

Research on Teacher Resignation

A Concern With Quantification and Aggregation

A review of the literature in the field of teacher resignation highlighted deficiencies concerning the phenomenon from the perspective of the individual teacher. The concern of researchers to generalise across sub-groups of teachers is an understandable and almost inevitable result of research. However it was found that variables associated with the individual and the personal had been neglected in such studies.

It was also found that overseas and Australian studies had in the most part concentrated on quantifying teacher resignation rates and governments and educational agencies had restricted themselves in the main to projections of teacher supply and demand. On the other hand, commentary in the media and in the community generally concerning teacher resignation was found to have been characterised by a reliance upon anecdotal evidence and even hyperbole.

The depth of feeling that the issue of teacher resignation engenders can be gauged by the following comment from Hewett (1990: 9), an "industrial officer" with the New South Wales Teachers Federation:

There has been a lot of talk recently about teacher resignation rates, early retirement, difficulty in recruiting teachers, and the demoralisation of teachers in public education generally ... There is little doubt from recent Federation surveys that the major cause of teacher resignations is salaries and the ever present threat of the Greiner [State] Government's attacks on teachers' working conditions.

The above quotation illustrates how teachers' unions, in this case the union representing public school teachers in N.S.W., have concentrated upon trying to influence government policy in the areas of salaries and teachers' working conditions and have used teacher resignation rates as evidence of poor working conditions, low morale and low salary.

Perhaps understandably, there has been a reluctance on the part of governments and educational systems to divulge the reasons why former teachers have resigned, although sometimes the new employment destinations for these people are provided. However, it is not enough to merely say that a certain percentage of teachers decided to resign in order to "operate their own business" as this might well be predominantly an effect and not the cause of such resignation which could have been caused by the interplay of a number of factors over a period of time.

What appears to be missing in many instances is an examination of resignation from a human and individual perspective (see Watson, et. al., 1989: 61) which could in the long term lead to greater understanding of teacher resignation and thus aid in the retention of teachers, if this is seen as desirable. One report from the New South Wales government, "Teacher Education Directions and Strategies" (N.S.W. Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs, 1990, see 25-47), illustrates the above situation with an emphasis upon aggregated statistics of teacher supply and demand for factors such as projected applicants, projected teacher vacancies, geographical imbalances, subject area imbalances, and teacher "loss" rates. Nowhere in this report is there an attempt to outline the reasons for teacher resignation or to profile those teachers who resign, except for a simple male/female, primary/secondary division, despite the fact that teachers are asked to provide such information upon resignation on the official form designated for this purpose.

The Supply of Teachers

The supply of teachers to the New South Wales public school system is critically important to the provision of the educational service. Macpherson (1989:4), Beard, et.al., (1990) and Beswick and Harman (in Hough, 1984: 29-31) have all noted the size and complexity of the public education system in N.S.W., with nearly 50 000 teachers, 10 000 other employees, over 2 000 primary and secondary schools, and an annual budget of about \$2.75 billion comprising a 20 per cent share of the state budget.

While actual and projected enrolments basically determine the demand for teachers, a more diverse range of factors determine supply, including losses from the teaching service, entrants to pre-service training courses, completion rates in pre-service courses, availability of graduates locally, interstate and overseas, and the number of former teachers wishing to return to teaching (N.S.W. Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs, 1990: 30).

Of the above determinants of teacher supply, teacher loss rates can be seen to be critical, and can vary significantly according to subject specialisation, geographical location, age, and gender. The above report from the N.S.W. Ministry noted (1990: 30-31) how:

Small changes in teacher resignations, which are the major component of total loss rates, can have a significant impact on the total number of teacher positions required. An increase of just one per cent in teacher resignation rates ... would result in an additional 600 teaching places, an increase of about 20 per cent in the number of vacancies. A 2 per cent increase in resignation rates would result in a 40 per cent increase in the number of vacancies. Variations in loss rates of this magnitude are not uncommon. [Annual loss] rates have increased from around 8% of all permanent and temporary teachers during the mid 1960s to between 13% and 14% during the first half of the 1970s and declined to less than 5% in 1979. During the past five years they have fluctuated between 5.5% and 7%.

However in March 1992, the N.S.W. Minister for Education Virginia Chadwick released figures which showed a decline in teacher resignation from N.S.W. Government schools during 1991 (Garcia, 1992: 14). According to information cited by Garcia:

The figures show that just over 1,440 teachers quit the N.S.W. teaching service between February last year [1991] and January this year, compared with 2,260 during the previous 12 months. This means the turnover rate for teachers had dropped from 5 per cent to only 3.2 per cent, the lowest since the mid-1980s. Mrs Chadwick conceded that the low turnover rate was probably due in part to the recession, but said there were a number of other important factors, including better working conditions.

Of those no longer teaching, analysis of Australian census data from 1986 (Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1989: 33) indicates that there is a "high rate" of separation from teaching in the first two years and that of those with teaching qualifications:

- 72 per cent were working as teachers within two years of completing their certificate or higher qualification;
- this rose to 74 per cent after 2-5 years;
- then fell to 62 per cent after 6-10 years;
- to 53 per cent after 11-15 years;
- to 49 per cent after 16-20 years;
- and to 42 per cent after 20 years or more.

Overall, only 72 per cent of *employed* persons trained as teachers were working in this occupation (Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1989: 34). Such loss rates from the pool of trained teachers should be cause for concern for tertiary educational institutions, governments, departments of education and the community generally.

A study carried out by Mark and Anderson (1985) offered an international comparison to the situation outlined above. The authors examined elementary and secondary teacher "survival rates" in St. Louis, U.S.A. between 1969 and 1982. For example, of the cohort entering teaching in St. Louis in 1969, 70.5 per cent survived until their second year, 59.5 per cent to their third year, 51.4 per cent to their fourth year, and following the high attrition rates in the first few years, the survival rate for the cohort declined steadily until only 28.0 per cent were still teaching in their fourteenth year in the St. Louis metropolitan area at the conclusion of the study period. The study found, as have others, that the first few years of teaching are critical to teacher survival in the profession.

"Hidden Resignation"

It should also be mentioned at this juncture that official resignation rates are only part of the overall picture of teacher loss. It seems, and this would be difficult to quantify, that a number of teachers take "long-service leave" or "leave-without-pay" with the intention of seeking other employment in the interim, rather than "burning their bridges" by actually resigning. In

addition, it may be that some female teachers take some form of "family" leave, with the possible intention of returning to teaching either in a full time or "casual" capacity sometime in the future. Other teachers may elect to take "early retirement" or "redundancy packages".

