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ABSTRACT

The investigation examined the relationship among role conflict, role ambiguity, and motivation to work of teacher-negotiators. The theoretical rationale for the study was formulated from the finding of Walton and McKersie, Deutsch, Vidmar and McGrath, and Blum concerning the negotiator's conflict with his adversary, his dependence on his representative group, his personal role in the negotiation process, and his desire for job security and stability. The sample included 191 negotiators and 247 nonnegotiators. Data analysis procedures include discriminant analysis and analysis of variance. A quasi-factor describing the differences between negotiator and nonnegotiator groups was developed from the research findings. (Author)

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**THE PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATOR: ROLE CONFLICT,
ROLE AMBIGUITY AND MOTIVATION TO WORK**

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**The Professional Negotiator: Role Conflict,
Role Ambiguity and Motivation to Work**

Since the early 1960's a steady growth of collective bargaining has been evident in the public sector. By 1966 there were thirty-three teacher strikes while the previous ten years produced only thirty-five (Glass, 1967). The issues were not only higher wages and better working conditions but also a desire by teachers for a voice in policy matters of the schools (Carlton and Goodwin, 1969). Additionally, Bakke (1967) and Gilroy, *et. al.* (1969) indicated that collective negotiations would eventually evolve to include policy decisions heretofore exercised almost exclusively by administrators and school boards.

Essentially, the role of the administrator has been generally accepted by teachers, boards and the public as one of agent of the board. Conversely, in bargaining situations, teachers are clearly in the adversary position in relationship to boards of education and administrators.

Because of the increased emphasis, and in some cases new insertion, of collective bargaining between local teachers' associations and boards of education, some teachers, in the roles of professional negotiators, have found themselves in conflict situations which are different from those encountered in the classroom or from those which they might normally experience in fulfilling their classroom obligations. Having come to some understanding of his role as teacher, the professional negotiator role for the teacher could possibly cause conflicting self-perceptions as to his teaching and negotiating roles, as well as possibly create feelings of ambiguity. The teacher-negotiator is

likely to find the dual role of teacher and negotiator discomfoting since the expectations of his peers may be different for each role. On the other hand, a logical assumption is that those who choose to be negotiators may possess work characteristics which would enable them to handle conflict situations and differing expectations on the part of peers with relative equanimity.

With the foregoing as a foundation, the general purpose of this research was to provide empirical information regarding negotiating and non-negotiating teachers' self-perceptions of work motivation, role conflict and role ambiguity as well as develop a demographic profile of educational negotiators.

Rationale

The accelerated growth of collective bargaining in education can be illustrated by an increasing number of strikes (Blum, 1969 and Bhaerman, 1972); growing teacher militancy caused by teachers' perceptions of boards being hostile to negotiations (Hellriegel, 1970); inadequate formulation of policy by administrators (Wynn, 1970); and unanimity of positive teacher attitudes toward the growth of collective bargaining (Urich, 1969). The increased use of the negotiation process has thrust teachers into the new role of negotiators for their local associations.

In addition to the teacher's professional teaching duties, the teacher-negotiator becomes the object of forces for which he may have little or no training or expertise. Vidmar and McGrath (1970) called these forces R, A, and C forces. The teacher-negotiator must now be responsive to his professional constituency or referent group (R forces),

perceive correctly the antagonist group's demands (A forces), and also be perceptive of the community's positions, values and goals in relationship to issues considered in the collective bargaining process (C forces). Other authors have discussed the referent considerations of negotiators. Mack and Snyder (1957) considered the relationship of a negotiator's values to his constituency, role of mediators, and environmental and community considerations. Deutsch (1960) discussed expectations for other (referent and antagonist groups). Druckman (1967) considered attitudinal and representational commitment. Walton and McKersie (1965) discussed role obligations of the negotiator. Additionally, there seems to be a degree of confusion on the part of educators as to the types of bargaining strategies that exist (Poort, 1968 and Goe, 1967), recommendations for arbitration (Ross, 1969) and fact-finding (Staudohar, 1970).

The teacher, in his new role as a negotiator, might very well find himself experiencing conflict as to the types of alternatives available to him in a bargaining situation (March, 1967). In direct relationship to his referent group, the negotiator may experience various types of role conflict such as the following: (a) intrasender, (b) intersender, (c) interrole, (d) person-role and (e) role overload (Katz and Kahn, 1966). Katz and Kahn defined role conflict as a simultaneous occurrence of two or more role sendings such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other. This dilemma can occur for the teacher-negotiator in relationship to his referent group and between his perceived negotiator role and his immediate authority's perception of his role as teacher.

