

**A Study of Instructors' Decision Making Styles in MBA English Program and BBA
in English Program at Siam University**

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Abstract

This study intended to describe the decision making styles of instructors in MBA English Program and BBA English Program at Siam University of Bangkok, Thailand. The study was primarily based on three decision making styles: '*Autocratic decision making style, Consultative decision making style and Group decision making style*'.

This study designed as a descriptive quantitative research by utilizing the survey to find out which decision making styles the instructors preferred to use when they had to make a decision in their concerning faculties where they have worked. The distributed questionnaires consisted of two parts: the demographic data and the decision making styles of the instructors who responded the survey. Total 10 of instructors from both schools of English Program were used in this case study. In fact, the 15 of instructors were distributed the questionnaires to give answers in this paper but the 5 out of 15 instructors did not respond and return questionnaires, and all respondents (instructors) were male. The survey distribution was acted in May 2015 to June 2015 and recollected all data from respondents in July 2015. The collection questionnaires were computed by the descriptive statistic including frequency, percentage and means.

This study found that the favorite decision making style instructors used to attempt making a decision when they confronted the problematic issues in their faculties were the group decision making style as the most preferred decision making style in this study. Regarding demographic of instructors, the results showed that the female instructors from both schools did not answer and all respondents were males, there were between 30-50 years old most and between 10-20 years of work experiences as well. The 8 of instructors earned PhD of education level while the 2 of instructors were at MA of education level.

Regarding discussion of research finding, the group decision making style the instructors preferred to practice when making a decision could generate five domains – communication, collaboration, responsibility, accountability and motivation in working place of an organization. However,

the group decision making style always requires time limitation to reach decision making by collective ideas. About demographic, the equal gender is not so much important in the decision making process and instead the age, work experiences and education level are more effective on decision making process and meanwhile, heterogeneous nationality in decision making produces the effective outcomes with collective ideas and cultural differences.

Depending on the research's finding, the recommendations are provided to the administrators and hierarchy staffs of both schools to consider collective idea in decision making and not always try to use autocratic decision making style in any problematic issues of faculties. The instructors are recommended to carefully consider the most effective decision making style relevant to situations to reduce time waste although they preferred to use the group decision making style.

Keyword: Decision Making Style: Autocratic, Consultative and Group Decision Making Style

Introduction

In the 21st century the required skill of the educational leaders is much emphasis on the problem solving skill. The problem solution embodied a series of decision making and the value of decision making is measured by the problem solving effectiveness. The decision making has three major materials: a goal, option for attaining to the goal and the choice of a preferred option among alternatives. However, when the problem comes, it needs to make an effective decision to solve it (Kowalski et al., 2012).

Siam University has demonstrated educational innovation and state-of-the-art technology to supply its students with the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed at the dawn of this new century. Siam's mission is to produce students who are competent, efficient and confident in their fields of study and ultimately in their chosen fields of work. These traits along with a sound ethical and moral grounding, and an understanding of diversified cultures, will provide them with the insight and abilities needed for continuing development after their school years have concluded (Siam University Website).

Since its establishment in 1986, The Graduate School of Business Administration at Siam University has been one of the pioneers in Thailand to offer an MBA program, and has continuously dedicated its resources and expertise to provide the most outstanding MBA education. Throughout its 18 year history, The Graduate School has graduated several thousands of superior top executives to business and government enterprises. MBA graduates have become proactive leaders with sound vision, innovative

minds and high professional integrity. The wide range of MBA programs prepares students to succeed in both the private and public sectors.

So far, there is no research about the instructors' decision making styles at MBA English Program and BBA in the English Program of Siam University. This paper will explore which decision making styles of instructors in the above stated schools suite to lead the standardized institution. This research, therefore, is focused on the decision making styles of the instructors.

Objectives

This research is conducted to identify the instructors' decision making styles and to know which decision making style is primarily used, and to identify the impact of the demographic on the decision making process.

Literature Review

Decision Making is defined as the process of choosing a particular action that deals with a problem or opportunity. The quality of the decisions that managers make is the yardstick of their effectiveness. Sometimes just one or two exceptionally good or exceptionally poor decisions can have significant effects on a manager's career or an organization's success (Sanders, 1999). The term "decision making" is also defined in immensely different ways. Maung Dennis (2012) searched that taking the perfect decision making is an ongoing process and challenging task of every leader not only in the field of education but also in any other organizations.