Eventually, of course, this pool of "hidden" resigned teachers will be forced to make a decision when their period of leave expires, and thus will eventually either return to teaching or be counted in the official resignation rates. Be that as it may, this "hidden resignation" may represent a significant factor in the assessment of teacher demand and supply.

Other Features of Teacher Resignation in N.S.W.

There are some additional points on teacher resignation in New South Wales noted in the report by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs. Aside from the unpredictable and volatile nature of teacher loss rates, it seems that rates for secondary teachers have been consistently greater than primary rates, and that resignation rates for male teachers have increased significantly in recent years, a serious problem when male entry rates to pre-service training have reached such low levels, particularly in primary education. The report also noted with some concern the difficulties associated with forecasting and extrapolating teacher supply and demand and recommended that a committee be established to meet this need (N.S.W. Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs, 1990: 32).

Significantly, while expressing concern about teacher supply and teacher loss rates, the report did not attempt to find reasons for teacher loss nor provide any insights from a human or personal perspective as to why teachers resign. From the examination of the literature, this seems typical of some government reports which are more concerned with policy than human factors and which state the results of teacher resignation statistically while shying away from the identification of its causes. In defence of such reports however, it may well be that it is considered too costly to collect and analyse such "human" data from those who are no longer seen as the responsibility of the employing authority.

Research Into Teacher Resignation

Bruce and Cacioppe (1989) investigated why teachers resigned from government secondary schools in Western Australia. Using a questionnaire which was administered to 124 teachers who had resigned during 1983, the authors found that a major reason for teacher resignation was lack of competence of the school principal, specifically the lack of ability of principals to manage the school, to support staff and to involve them effectively in decision making. The average age at which the respondents resigned was 34.5 years, while 40 per cent of those

surveyed had moved into the private education sector and thus intended to continue their teaching careers, the suggestion being that this sizeable proportion of those surveyed were not disillusioned with teaching but with the institution and/or system they had previously worked in.

Perhaps surprisingly, the authors found that discrimination by the school administration was felt more strongly by males than by females. Males expressed dissatisfaction with being discriminated against relative to females in such matters as class and grade allocation, class size, teaching load, and playground and relief duties. For "career-oriented" teachers, lack of promotion opportunities was one of the major causes of resignation. Assessment procedures for permanency and promotion also caused dissatisfaction as did problems with classroom discipline caused in part by ineffective school policies and procedures.

Diamond and Borthwick (1989), in a survey of 147 prospective teachers completing their credentialing diploma, sought to test the popular view that the "brightest and best" are more likely to withdraw from teacher training to take up other more financially or otherwise rewarding careers. While principally concerned with the substance of the pre-service diploma course, the study broadly found that those who were committed to and satisfied by teaching intended persisting. In summary, the authors found (1989: 148) that:

The intention to stay or leave was shown to be significantly linked not with gender but with present commitment, frequency of part-time work, practice teaching results, perception of the usefulness of the diploma, getting to know staff personally, confidence in gaining promotion, the importance of extrinsic rewards and career satisfaction.

However, Diamond and Borthwick (1989: 148) also found that a significant group of student teachers were still making up their minds about teaching, with 19 per cent not sure if they were satisfied with teaching and 19.7 per cent not sure if they would stay teaching.

Schlechty and Vance (1981) sought to test the view that the more academically able teacher was more likely to resign in a longitudinal study of over 32,000 teachers who entered teaching in North Carolina between 1973 and 1980. In summary, Schlechty and Vance (1981: 111-112) found that between 1973 and 1980 the academic ability of beginning teachers in North Carolina had declined. While retention of teachers showed a slight increase during the period of the study, the authors believed that based upon the data at their disposal, only half of those entering teaching in North Carolina in 1980 would still be teaching in 1990.

Significantly, Schlechty and Vance (1981: 112) found a "strong" negative correlation between measured academic ability, utilising scores on the National Teacher Examination (N.T.E.), and retention in teaching:

Year after year, those North Carolina teachers who scored highest on ... (the N.T.E.) are the most likely to leave education. These conclusions suggest that whatever success North Carolina is having in retaining teachers is focused on the least academically able. Thus the combined effects of recruitment and retention in North Carolina appear to be yielding a steadily deteriorating talent pool, as measured by a test of academic ability.

Wilkins and Korschgen (1985) were also concerned with the notion of the most able teachers being thought to be more likely to leave teaching. However, they also sought to test the proposition that the problem of "teacher flight" might be a product of media and other exaggeration. A survey of all 432 school districts in Wisconsin (U.S.A.) yielded 348 responses (80 per cent) to a questionnaire. Broadly, the survey revealed that the level of teacher resignation in Wisconsin had not increased dramatically, but there was some support for the notion that teachers with "average to above average teaching ability" were more likely to resign (1983: 149).

Wilkins and Korschgen (1985: 149) also found that the major reasons given by administrators for teacher resignation were, in order, work opportunities outside education, relocation of spouse, staying home with family, job dissatisfaction, and medical reasons. While acknowledging that their sample may not have been representative, the authors warned that readers should remain sceptical of articles in the popular press purporting to describe an exodus of talented teachers from the classroom.

Data regarding "destinations after cessation" appears to be lacking in Australia. Information provided by the Victorian Catholic Education Office (C.E.O.) cited by the Schools Council (1990: 20) showed that about 16.5 per cent of the total numbers of teachers in the C.E.O.'s primary schools ceased their employment during 1988-89. Of these, about 55 per cent had not resigned but had taken leave of various types. Another 11.7 per cent were teaching in other schools or systems. Of the remaining third, there was a wide variety of reasons given for resignation, including "home duties" (8 per cent), travel (7.6 per cent), going into private industry or setting up own business (6.2 per cent), retirement (4 per cent) and study, ill health, moving interstate, and "discontinuation of position".

In the secondary sector of the Victorian C.E.O. for the same period, there was a higher proportion of teachers ceasing work (around 20 per cent). Of these, about 28 per cent took leave of various forms and over 22 per cent had left the C.E.O. to teach in other schools or systems. Of the remainder, 16.8 per cent said they were going into private industry or business, 8.1 per cent nominated "home duties" as their destination, while 7.2 per cent said they intended to travel. However a deal of caution needs to be taken before reading too much into these figures because of the possible atypicality of the cohort concerned.