Because of the uncertainty involved in most negotiation situations, the inability of the teacher-negotiator to predict the outcome of his

own behavior as well as to know what behavior is appropriate in relationship to his teaching and negotiating roles could possibly cause role ambiguity (Rizzo, 1970). Kahn (1964) indicated that role ambiguity is the lack of necessary information which could result in coping behavior to solve the problem or use defense mechanisms to distort the reality of the situation.

When a negotiator is faced with a conflict situation, motivation to reduce the conflict is generated (March, 1967). Also, (Kahn (1964) indicated that role ambiguity would lead to one of two types of coping behavior: (a) solve the problem, or (b) distortion of reality. Kahn, et. al. 1964; Wispe and Thayer, 1957; Cohen, 1959; and Smith, 1967 all found that high degrees of role ambiguity were associated with increased tension, anxiety, fear and hostility, decreased job satisfaction, and loss of self-confidence often with lower productivity. Because of the conflict-producing nature of the negotiation process, the negotiator will find himself in increasing numbers of situations in which he must make a choice between working to resolve the problem or distortion of the reality of the conflict. The question arises as to whether the negotiator chosen by his peers possesses work motivation characteristics different from other teachers which would better enable him to solve arising conflict situations.

Vroom (1964) used the term motivation to refer to a process of governing choices made by persons among alternative forms of voluntary activity. An essential concept to the area of work motivation is that of inequity-perception of inputs and outputs of others (Adams, 1963). Festinger (1959) found that perception of inequity caused tension in a person and Adams (1963) indicated the means for reducing inequity would

be for the individual to increase his inputs, decrease one's outcome to match another's input or distort inputs and outcomes similar to the device used when one experiences role ambiguity. From the foregoing literature, the following hypothesis was developed and served to guide the study.

Hypothesis

A quasi factor that describes the differences between negotiating and non-negotiating teachers can be established with the following variables: role ambiguity, role conflict, motivation to work (potential for personal challenge and development, competitiveness desirability and reward of success, tolerance for work pressure, conservative security, willingness to seek reward in spite of uncertainty vs. avoidance of uncertainty, and surround concern).

Methodology

Instrumentation

Role conflict and role ambiguity. Items having the highest factor loadings from Rizzo et. al. (1970) role conflict and role ambiguity questionnaire were selected to measure role conflict and role ambiguity among negotiators and comparison teachers. The eight items selected were chosen from an original list of thirty. Four items were chosen to measure each factor. The respondents replied to each item on a seven-point Likert-type scale which included the following categories: (a) very false, (b) false, (c) somewhat false, (d) neutral, (e) somewhat true, (f) true, and (g) very true. The categories were assigned values of 7 through 1.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients (1951) were calculated to estimate the reliability of the role conflict and role ambiguity measures. The alphas were .69 for role ambiguity and .74 for role conflict.

Educational Work Component Study (EWCS). The EWCS (Miskel and Heller, 1972) originally devised from the Work Component Study (Borgatta, Ford and Bohrnstedt, 1968) was used to measure motivation to work of negotiators and non-negotiating teachers in this study. The original seven factor, 66 item WCS (Borgatta, et. al., 1968) was pared to a six factor, 49 item EWCS (Miskel and Heller, 1972).

To modify the WCS for use in the public schools and yet preserve the content, Miskel and Heller (1972) reworded the original items by replacing those words pertaining to an industrial work situation with words indicating an educational work situation. The Cronbach alpha coefficient (1951) for the six subcategories of the EWCS were .80, .73, .79, .81, .82 and .83.

The six unidimensional factors found to be operating in the educational organization through factor analysis were as follows: (a) Potential for personal challenge and development--to measure the desire in job situations where there is an opportunity for creativity, and opportunity for as much responsibility as one wants, and an emphasis on individual ability; (b) competitive desirability--to measure whether an individual seeks job situations where the salary is determined by merit, the competition is keen, and the emphasis is an accomplishment; (c) tolerance for work pressure--to measure attitudes toward situations where the work load might be excessive or where a person might have to take work home; (d) conservative security--to measure whether the individual wants to play it safe and have security with well-defined

promotion guidelines and job routines; (e) willingness to seek reward in spite of uncertainty versus avoidance of uncertainty--to measure whether the individual is willing to do interesting work even though he might get fired easily or it might be a short-run job; (f) surround concern--to measure the individual's concern with the hygiene aspects of the job.