Baron (2004) defined that the decision making is a judgment of which is acceptable and unacceptable among alternatives. Serrat (2012) and Kowalski et al (2008) commented that the decision making is a cognitive process of choosing the effective one between the possible actions in situation of uncertainty: Santrock (2009) Teale et al. (2003) contended that decision making is difficult to literally define because it takes many norms based on the situation but 'the choice, evaluation and commitment' are said to be the elements of decision making.

Yroom-Yetton's Normative Model: Decision Making Styles

There are so many decision making models which have their perspectives on the decision making process. Amongst them, Yroom-Yetton's decision making model is useful, effective and structured, and it

also introduces a clear statement of what the leader is supposed to reach the final decision (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). Newstrom & Davis (1977) supported that this model was developed to help the instructors examine, determine and respond the more effective decision making style while in different problem situations. Owens (1995) said that the key issue for leaders is also to choose the appropriate one among given situations to lead the effective decision.

Vroom-Yetton and Jago (1998) as cited by Lunenburg (2010) offered the five decision making styles well-known as the Vroom-Yetton's decision making model to assist educational leaders to understand the contingent situations in the practice of decision making process. In this paper, the 3 of decision making styles out of 5 decision making styles will discuss as below;

Autocratic Decision Making Style: this style is an individual decision making process which the leader makes a decision alone, not letting others participate in decision making. This decision making has two different styles- (1) the leader uses available information already existing and makes a decision alone, not to invite anyone in decision action and even not to ask any information from other members, (2) the leader collects information from other persons and makes a decision alone, not invite them to participate in it. He/ she may or may not describe the problematic issue to them when requested information.

Consultative Decision Making Style: this style is that the leader distributes the problematic issues to the relevant persons in the organization and consults with them but finally he makes a decision alone, not to take into consideration of other's reflections. This style also divided into two types- (1) the leader consults with other relevant persons, individually soliciting information available, ideas and suggestion and then he makes a decision that may or may not consider the others' suggestions, (2) the leader consults with group to obtain collective idea through discussion and then he makes a decision that may or may not reflect others' opinions.

Group Decision Making Style: This is a team decision making which involves all persons to get a better decision and they all make a decision in group. In this decision making style, the leader shared all issues with the group, and then all together discuss to reach making a decision. All group members share equally as they generate each other with communication, collaboration, responsibility, accountability and motivation. The role of leader here is just to facilitate the group towards consensus on a solution of problem and must be willing to accept the result of decision of the entire group.

Characteristics of Decision Making Situations

There are seven situational characteristic variables which are designed to eradicate the certain decision process when those decision processes are not effective to decision quality as well as decision implementation in specific situation (Vroom & Jago, 2007). The first group of rule contains three aspects which are characterized to promote the quality of decision such as the information - if decision makers have no enough information to make a decision and no skills or expertise to solve the problem alone, then they should avoid the autocratic decision making style, the trust- the decision makers attempt to make a decision but other members do not seem to pursue the decision action in problem solving issues. In this case, the decision makers should eliminate the group decision making style, the unstructured problem- the decision makers attempt to make a decision alone but they have no enough information and expertise to solve issue alone and the problematic issues are also now well-constructed. In that case, they should collect sufficient information from other persons and make a decision. Remove the Consultative Decision Making Style.

The second group of rules is formulized to enhance the decision acceptance of others who will take action of decision already made. The acceptance- it is very important that other members must accept the decision but there is not possible criterion, and then eliminates the autocratic style. The conflict- it is crucial element that the decision is accepted by the others but autocratic decision does not seem to be accepted. And, it seems to appear the disagreement amongst members as well. In this situation, it exactly needs the group to participate in the decision making process. So eliminate autocratic style and consultative style. The fairness - decision quality is not so much important but its acceptance by members is critical and there are still problematic issues to be considered. In this case, there is more likelihood that group decision will be accepted and it will generate more commitment amongst members as well than hierarchical one. In this situation, eradicate autocratic style and consultative style either. The acceptance priority- decision acceptance is important, not possible to be assured by the autocratic decision and other members are able to be trusted. In this circumstance, group decision making style is appropriate to generate the commitment of other members. Eliminate autocratic style and consultative style also (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008; Hoy & Miskel, 1991).