The Schools Council (1990: 21), after examining the data provided by the Victorian C.E.O., made the significant observation: "But while we know where they have gone, we don't know

why they went". This highlights the confusion that sometimes arises where the destinations of departing teachers are confused with their reasons for resignation. It may well be that the new job destination of the individual teacher is more an effect rather than a cause of his or her resignation from teaching. In addition, it may be an oversimplification to state a single reason for resignation when a variety of factors, both human and otherwise, might have contributed to this decision.

Berry (1985) provided details of a case study of teacher resignation in one south-eastern (U.S.A.) metropolitan school system employing some 4,000 teachers. During the 1983-1984 academic year some 210 elementary and secondary teachers resigned. The major reasons for resignation given were: retirement/health (24 per cent); dissatisfactions (21 per cent); spouse moves (20 per cent); family (15 per cent); business opportunity (nine per cent); break from teaching (four per cent); teaching elsewhere (two per cent); "coaching-related" (two per cent); and "reduction in force" (one per cent).

Of those who nominated dissatisfactions as their prime reason for resignation, the major factors contributing to this were poor administration, poor pupil discipline, lack of teacher control, large class sizes, "Mickey Mouse" or extraneous non-teaching duties, uncooperative parents, stress, and the valuing by others of "mediocrity" in schools. These factors were found to be more responsible for resignation for dissatisfied teachers than low salaries or lack of opportunity for promotion.

Quong (1991) set out to investigate the induction of teachers into the Northern Territory (Australian) Teaching Service. He found that the isolation of the Northern Territory and its small and dispersed population made for some "context specific" problems facing the new teacher. Nearly 90 per cent of all new teachers in the Northern Territory must be recruited from elsewhere because the Northern Territory University does not produce sufficient graduates to staff the Northern Territory Teaching Service (Quong, 1991: 21). As a consequence, new arrivals from interstate must adjust to isolation from family, friends and social and cultural facilities, the harshness of the climate, the significant Aboriginal presence in many schools, and a different educational system. Many teachers receive their first appointment to a small disadvantaged location as positions in larger regional centres are occupied by more experienced colleagues who have "done their time" in smaller centres or by local graduates.

Partly because of these difficulties, the Northern Territory Teaching Service has a high turnover of teaching staff, with 17.3 per cent of all teachers resigning in 1990. The schools where resignations are at the highest levels are Aboriginal and rural schools, where approximately 20 per cent of staff resign annually (Quong, 1991: 22). Because of the significant turnover caused both by resignation and transfer, teacher induction is seen as a high priority in the Northern Territory.

A significant study recently completed by Watson, et.al., (1989; 1991) for the New South Wales Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs, has also thrown light upon teacher resignation. A concern of the study, "The Staffing of Schools and the Quality of Education", was the problem of staffing the less attractive regions of the state, especially the west and south-west of the Sydney metropolitan area and the north-west, western and Riverina areas of the state (see also Watson, et.al., 1987).

Traditionally, it has been difficult to attract classroom teachers to these locations, with the result that positions in schools within these regions are usually filled by recently graduated inexperienced teachers. In fact, for many years there was a requirement for Government teachers in New South Wales to complete two years of "country service", and it was usually the least experienced teachers who were forced to comply with this early in their careers. Today the New South Wales Department of School Education still gives preference when initial offers of employment are made to prospective teachers who are prepared to teach in the less popular and more remote areas of the state, including the outer western suburbs of the Sydney metropolitan area (for an earlier South Australian study see Cawthron, et.al., 1980).

Despite these measures, in some cases, notably the secondary teaching subject areas of Music, Mathematics and Science, many schools in these regions have been left without teachers, both because of overall teacher shortages in these subjects and because of the perceived difficulties of teaching and living in these areas.

Not only is it difficult to attract teachers to these regions, however. It is also very difficult to retain them once they have fulfilled their minimum employment requirement, typically three or in some cases only two years in particularly "unfavourable" areas. The result of this situation is that schools in these less favoured areas experience high rates of staff-turnover as well as staff shortages and relatively inexperienced staff. There are also associated problems such as high transfer costs, greater settling in time at the beginning of the school year, greater problems with establishing staff cohesion and collegiality and weaker ties with the community (Watson, et.al., 1989: 1). This combination of factors leads to an obvious concern for the quality of education received by students in the outer areas of Sydney and in the remote interior of the state.

Watson, et.al., (1989: 1-3) outlined two basic approaches that can be taken to addressing this problem. The first is a "deficit model" which assumes that teachers need to be compensated materially to induce them to teach and remain longer in these perceived unfavourable areas through higher salaries or need to be forced to take up positions for a period of time through compulsory postings and contracts. Deficit models can be said to concentrate upon reducing teacher dissatisfiers (Herzberg, et.al., 1959; Sergiovanni, 1967) and may even include elements of coercion, possibly resulting in turn in greater and not less teacher dissatisfaction.

The alternative approach is termed a "challenge model", in that the intrinsic benefits to the individual choosing to teach in these areas are stressed. This model relies upon breaking down the fear of isolation through appropriate preparation, induction and in-school and community support. The benefits to the individual teacher taking up such an appointment are emphasised, including greater responsibility at an earlier stage of one's career, enhanced prospects for promotion and the opportunity to be more greatly appreciated by students and the community. Challenge models can be said to be attuned more to increasing teacher satisfaction. The authors note that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive and in fact a combination of the two is usually necessary to staff these "unpopular" schools, some of which are forced to resort to advertising vacant positions in newspapers, something not normally necessary for government schools.

While both "deficit" and "challenge" models might be successful in attracting teachers to hard to staff schools, the problem of high staff turnover remains, with the Department of School Education constantly seeking to refill the vacuum caused by teachers leaving for more favourable postings after their period of tenure in these schools. Even attracting teachers is not enough, however, as Watson, et.al., (1989: 2) observed:

The teacher who goes to an appointment reluctantly, who is poorly prepared for the special demands of the place, who finds the living conditions difficult, the children with unexpected problems, professional contacts narrow and work satisfaction low is not likely to teach well even though she or he may stay there for the compulsory two or three years. If the purpose of providing equality of educational opportunity to all children is taken seriously, then staffing must take account of qualitative as well as quantitative concerns. Such consideration must be based on the careful investigation of the experiences, motivations and aspirations of young teachers in locations which are seen as difficult to staff.