The respondents read the directions: "How desirable would you consider each of the following items in a job for you? A job where" The items followed, each with a five Likert-type response varying from "completely undesirable" to "would favor job greatly." The categories were assigned arbitrary values of one to five..

Demographic data. Six items were included in the demographic section for the comparative teachers and the negotiators. The six items included age, sex, educational aspiration, present position, tenure in present position and length of teaching experience.

Two additional questions were included for negotiators only to determine the extent of collective bargaining that transpired and the negotiator's perception of the type of bargaining engaged in by the parties, for example, distributive, integrative, or mixed. The first question for negotiators asked, "Did you, or do you plan to, as a negotiator for the teachers (1) meet directly with the board and discuss items of concern, (2) merely present a written form of concerns to the board or its representative (3) make no contact with the board of education or any of its representatives." The second question for negotiators asked, "If, as a negotiator for the teachers, you met directly with the board of education or one of its representatives, did you find the meeting to be one in which (1) sharing of information and cooperation on the parts of the board and teachers was most evident, (2) the

negotiation procedure was a battle of demands by each side, or (3) the negotiations consisted of parts of the two above."

Sampling

The sample used for the study consisted of 556 Kansas teachers. Of this number 267 were negotiators. The names of 178 negotiators were obtained from Kansas-NEA of Topeka. In districts without a negotiator on the K-NEA rolls, negotiators were contacted through the presidents of each local association and this group numbered 89. One non-negotiating teacher from 289 school districts was randomly selected from faculty lists for the current school year. The first mailing of questionnaires to 289 comparison or non-negotiating teachers yielded 205 or 70% and of 267 negotiators 147 or 54% responded. A follow-up questionnaire yielded 42 additional comparison teachers for a total of 247 or 85% of which 241 or 83% were useable. An additional 53 questionnaires returned by negotiators for a total of 200 or 74% of which 191 or 71% were useable. Of the 191 returns 151 or 56% of the total were selected on the basis of whether the negotiators met directly with their respective boards of education. It was posited that those not participating in direct negotiations with boards of education would not be representative of the negotiator group.

Design

The primary statistical technique for data analysis was a multiple discriminant analysis procedure using the Muldis program of the NT-SYS (Roulf, et. al., 1969). This procedure calculated discriminant scaled weights of each variable for building a quasi-factor to describe the negotiator and comparison teacher groups.

From the discriminant weights on each variable a discriminant function was calculated which was tested with an F statistic to determine

significance. Standardized discriminant weights were then calculated on each variable from the estimate of the pooled standard deviation and discriminant weight to determine which variables displayed the most relative importance.

Findings

In interpreting the findings of the discriminant analysis technique, the means of each group were used to determine which variables were representative of the comparison teachers and of the negotiators. The means of each group were determined by the projections of the group means onto the discriminant function. The group with the higher mean was described by the variables which displayed a positive direction and the group with the lower mean was described by the variables which displayed a negative direction. The discriminant function means for the comparison teachers and negotiators were 2.21 and 1.66 respectively.

From the discriminant weights on each variable, a discriminant function was calculated which was tested with an F statistic to determine significance. An F with 8 degrees of freedom to infinity equals 3.27 at the .01 level. An F of 3.38 with 8 and 383 degrees of freedom was calculated and was found to be significant at the .01 level. An inspection of Table 1, Standardized Discriminant Functions, revealed that the role conflict variable had a standardized weight of -0.54 which demonstrated the highest relative importance of those variables which were descriptive of negotiators.

Table 1 about here

Consequently, negotiators were found to experience more significant self-perceived role conflict than teachers not participating directly in the negotiations.

Of the three variables descriptive of negotiators, the role ambiguity variable demonstrated relative importance second only to role conflict with a standardized weight of -0.47 as indicated in Table 1. Negotiators were found to experience more significant self-perceived role ambiguity than teachers not participating directly in negotiations when using the findings of the discriminant analysis technique.

The calculated standardized discriminant weights for the six EWCS variables and the two role variables ranged from -0.23 to 0.68 . All but two variables, surround concern (0.15), and potential for personal challenge (-0.23) were found to be good describers of their respective groups.