Conceptual Framework

Grounded in Vroom & Yetton’s decision making model, three decision making styles are mainly focused on this research. The research is conducted for describing which decision making style is most used by the instructors in faculty as the issues they face and who the faculty members are most among nationalities, aged, educational levels and work experience. There is, therefore, no dependent and independent variables. Theoretical framework is figured as below;

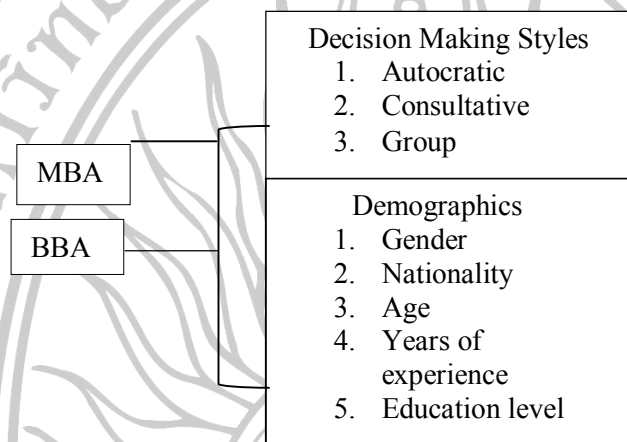


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This research is designed as a descriptive quantitative research by utilizing survey to find out the instructors’ decision making styles in their decision making behaviors in MBA English Program and BBA English Program at Siam University. The research selected total instructor numbers from both schools. The target population of the study is 15 instructors but 5 instructors did not return the survey questions. Therefore, there are 10 of teachers who instruct the students in both of schools. The 8 respondents of this research are instructors from MBA English Program and 2 instructors from BBA English Program, who were giving the lectures in 2015 academic year.

Research Method

According to research objectives, the researcher initially set up the questionnaires to distribute the instructors in both school and consulted again and again with supervisor, Dr. Vijit supinit, Dean of MBA

faculty, to get suggestion from him. The resources of this study was searched from the many materials such as- published books and theses, unpublished these, dissertation, online and journals.

Interpretation for Survey Questions of DMS

In order to identify the levels of instructors' decision making styles, there were distribution of 12 questions to instructors in both schools and they were asked to respond the questions according to the use of their preferred style relevant to problematic issues by ticking strongly agree-agree, strongly disagree-disagree and no idea or neither agree nor disagree. In the questionnaires, the scores represented the level of DMS as follows;

Table 1: Score, Scale and Interpretation for survey questions of DMS

No	Score	Scale	Interpretation
Strongly Agree	1	4.51~5.00	Very Positive
Agree	2	3.51~4.50	Positive
Strongly Disagree	3	1.00~1.50	Very Negative
Disagree	4	1.5~2.50	Negative
No idea	5	2.51~3.50	Neutral

Data Collection

In order to conduct this research, the researcher asked permission from Dr. Vijit Supinit, Dean of MBA faculty, to deliver the survey questions to instructors in both schools. Questionnaire distribution was acted in May 2015 to June 2015. The researcher collected all survey data from respondents in July 2015.

Data Analysis

The collected data was computed by utilizing the descriptive statistics for ease and accuracy. For Research objective 1: the decision making styles of instructors from both schools were analyzed by frequency, percentage and means. For Research objective 2: the demographic factors of respondents were also analyzed in frequency and percentage.

Table 2: Design of Data Analysis

Research Objective	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Data Analysis
To identify decision making style of instructors	Research was conducted with instructors from both schools.	Survey Distribution May to June 2015	Frequency Percentage Means
To identify instructors' demographic data		Survey Collection July 2015	Frequency Percentage

Findings/Results

A total of 15 questionnaires were distributed to the 15 instructors in both schools but the 5 of instructors out of the 15 of instructors did not return the questionnaires. The returned-valid-questionnaires' rate reached 90%. The research of data analysis and the interpretation produced the information by giving answer to the research objectives. The findings are illustrated and stated according to providing two research objectives.

Research Objective one: To identify the instructors' decision making styles and to know which decision making style is primarily used by the instructors.

To cover the decision making style of instructors, the 1-12 items questions distributed to the 10 of instructors for answer based on their preference of decision making styles by choosing from a range of 1- strongly agree, 2- agree, 3- strongly disagree, 4- disagree, 5- no idea or neither agree nor disagree.

By investigating which decision making styles the instructors preferred to use to settle down the daily concerned issues in their faculties, the research separately found out total scores of each decision making style and the scores of each decision making style of each instructor and then the highest scores of decision making style were hereby presented as the instructors' preferred decision making styles. To interpret the level of means, the numbers were presented as the following table.

Table 3 showed that the 20% of respondents (instructors) from both of school preferred to use Autocratic Decision Making Style, the 30% of respondents preferred to apply Consultative Decision Making Style and the 50% of respondents preferred participating with Group Decision Making Style.