The purpose of the study carried out by Watson, et.al., was thus concerned with improving schooling in difficult to staff urban and rural areas by providing a better understanding of the factors which increase the mobility of teachers and to enhance the stability and quality of the teaching force through identification of ways to improve teacher adjustment and satisfaction in such schools.

The study drew on responses to a questionnaire from 1,322 three and four year trained primary and secondary teachers in New South Wales public schools. A "small number" were interviewed to provide further information. The study found that about 17 per cent of young teachers leave teaching within their first two years. The most likely teachers to resign were found to be male high school teachers who had a resignation rate of about 20 per cent in the first two years of teaching.

Watson, et.al., (1989: 61-64) found that the most common reason for resignation was dissatisfaction with teaching and that a crucial factor in teacher adjustment was the support

given from fellow colleagues and the use of formal teacher induction programs. Some 88 per cent of those surveyed had not received any formal induction. A third of those surveyed said that they had received little or no help from senior staff in this respect. Two-thirds had received no in-service education or found it of little or no help. Only six per cent of those surveyed mentioned the community as a source of satisfaction, indicating the continuing problem with teachers in such schools being perceived, and contributing themselves to this problem no doubt, as "outsiders".

A major cause of job dissatisfaction was excessive travelling time to and from school, particularly where this exceeded two hours daily in total. Other reasons given for teacher dissatisfaction were stress, difficulties with pupils, and lack of recognition for effort. On the positive side, the most common factor contributing to teacher satisfaction was given as good staff relations at the school.

It has been noted that traditionally, young teachers are normally posted to the more difficult to staff teaching areas, exacerbating the difficulties of adjusting to teaching. Watson, *et.al.*, (1989) were critical of such compulsory postings and of the incentives currently given to induce teachers to take up appointments in hard to staff areas i.e., the "deficit model". Rather, the report proposed increased attention to measures associated with the "challenge model", including better teacher preparation and induction, assistance with adjustment and support from experienced "leading teachers" and senior staff within schools, and effective in-service programs.

However, the authors noted some inherent tensions between the measures designed to overcome teacher shortages and those required to increase teacher stability. Forcing teachers to take up a position in a "disadvantaged" area may do little to encourage teacher stability in such locations. The key may in fact lie in increasing teacher satisfaction in such schools, an initiative possibly requiring attention to a different set of measures.

One text devoted solely to teacher resignation is the now fairly dated "The Teacher Dropout" (Stinnett, Ed., 1970). This work actually represented the findings of a commission instigated by Phi Delta Kappa in 1965 to investigate "Strengthening the Teaching Profession". The Commission (Stinnett, Ed., 1970: ix) saw the issue of teacher resignation as "of critical importance in any effort to strengthen the teaching profession".

Statistics cited by Corey (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 1-2) indicated that the problem of teacher resignation in the United States in 1965-1970 which caused such concern was in fact similar to the present scope of the problem in New South Wales, at least until the fall in resignation rates from 1991 which some have attributed to the recession (Garcia, 1992: 14), with then loss rates from elementary and secondary schools in the United States exceeding eight per cent per year,

with half of all Californian teachers leaving the profession before 10 years and with the first two to three years being where "the larger number" of these separations occurred.

Corey also cited studies to support his view that it was an oversimplification to equate holding power with salary although he admitted that it could be a factor in recruitment. Corey (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 3) believed that there was a:

need for investigation of the subtler factors which, being more difficult to evaluate, have too often been ignored ... Teacher dissatisfaction studies indicate that factors connected with the limits of responsibility and influence in the nature of the job itself are as important as the obvious factor of salary. It is conceivable that there are personality traits, particularly competencies in inter-personal relations, which if detected in advance might indicate that an individual would likely persist in teaching. If occupational persistence could be predicted and uncommitted candidates screened out before they began, professional continuity could be somewhat enhanced. Apparently, no instrument for this purpose exists. Assuming that such prediction were possible, there is little probability that it would be widely used while the teacher shortage continues.

As well as the very pertinent points noted above, Corey (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 4- 11) went on to note a number of factors which can contribute to resignation and despite the temporal and geographical differences with teacher resignation in N.S.W. today these factors still appear to have a ring of truth to them.

Factors contributing to resignation cited by Corey included: the nature of the system which tends to be bureaucratic and to stifle creativity; the lack of involvement of teachers in the educational decision-making process (see also Barstow, in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 31-60); the workload of teachers (see also Selden, in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 61-77), especially extraneous administrative work and particularly for beginning teachers; lack of effective personnel policies and procedures, particularly in regards to recognising and rewarding teacher achievement; inadequate programs of teacher preparation and induction; the low status of the career classroom teacher and the need to provide alternate career paths and salary structures to reward the good teacher who chooses to remain in the classroom rather than enter administration; factors extrinsic to schools such as the need for female teachers to raise families, thereby losing seniority and tenure, and social attitudes about teaching.

Reiss (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 13-30) examined the nature of the American school system and despite obvious differences with the Department of School Education in N.S.W., a number of commonalities did emerge. Reiss noted that change in the educational system invariably resulted from sources external to the school, with the funding of schools by higher authorities being a prime reason for this. Pressure for change also comes from the community generally, but despite these external pressures, change occurs very slowly in schools, meaning that if any externally determined change is to be successful, then the pressure exerted upon schools to comply with this needs to be great before its impact is likely to be felt, a strategy those familiar with educational change in N.S.W. since 1988 would immediately identify with.

Reiss also made the point that teachers' unions tend to act to preserve the *status quo* and put "job goals" ahead of "professional goals". Again, there are parallels with the situation today, some having criticised the New South Wales Teachers Federation for being an "industrial" organisation rather than a "professional" one. Reiss believed that any change needs to rely upon the teachers already in the system to affect this change, the implication being that prevailing values and attitudes may need to alter, a problem when efforts are made to change the promotion system, introduce new job specifications or positions or to decentralise decision-making in education.

Reiss (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 21-24) also considered the status of teaching and offered the opinion that the prestige of the teacher had not changed significantly over "the past forty years". Within teaching, administration was rated higher than classroom teaching, and outside the profession, low salary and the disproportionate number of teachers who were women contributed to an occupation perceived to be closer in status to skilled work than to the other professions.

