liberal arts institutions, and an attempt should be made to determine the impact of the

professional staff upon students.

Although the scope of this study was delimited several times during the development of the initial research plan, several of the questions used on the interview guide could have been eliminated or used as the basis for a separate research study. A study utilizing a questionnaire for data collection should be given consideration. Although this researcher felt the personal interviews were invaluable, such factors as traveling time and distance, cost of the study, and the extreme amount of time involved in analyzing the data should all be considered by the researcher before conducting such a study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PRESIDENTIAL INTERVIEW FORM

NAME OF PRESIDENT: _____

INSTITUTION: _____

DATE: _____

I. INTRODUCTION

Brief introduction of interviewer, expression of appreciation for willingness and time of president to participate in the study. Relate nature and purpose of study and explain how interview information will be utilized. Request permission to tape record interview and explain that the research methodology requires posteriori analysis. Tape recording of the interview will assure accuracy of comments and prevent distortion and interviewer bias. Reassure interviewee of confidentiality and that neither his name nor the name of his institution will be identified in the study.

II. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. First, please give me a brief history of your academic background and previous positions held before becoming president. Also note how long you have served as president.
2. Briefly characterize the decision-making hierarchy within your institution and explain the decision-making role of the board of trustees.
3. How is student input recognized, and how are students' views incorporated into the decision-making process?
4. What is your role in fund raising and institutional development, and how much time do you expend in these areas?
5. What effect has the "accountability crisis" had upon presidential decision-making?
6. To what extent do you as president rely upon an institutional research program and/or computer data base for decision-making?

7. In what ways do you as president attempt to keep abreast in your knowledge of higher education administration and improve your professional skills as a chief-executive decision-maker?
8. What role should the private liberal arts college assume in American higher education, and what is your institution doing to accomplish that role?

III. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS AND REACTIONS TO INTERVIEW:

IV. INTERVIEWER'S IMPRESSION OF INTERVIEW:

APPENDIX B

DATE

PRESIDENT
ADDRESS

Dear President _____,

As a Ph.D. candidate in Administration and Higher Education at Michigan State University, I am conducting a doctoral dissertation study concerning the role of decision-making of presidents at private liberal arts institutions of higher education. Presidents of institutions in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio are participating in this study. I would like to request a forty-five minute structural interview with you to gain your perceptions of presidential decision-making at _____ College.

There are several significant reasons for conducting this study. First, there is a clear need for more research in the area of private higher education and the decision-making process. Secondly, the president's role in the small Christian liberal arts institution is the key determinant of success and direction, and thus, merits study. Finally, I am a graduate of a private liberal arts college and have a personal interest and commitment to the future of private higher education.

To indicate your willingness to participate in this study, please complete the enclosed form and return it in the stamped self-addressed envelope. Since I will be visiting a number of presidents at various institutions, I have suggested a meeting time on (SUGGESTED DAY, DATE, AND TIME.) I would appreciate your willingness to meet on this date, if possible.

Please be assured that your name and institution will in no way be identified in the study and that all information will be held in strict confidence.

Thank you for your consideration and interest. I would be most appreciative of a reply at your earliest convenience and shall look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sam Shellhamer

PRESIDENT'S REPLY FORM

_____ I would be happy and willing to participate
in your study of private liberal arts presidents,
and will be able to meet with you on the
following date:

DATE: _____ TIME: _____

_____ I would be happy and willing to participate in
your study of private liberal arts presidents,
but will not be able to meet on the suggested
date and will look forward to a contact from
you regarding an interview time.

_____ I will not be able to participate in your study.

NAME: _____

INSTITUTION: _____

Please return in self-addressed
envelope to:

Mr. Sam Shellhamer
4470 Seaway Drive
Lansing, Michigan 48910



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