Those variables, in order of their relative importance, which were representative of the comparison teachers, were conservative security (0.68), willingness to seek reward in spite of uncertainty (0.51), and tolerance for work pressure (0.35). Those variables representative of negotiators were found to be role conflict (-0.54), role ambiguity (-0.47), and competitiveness desirability (-0.31). Potential for personal challenge (-0.23) did not approach half of the variable conservative security with the largest standardized discriminant weight of 0.68 . The findings supported the hypothesis in that all variables except surround concern and potential for personal challenge were found to be descriptive of differences between negotiators and non-negotiating teachers.

Demographic Data

From the demographic data in Table 2, a profile of negotiators emerged in relationship to non-negotiating teachers. Most negotiators' ages were from 21-45 years (62%) and the largest percentage of this group were between 30-39 years (34%). Most negotiators were male by a 2 to 1 ratio (66% to 34%, respectively) and were found to be predominantly secondary teachers by a 3 to 1 ratio (64% secondary and 21% elementary).

Table 2 about here

Almost one-half of the negotiators were in their first five years at their present position, however, most, by a 4 to 1 ratio, had five or more years of teaching experience. Also, the level of aspiration of negotiators was higher than those of the comparison teachers with 67% aspiring to a Masters or beyond while the comparison teachers had 38% in the same category.

Additionally, negotiators, when questioned as to the type of negotiations which transpired, perceived the bargaining to be predominantly integrative (50%) or mixed (44%). A very small percentage (6%) perceived bargaining to have been a battle of demands or solely distributive bargaining.

Implications and Discussion

The first implication is based on the finding that the variable tolerance for work pressure, is most representative of the comparison-teacher group and least representative of the negotiator group. Negotiators' lack of tolerance for work pressure might lead one to imply that negotiators are chosen or choose their role because they are less likely

to acquiesce to constant work increase in their teaching role. Also, negotiators were found to be the direct antithesis, not only of teachers, but also principals. Miskel (1973) found that principals displayed greater tolerance for work pressure than students or elementary teachers. The implication is that negotiators display a greater sensitivity to greater work in their teacher role thus indicating one work characteristic that motivates the selection of the negotiator's role.

The second implication is based on the finding that the variable conservative security was most representative of teachers. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Miskel's (1973) study of work motivation of educators. He found that those in leadership positions, for example, administrators, indicated less desire for conservative security than teachers. The implication is that negotiators display leadership characteristics attributed to administrators by Miskel in greater degree than found to be characteristic of teachers. Negotiators also indicated, through a low preference for conservative security, motivation to perform in conditions which might create frustration. Blum (1961) found that some individuals select jobs in which elements of security are high while others are less concerned with security. Negotiators appear to be atypical from their constituency in their lack of concern with security.

A third implication drawn from this finding and using Adam's (1963) means available to a person for reducing inequity, is that rather than choosing to distort the reality of inputs which cause inequity, the negotiator chooses to increase his inputs through participation as a negotiator thus indicating less concern for security than for being an agent of change. This implication is further substantiated with the

finding that negotiators demonstrated high motivation for competitiveness desirability. Additionally, negotiators expressed a higher educational aspiration than the comparison teachers. Consequently, negotiators seem to emerge from the teacher group as individuals who are relatively unconcerned about job security and who possess a desire for competitive situations.

The fourth implication is based on the findings that the variables role conflict and role ambiguity are most representative of the negotiator group. The implication is that the negotiation process is a stressful or conflict-producing activity and one in which the participants will experience confusion as to their role. The findings of high negotiator role conflict lends empirical support for the theoretical discussion of Walton and McKersie (1965) of factors which create conflict in the negotiation process. The authors posited three basic contributing factors to be considered by a negotiator: (a) the need to defend one's self-interest as well as engage in joint problem-solving, (b) the involvement of attitudes, feelings and tone of relationship in negotiations, and (c) the complexity of social units which are interested and influential in what transpires at the bargaining table. Vidmar and McGrath (1970) presented the Tri-Forces which further discussed the effects of the referent group pressures. Additionally, Vidmar (1971) found that representational role obligations are detrimental factors in negotiation effectiveness. This lack of clarity as to the negotiator's role in relationship to the various forces which act upon him, might result in confusion as to which forces should warrant his consideration. Smith (1957) indicated that lack of clarification of the role of each member in solving problems could create role ambiguity. Cohen (1959), Wispe and Thayer (1957), Rizzo et. al. (1970) and Kahn, et. al. (1964)

posited that role ambiguity was associated with increased tension, fear, hostility and job dissatisfaction. The foregoing theoretical positions are supported by the finding of high self-perceived role ambiguity by negotiators.