Bush also considered the role that teacher status might play in attracting and retaining teachers (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 111-135). He believed that a number of factors contribute to the status of any occupation. The first of these was the actual number of people engaged in the occupation. Teaching is by far the largest of the "learned professions" and thus its members the most numerous. Bush speculated that a more differentiated staffing structure in education with fewer teachers at the lowest levels might redress this perception of commonality. Fewer teachers with higher standards of entry and qualifications assisted by larger numbers of non-teachers in schools might help to increase the number of "quality" people wishing to be teachers. It is interesting to note that this suggestion has yet to be taken up over 20 years later, despite common agreement that it has both pedagogic and economic potential.

Bush believed that the perceived importance of an occupation was another factor contributing to the status of its workers and offered the opinion that education was increasingly seen as a vital commodity in modern society, and thus, according to this line of reasoning, teachers should be enjoying higher status, although other factors were acting to prevent this from occurring.

One such factor was that of financial remuneration, according to Bush. Teaching has long been a poorly paid occupation in comparison with other "professions", although union agitation and new career structures might help to improve the financial position of teachers and thus their status.

A further factor contributing to the status of teachers was the "degree of expertness" displayed by the practitioner. With a typical entry point to the occupation of only a bachelor's degree,

Bush advocated that a better and more highly trained body of teachers would make a positive contribution to the status of the teacher in society. In addition, there was a necessity to demonstrate the relevance and effectiveness of this additional training and to reward those who undertake such training accordingly. Bush also believed that schools needed to be better designed so that they contain physical conditions i.e., offices, studies, meeting and planning rooms, where teachers could exercise their "expertness".

Taking the theme of relevant training further, Bush advocated a distinctive teaching degree comparable in "length, relevance and rigour" to undergraduate law and medical degrees. A doctorate was unsuitable, according to Bush, because this was a research rather than a teaching degree. Such an innovation would require reforming the conception and design of teacher education and would go some way towards giving teachers the status afforded to doctors and lawyers, although the impact on teacher recruitment that such training, of six to eight years as advocated by Bush, might have is open to question. Interestingly, debate over this very issue remains unresolved over two decades later, although the cost of such training would make it difficult for any government to fund.

Bush concluded by noting that any increase in the status of teachers would only occur as the result of "far-reaching" changes throughout the teaching profession and would not be easy to accomplish.

Selden (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970) considered the relationship between teacher workload and resignation and noted that despite the apparently short hours and long holidays, teachers appeared to be as drained at the end of the school day as any worker in "sweated" labour occupations. Selden attributed this to a number of factors such as the isolation of the teacher within the classroom (a sometimes hostile environment), the fact that the teacher is tied to the school during school hours (unlike the situation with higher status tertiary teachers), the large proportion of teachers' time devoted to "non-teaching" activities such as supervising students during lunch which tends to "dissipate" teachers' energy, the lack of "class-free" time, especially for elementary teachers, large class sizes, and low receptivity of pupils.

In summary, Selden (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 69) offered two major reasons, frustration and lack of status, "why prospective teachers shun the profession". As to why teachers were not "held" or retained, Selden speculated that this was normally thought to be due to a number of "push" factors such as teacher workload and conditions, and "pull" factors such as higher salaries elsewhere and matrimony, particularly for female teachers.

However, Selden noted that the remedies to such possible problems were likely to be extremely expensive. Both increasing salaries and reducing teacher workloads even by small amounts would lead to considerable cost for employing authorities which must be funded from the

public purse. Selden speculated that there might be a way around this problem through making schools more effective and reducing the workload of teachers without additional expense e.g., through computerised instruction and large-group teaching coupled with the increased use of teachers' assistants, innovations which Selden believed need to be examined very carefully. Selden (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 77) ended on a cautionary note:

Educational success cannot be accomplished by administrative fiat. What happens between teachers and pupils is crucial, and if we take the position that all pupils must be educated regardless of the handicaps implanted by an imperfect social order, it is the teacher side of the equation which must be changed -- and this can only be accomplished by making the job of teaching intrinsically more attractive and productive than it now is.

Stimbert (in Stinnett, Ed., 1970: 79-91) considered the role that personnel policies and procedures can play in arresting teacher resignation. In summary, Stimbert believed that educational administrators have been too occupied for too long with "budgets, bricks and babies" and that there is a real need to involve teachers in all phases of administration that affect them. Stimbert saw collaborative decision-making giving a positive contribution to teacher morale, personal happiness, individual achievement, enthusiasm, dignity and self-worth. This required administrators to give increased attention to recruitment practices, organisational hierarchies and responsibilities of staff, evaluation procedures, problem-solving procedures, relationships with professional associations, discipline policies, and training in personnel management.

To conclude this examination of "The Teacher Dropout", the concern of the contributors was commendable and the remedies proposed by them to arrest the resignation of teachers and to attract and retain teachers seem quite reasonable although lacking in precise detail as to implementation. However the diversity of the approaches and the fact that the majority are still being debated over 20 years after the book was written and 25 years since it was instigated, indicates that very little has really been achieved in the interim in coming to a greater understanding of teacher resignation and in promoting teacher retention. The major concerns highlighted by this interesting book remain unresolved today.

An editorial in the "Education Monitor" (anon, 1990: 2-3) summarised many of these continuing concerns, noting the importance of teaching to the community, concerns over attracting suitable school leavers to teacher training courses, problems with classroom discipline and the lowering of teacher prestige in recent times. The article also offered the observation that while teachers have been prevented from teaching "real subjects" due to the proliferation of new "hodgepodge" courses, they have been called upon to take on the roles of surrogate parents, psychologists, social workers and counsellors, roles for which they receive neither public recognition or thanks, nor, one suspects, suitable training or resources.

The article also offered the opinion that the working conditions of teachers are not fully appreciated by the general public who have something of a fixation with teachers' holidays. Great pressures are being placed upon schools to reform and restructure education, and career paths and salaries are causes for concern. The article ended by calling for changes to the structure of schools and the categories of teachers to provide more flexibility and variety. The unstated conclusion of the leader writer was that much more needs to be accomplished in the areas of salaries, career paths and school structure before quality people can be attracted and retained in teaching and the reputation of teachers and schools is improved.

Are Those Who Resign Different From Those Who Persist?

An issue that has received attention from few writers is whether those who persist in teaching are different from those who resign or even train but decide not to enter teaching at all. One writer who investigated this issue was Chapman (1983; 1984) and some of his findings are examined later in the section dealing with teacher retention.