Table 3: Preferred Decision Making Styles of Instructors

Decision Making Styles	Frequency	Percentage
Autocratic Decision Making Style	2	20.0
Consultative Decision Making Style	3	30.0
Group Decision Making Style	5	50.0
Total	10	100.0

Moreover, from ‘the means and standards deviations’ table 3 described that the lowest means score of decision making style was 1.78 for AQ4; which meant most instructors rarely think “I am certain that other faculty members will have to accept what I decide” while the highest means score of decision making style was 4.58 for GQ4 which also indicated that most instructors “respect the majority view of faculty members despite my disagreement.” This means that the instructors from both of school were most likely to practice group decision making style and they seldom applied autocratic decision making style while it seemed that they sometimes practiced consultative decision making style, since all the highest means belonged to Group decision making style questions.

Table 4: Instructors decision making styles

DMS	Items	N	Means	Interpretation
AQ1	When there is a problem in a faculty, I make a decision to solve it by myself.	10	2.56	Neutral
AQ2	I request necessary information from one or more members regarding a problem or issue faced; however, I decide on a solution by myself.	10	3.47	Positive
AQ3	I have self-confidence that I am able to manage any problem faced and make a decision by myself.	10	2.85	Neutral
AQ4	I am certain that other faculty members will have to accept what I decide.	10	1.78	Negative
CQ1	I discuss a problem with other faculty member individually in order to obtain their ideas and suggestions.	10	3.00	Positive
CQ2	I seek suggestions from other faculty members by having a group discussion on a problem that I face.	10	3.25	Positive
CQ3	Even though I take all suggestions from other faculty member into consideration, I base my decision on my judgment.	10	3.42	Neutral
CQ4	I believe that it is better to consult other faculty members before making a decision on a problem that I face.	10	3.64	Positive
GQ1	I believe that it is important to have all team members take part in making a decision on faculty issues.	10	4.22	Positive
GQ2	I believe that a group decision making is effective.	10	3.97	Positive
GQ3	I try to co-ordinate with other faculty members in order to involve them in a decision making process regarding issues related to them.	10	4.03	Positive
GQ4	I respect the majority view of faculty members despite my disagreement.	10	4.58	Very Positive

Research Objective two: To identify the instructors’ demographic data including their gender, nationality, age, years of experience, and educational level.

The table 5 below proved that 100% were male instructors. (But female instructors in both schools did not participate to give answer in this paper.)

Table 5: Gender of Instructors

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	10	100.0
Female	0	0.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 6 showed that there were 60% of Thai instructors and 40% of Non-Thai instructors in both of school.

Table 6: Nationality of Instructors

Nationality	Number	Percentage
Thai	6	60.0
Non-Thai	4	40.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 7 described that instructors between age of 31 and 50 were 40% and above age of 60 were 70%.

Table 7: Age of Instructors

Age	Number	Percentage
Between 31-50 years	4	40.0
Above 50 years	6	60.0
Total	10	100.0

The table 8 below also showed that the 20% of instructors were below 10 years of work experience, the 50% of instructors were between 10-20 years of work experience and the 30% of instructors were above 20 years of work experience.

Table 8: Years of Work Experience of Instructors

Years of work experience	Frequency	Percentage
Below 10 years	2	20.0
Between 10-20 years	5	50.0
Above 20 years	3	30.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 8 indicated that the 20% of instructors had gained master degree and the 80% of instructors earned doctorate degree.

Table 8: Education Level of Instructors

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Doctorate Degree	8	80.0
Master Degree	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0

Conclusion

The overall result of the research found that the instructors who responded to survey questionnaires preferred to use autocratic decision making style reach at 20%, consultative decision making style 30% and group decision making style 50% mostly. This finding indicated that the instructors in both schools most like to practice the group decision making style as well as the consultative decision making style relevant to situations.

The group decision making style the instructors preferred to use when making a decision could generate five domains – communication, collaboration, responsibility, accountability and motivation in

working place of an organization. However, the group decision making style always requires time limitation to reach decision making by collective ideas. The equal gender is not so much important in the decision making process and instead the age, work experiences and education level are more effective on decision making process and meanwhile, heterogeneous nationality in decision making produces the effective outcomes with collective ideas and cultural differences.

Recommendation

Depending on the research's finding, the recommendations are provided to the administrators and hierarchy staffs to consider collective idea in decision making and not always try to use autocratic decision making style in any problematic issues of faculties. The instructors are recommended to carefully consider the most effective decision making style relevant to situations to reduce time waste although they preferred to use the group decision making style. The group decision making style always requires the time limitation to reach agreement in member and it is difficult to use in any situations when other members have no sufficiency capacity to understand the problematic issues. It is, therefore, said that taking the perfect decision making is an ongoing process and the challenging task of every leader not only in the field of education but also in any other organization (Maung Dennis, 2012).

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