One might question why negotiators displayed high results on both role conflict and role ambiguity. One possible reason for the perceived role conflict and role ambiguity experienced by negotiators is that lacking sufficient expertise in the bargaining process the negotiator approached the issues from a problem-solving orientation. Poort (1968) found that a general naivete' concerning collective negotiations existed among those in education. If one side in bargaining is using basically an integrative approach to the issues while the adversary is employing distributive techniques, the adversary is at a definite advantage (Walton and McKersie, 1965). Only 6% of the negotiators surveyed indicated that the bargaining which took place was distributive in character. However, of the remaining number 50% felt the type of bargaining they participated in was integrative or having a problem-solving orientation and 44% felt the bargaining was mixed in type. The implication is that educational negotiators lack the expertise in bargaining techniques which might subsequently lead to greater role conflict and role ambiguity than ordinarily found in experienced negotiation representatives.

The sixth implication is based on the finding that the variable willingness to seek reward in spite of uncertainty was most representative of the comparison teachers. This finding seems contrary to what one might expect at first consideration. One might assume that this variable would be most representative of the negotiator group if the other variables are taken into consideration. Possible explanations for this apparent phenomenon is that teachers responding to the questionnaire

were doing so in context to their classroom and the autonomy which they maintain in that setting. The negotiator might be responding in relationship to his teaching role as well as his negotiating role. Evidence has already indicated that he perceives role conflict and role ambiguity as significant factors. The negotiator also may be confronted with more realistic situations which bear more significantly on this variable than teachers functioning primarily in the classroom setting. For example, Walton and McKersie (1965) posited that the negotiator is usually more realistic of the gains that can be achieved at the bargaining table than is his referent group. Hence, because of his better knowledge of the real situation, he may be less inclined to seek those rewards which have a great amount of uncertainty attached to them. Also, he has the added responsibility of being answerable to his referent group for any actions taken.

The final implication is based on the findings that most descriptive variables in the area of motivation to work distinguish between teachers and negotiators. The general implication is that negotiators are the personified representatives of the new teacher militancy which was discussed by Brubacher (1969), Wynn (1970), Hellriegel (1970), and Moore (1971). Support for this general implication was given in the foregoing implications which were based on the findings of this study. The emergence of a negotiator type from the ranks of teacher associations presents one with an individual who possesses particular distinguishing characteristics. The emerging negotiator type is an individual who is relatively young, has at least five years teaching experience, appears to be hypersensitive to increased work requirements, is willing to assume a leadership role and is desirous of competitive situations.

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TABLE I

Standardized Discriminant Functions for
EWCS, Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict
for Negotiators and Comparison Teachers

Variables	Estimate of the pooled S. D.	Discriminant Weights	Standardized Discriminant Weights
1. Potential for Personal Challenge	2.74	— 0.08	— 0.23
2. Competitiveness Desirability	4.56	— 0.07	— 0.31
3. Tolerance for Work Pressure	3.59	0.10	0.35
4. Conservative Security	4.14	0.16	0.68
5. Willingness to Seek Reward in Spite of Uncertainty	4.63	0.11	0.51
6. Surround Concern	3.88	0.04	0.15
7. Role Ambiguity	3.96	— 0.12	— 0.47
8. Role Conflict	4.76	— 0.10	— 0.54
Projection of group means onto the discriminant function mean			
Comparison teachers	2.21		
Negotiators	1.66		

TABLE 2

Frequency Table for Demographic Variables

Item	Negotiators		Comparison Teachers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<u>Age</u>				
21-29	43	28	73	30
30-39	52	34	42	17
40-49	34	23	50	21
50-65	22	15	76	32
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Sex</u>				
Male	99	66	96	40
Female	52	34	145	60
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Level of Aspiration</u>				
Less than Bachelor	1	<1	3	<1
Bachelor	1	<1	28	12
Bachelor plus	35	23	121	50
Masters	33	21	26	12
Masters plus	68	45	26	12
Doctorate	13	1	0	0
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Present Position</u>				
Elementary	31	21	197	82
Secondary	96	64	24	10
Other	24	15	20	8
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Time in Present Position</u>				
New	3	2	3	1
1-5 Years	61	40	139	58
5 Years or More	87	58	99	41
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Length of Time as a Teacher</u>				
New	1	<1	4	2
1-5 Years	28	19	71	29
5 Years or More	122	81	166	69
	<u>151</u>		<u>241</u>	
<u>Types of Perceived Negotiations</u>				
Distributive	9	6		
Integrative	75	50		
Mixed	66	44		
	<u>150</u>			