Chapman and Hutcheson (1982) sought to build upon the work of Holland (cited in Chapman and Hutcheson, 1982: 94) who posited "that vocational satisfaction, stability and achievement depend on the congruence between one's personality and the environment in which one works". The authors sought to confirm this by testing the differences in skills, abilities, values and criteria used to judge success, between those who started as teachers and persisted and those who started as teachers but subsequently resigned. The authors utilised discriminant analysis for elementary and secondary school teachers who graduated from three Indiana universities.

The authors were able to undertake a secondary analysis of data obtained from the three universities from 1967 to 1978. A sample of 690 individuals who had trained as teachers and began teaching were divided into two groups: those who had subsequently left teaching; and those who had persisted in their teaching career. Each group was then in turn divided into elementary and secondary teachers. Of the trained elementary teachers, 73 per cent had remained in teaching, while for the secondary teachers the figure was slightly lower at 71 per cent. The study utilised the "Alumni Questionnaire" which collected information on the respondents' current employment, job satisfaction, and their ratings of their educational experience. The respondents were also asked to rate the degree to which they possessed 16 specific skills and abilities and the importance they attached to 11 possible criteria for judging success.

In a discussion following the presentation of the results of the discriminant analysis, Chapman and Hutcheson (1982: 103) noted the following conclusions which supported their contention that those who remained in teaching differed significantly from those who resigned:

Differences between people remaining in and those leaving teaching were not explained by differences in sex, race, current age, or the institution a person attended. Nor did people appear to leave teaching to make better use of their educational skills ... However, those who left and those who did not leave teaching differed significantly in the importance they assigned to selected criteria for success. Across both elementary and high school levels, people remaining in teaching were characterised as having greater organisational skills ... Those leaving teaching were characterised as having greater analytic skills ... These patterns tend to support Holland's description of teachers as particularly skilled at explaining, supervising, and organising. Within Holland's model, those leaving teaching would be characterised as primarily investigative.

Chapman and Hutcheson (1982: 104) believed that their study supported the hypothesis that individuals leaving teaching would attach greater importance to autonomy and salary while those who persisted would assign greater importance to recognition by both supervisors and friends. They believed as a result of this finding that the declining public confidence in public education coupled with the widening gap between educational administrators and teachers could have serious consequences for teachers' self-esteem and thus teacher retention.

Marlow and Hierlmeier (1987) were also concerned with possible differences between those who resign from teaching and those who stay. The authors used a survey instrument distributed to a random sample of classroom elementary and secondary teachers in West Central Florida. Based upon previous research, the authors hoped to identify characteristics and areas of dissatisfaction attributed to the "likely leaver". Factors identified as being characteristic of the likely leaver fell into two categories: "demographic" factors, such as socio-economic status, marital status, age and gender; and "attitudinal" factors such as the philosophies and expectations arising from training and experience.

In brief, Marlow and Hierlmeier (1987: 4-17) found that while a "low" percentage of the teachers (20 per cent) exhibited 50 per cent or more of the "likely leaver" characteristics, almost all teachers displayed some of these characteristics and a "disturbing" number of teachers either occasionally considered leaving (50 per cent) or seriously considered leaving (22 per cent). However, what the authors did not provide was a comparison of how these figures compared with those from other similar occupations.

Further findings of Marlow and Hierlmeier (1987: 6-10) included the following:

Many beginning teachers find that once the reality of the classroom has set in they feel that 'the business world' would offer greater intellectual stimulation ... Four out of every five respondents ... had held a second job outside the school system within the past year ... one out of every three teachers felt that the business world held ... greater intellectual challenge ... Current trends suggest that the lure to gain professional recognition and compensations will eventually tempt even the most altruistic educator ... The attitudinal factors contributing to attrition are those which have evolved through a teacher's training and experience ... Many

'leavers' admitted that the low prestige they first experienced upon entering the profession was unexpected ... Within the interpersonal school setting, the teacher's principal and colleagues are very important, and unrealised expectations from them contribute to eventual attrition ... The greatest degree of teacher frustration, 51 per cent, comes from the classroom environment, the daily workplace and its inhabitants.

Marlow and Hierlmeier (1987: 10) noted five factors which contributed to the prevailing attitudes and atmosphere of the classroom: negative student attitudes and discipline problems; emotional aspects such as boredom, stress, frustration, and routine; low salaries; working conditions relating to class size, work load and non-teaching duties, and finally, the fact that there was no relationship between salary and productivity, with no reward and advancement. The authors felt that many of these factors had the potential to be dealt with by administrators and educational systems. In particular, the authors called for greater attention to pre-service screening and the preparation of teachers, and for improvements to be made to the classroom and school environment. Both teacher induction and professional development also needed greater attention if the serious problem of teacher attrition was to be adequately addressed.

However, probably the most significant finding of the study carried out by Marlow and Hierlmeier was that, in their particular sample, so many of the teachers exhibited characteristics attributed by research to the "likely leaver".

Teacher Resignation: Some Concluding Points With Implications for the Present Study

To conclude this examination of the literature on teacher resignation, it seems that while a number of studies of teacher resignation have been undertaken, and much anecdotal evidence abounds in the media and the general community, there still exists a degree of misunderstanding of the phenomenon of teacher resignation, with much rhetoric and even angst clouding the issue. A wide range of factors have been identified as possibly contributing to teacher resignation, yet teachers still appear to be experiencing the same kinds of pressures which studies carried out over 20 years ago indicated could lead to teacher dissatisfaction and teacher resignation and if anything, despite research into the area, these pressures have increased.

Departments of education seem to have exhibited a reluctance to address the issue of teacher resignation except in a broadly statistical sense pertaining to teacher demand and supply. Salary increases have been seen by departments of education, governments and teachers' unions as the panacea to solve the problem of teacher resignation, although recently efforts have been made to increase teacher satisfaction. However, "deficit" models designed to overcome teacher shortages are still being utilised and may have counter-productive effects resulting in greater teacher dissatisfaction which may contribute in turn to higher teacher turnover and even resignation.

Given this background, it was felt that this present study could add something to the understanding of teacher resignation from a qualitative, personal and human perspective. As Watson, et. al., (1989: 61) noted in the section of their report dealing with "Limitations and Further Research":

A ... limitation of the data is its generality. Although the sample is comprehensive and broad in its sweep, there is a need to look more closely at the individual and the particular ... A small number of interviews (16) were carried out in the inland of N.S.W. ... but it was not possible to extend these interviews to include teachers in Western Sydney ... Caution is needed in the causal interpretation of the data for its application. As an example, it was found that adjustment and satisfaction are related to teacher stability but there are other factors prior to appointment e.g., personality and aspirations of teachers which are likely to effect, in some degree adjustment, satisfaction and stability.

Research on Retaining Teachers

Introduction

This section considers measures which have been advocated or introduced for the purpose of attracting and retaining teachers.

The Issue of Teachers' Salaries

A key factor in the satisfaction and retention of teachers is believed by many to be the level of teachers' salaries. The Schools Council (1990: 14) has noted that education is a labour-intensive industry and that two factors added greatly to the cost of education during the 1980s: expenditure on educational facilities, resources and equipment to supplement a more diverse vocationally-oriented curricula, and secondly, teachers' salaries, something which consumes around two-thirds of the total recurrent school primary and secondary education budget.

However, the Schools Council (1990: 14-15) made the important point that the substantial growth of spending in schools during the 1970s and 1980s, and which has now tended to plateau, was not reflected in increased salaries for individual teachers. Instead, much of this growth was absorbed in smaller average class sizes and the increase in the total number of teachers employed to achieve these reductions.

A further pressure on government resources allocated for education was provided by the generally automatic progression of teachers towards the top of incremental pay scales by an aging teacher population. The Schools Council (1990: 15) cited figures from the Australian Teachers Union which showed teachers' salaries declining from 104.5 per cent of average weekly earnings in 1977 to 90 per cent in 1988 while average class sizes fell by 15 per cent in the same period. However, it must be noted that teachers' salaries nationally increased in comparison with the rest of the workforce during 1990 as a result of a number of salary court cases and arbitration. Whether these increases have any impact upon attracting the "brighter" school leaver to teaching and help reduce the present levels of teacher resignation remains to be seen.

A major report to the New South Wales Government (Management Review: New South Wales Education Portfolio, 1990) provided a number of relevant statistical tables which illustrated how teachers' salaries compared to those of the rest of the community and to inflation over

recent times. From 1972 to 1988, average prices, as expressed in the "Consumer Price Index", increased by 322.5 per cent. In the same period, the salary of a high school principal increased by only 304.1 per cent and a four year trained teacher in his or her fifth year of teaching increased by 320.7 per cent.

As far as other professions are concerned, the salary of a clerk in the N.S.W. public service (maximum rate) increased by 275.3 per cent, the salary and allowance of a backbench member of parliament increased by 617.0 per cent, a professor's salary increased by 312.0 per cent, legal fees as expressed in consultation fees per hour increased by 417.0 per cent and the scheduled fee for a standard consultation with a general medical practitioner increased by 340.0 per cent.

A more telling comparison is that while the salaries of teachers and school executives failed to keep pace with the rise in average prices of 322.5 per cent from 1972 to 1988, average male weekly earnings increased by 423.5 per cent and average female weekly earnings increased by 602.5 per cent in the same period. Clearly, since the early 1970s, teachers' salaries in N.S.W. have declined both in real terms and in comparison to average weekly earnings as a whole (Report of the Management Review: New South Wales Education Portfolio: 317).

An interesting survey carried out by the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University (1990: 1-4) raised the issue of not what teachers and members of other occupations earn, but what people think they *ought* to earn. The study, a survey of 1,650 Australians in 1987-88, asked the respondents to choose any figure they wished for the remuneration of a variety of occupations. Average incomes provided by the respondents were as follows:

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>How Much Should They Earn? (\$1000s per year)</u>			
Corporate Chairman	-	-	-	81
Managing Director	-	-	-	76
Surgeon, High Court Judge	-	-	-	73 *
Newspaper or Factory Owner	-	-	-	65
Medical Doctor	-	-	-	64 *
Cabinet Minister	-	-	-	59
Lawyer	-	-	-	55 *
Architect, Engineer	-	-	-	51 *
Bank Manager	-	-	-	47
Dentist	-	-	-	47 *
Accountant	-	-	-	44 *
Butcher, own shop	-	-	-	39
Small Shop Owner	-	-	-	34
Teacher	-	-	-	33 *
Bricklayer	-	-	-	30
Skilled Worker	-	-	-	28
Bank Clerk, Steel Worker	-	-	-	25
Car Worker, Secretary	-	-	-	24
Farm Labourer, Bus Driver	-	-	-	23
Unskilled	-	-	-	20

* Tertiary education required

For the occupations rated by the respondents, it can be seen that of those requiring a tertiary qualification, teaching is rated at the lowest income level, well below the incomes for accountants, dentists, engineers, architects, lawyers and doctors.

Merit Pay

Another measure which might influence teacher persistence is the use of merit pay, or paying teachers for taking on extra responsibilities or for superior performance. While the measure would be fairly easy to implement, provided funds were available and teachers' unions willing, the identification of "good" teachers is a highly contentious issue. The nature of teaching itself militates against objective measures of teacher accomplishment and relying on such measures as student performance in examinations could be seen to be grossly unfair and inaccurate in many cases.

Merit pay, while possibly appealing to the community, could lead to the situation of pitting teacher against teacher to obtain the status of having "merit", even if this could be measured and additional funds were available to reward it. The possible effects on teacher morale plus the cost of implementing "merit pay" might thus outweigh any potential benefits.

Mickler (1987) considered the use of merit pay and concluded that the failures of the initiative had so far clearly outweighed its successes. Lines (1984) too considered the problems inherent in the introduction of merit pay and also expressed concern over the difficulty of recognising "merit". The author noted that the whole issue had legal ramifications due to the possibility of bias and poor decision making by teachers' evaluators. Lines advocated the development of sound criteria and evaluation methods for the identification of good teachers worthy of merit pay, but noted that this incentive needed to be backed by relevant legislation to protect the rights of teachers. Of equal importance to the success of merit pay as an incentive and reward to good teaching was the commitment of teachers to the initiative.

Merit pay as an issue is obviously intertwined with the use of performance indicators to assess teacher competence, an area still being debated despite the recent introduction of "merit" promotion in the N.S.W. teaching service.

The recent introduction of "Advanced Skills Teacher" (A.S.T.) positions in Australian education systems has tended to confirm some of the misgivings expressed above concerning merit pay, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that the identification of those to fill such positions is quite difficult and even divisive in some cases where the "wrong" teacher is

selected, and with further concern that there is not adequate time or financial reward for the additional responsibilities A.S.T.'s are being asked to assume.

Other Forms of Recognition

Apart from promotion and higher salary, other forms of reward and recognition could be given to teachers, although as the Schools Council (1990: 111-112) has noted, it is difficult in very large educational systems to maintain the "personal touch" that many teachers undoubtedly desire and would find satisfying. Where given, these rewards need to be seen as being of value and of being for genuine achievement in education and could include sponsorship for higher degree study, study leave, the chance to teach in other systems and countries, the chance to contribute to teacher pre-service training, reduction in duties to allow the teacher to act as a "mentor" to a beginning teacher, recognition as an A.S.T., sponsorship to attend conferences, additional leave, favoured treatment for transfer, as well as the more obvious rewards such as certificates and prizes.

Schools too could be given recognition in the form of extra funding, extra specialist staff and additional facilities, although it might be that under such an arrangement the schools needing additional resources and assistance the most would probably be least likely to receive it because of their inherent disadvantages which militate against "success". Obviously, how such success is defined and measured will be of crucial importance if such an initiative was not simply to perpetuate and even deepen existing inequalities.

In very large systems where such rewards are arguably needed most, the cost of providing these forms of recognition would be great, but possibly worthwhile if the results were lower teacher alienation, greater teacher commitment, higher morale and better quality education. However, such recognition, despite the advantages that it might bring, could well be opposed by teachers' unions and even by teachers themselves if it was seen to be divisive and unfair and based on nepotism, conformity and the pandering to authority by some teachers.

Pre-Service Training

The question of how best to select teachers for pre-service training is of some concern. In New South Wales, most students are selected for teacher pre-service training on the basis of their performance in both school-based assessment and final year examinations for the "Higher School Certificate".

Until 1990, students received an "aggregate" of up to five hundred marks which was used to determine entry to tertiary education courses, with courses such as medicine and law requiring aggregates usually in excess of 450 marks. Entry to the various types of teaching pre-service courses was normally far below this figure, with aggregates in the low two hundreds being not unusual, a situation which the Schools Council (1990: 109) viewed with some concern.

For entry to tertiary education in New South Wales from 1991, a tertiary entrance score or rank utilising percentiles was substituted for the former aggregate, a score of 50 for example indicating that the student finished ahead of 50 per cent of the total Year 12 student candidature. In 1991, a percentile score in excess of 99 was required at most universities to gain entry to medicine, while teaching required a minimum score of something between 40 and 50, depending upon the specialisation sought and the individual institution concerned. Possibly due to the effects of the recession, the minimum scores for entry to most pre-service teacher training courses were above 1991 levels in 1992.

Clearly, the status of teaching within the community, the nature of the job itself, and the material rewards are not sufficient to attract the brighter secondary school graduate.

Entry to teaching can also be gained through various adult or mature entry schemes, where often the applicant is interviewed to ascertain his or her suitability for tertiary study and for teaching, but for the bulk of candidates, acceptance is gained by obtaining the required "score" in the Higher School Certificate examination and no attempt is usually made at the tertiary level to interview potential teachers or to assess their potential in any other way.

It would appear that basing entry to teacher pre-service training solely upon marks and ignoring personal characteristics and suitability for teaching could lead to the selection and training of teachers who, despite possession of the requisite secondary academic qualifications, are unsuited to the profession and could well drop out of university or resign from teaching when qualified. On the other hand, it is equally possible that many potentially able teachers miss out on entry to pre-service training by small margins when entry levels are set. Clearly, there are questions over the use of examination scores alone to determine entry to teacher pre-service training, and other criteria and methods need to be explored, given the cost of training teachers, the present levels of teacher resignation, particularly in the first few years, and the need for quality education generally.

Another aspect of teacher pre-service training that needs further attention is that of the efficacy of the length and nature of the training itself. As noted earlier, teachers are being trained for longer, with three and then four-year training becoming the norm but whether this alone will help to facilitate the retention of teachers is unknown. As for the content of teacher pre-service training courses, there is on-going debate over whether "content" should be the focus, or

whether a more professional type of training stressing teaching practice should be undertaken. Others have called for a more "liberal arts" type of training, to be followed by a professional degree, giving a longer period of training and two degrees, in some cases. The effect that such longer training might have upon the quality and quantity of potential teachers is problematical.

There have been calls for the final period of teacher training to be in the form of an "internship", and for such teachers to receive a more gradual induction to teaching with a lower teaching load under the supervision of an experienced "mentor" teacher. This procedure is already in place in the case of some types of secondary teaching such as mathematics and science where shortages exist, and university graduates are receiving intensive training to enable them to take up positions in schools as soon as possible, although it should be noted that teachers' unions are often opposed to such "quick fix" solutions as it devalues the profession and reduces the quality of teaching to train people so quickly. There is also conflict over release time for the "mentor" of such students and over the issue of who pays for the cost of the venture. The issue of a non-qualified teacher in the classroom for extended periods has also to be resolved. Such measures may well have an impact upon teacher resignation and retention, but careful and thorough evaluation of such programs will be needed.

One initiative which was utilised up until the mid-1970s in N.S.W. was the use of teacher education scholarships to attract the brighter school leaver to teaching and to ensure an adequate supply of teachers. However, many students took advantage of this scheme to obtain a degree which was never used for its intended purpose. A system of "bonding" then ensued whereby students agreed to teach for a period of two years after graduation, not a great return on the State's investment. Burkhardt (1970: 90-91) made a study of teacher demand and supply in New South Wales from 1948 to 1968 and found that due to the two year bond then in place, the majority of resignations occurred between the third and sixth year of service following the completion of the bonding period. However the use of "bonds" was found to be legally unenforceable and this and the expense of the scheme plus an oversupply of teachers at the time saw the demise of bonding in the mid-1970s, although it has been recently resurrected in some cases where it has been difficult to staff certain subject or geographical regions, the students concerned being paid an allowance and being guaranteed employment if they are prepared to sign a contract to teach for a minimum period in certain parts of the state.

Teacher Induction

Like teacher stress, the issue of teacher induction was really only placed upon the educational agenda in the period since the 1970s. Since that time much has been written on teacher induction, both in Australia and overseas. The selection of the literature reviewed in this section is thus representative rather than exhaustive.

A variety of terms have been used in the literature to identify the graduate teacher, including "beginning teacher", "student", "probationer", "intern" and "neophyte" (Catholic Education Office of Victoria, 1984: 13), but whatever the label, there has been growing awareness that the teacher spending his or her first year in the classroom has special needs.

A number of writers have highlighted the need to do more about teacher induction if teacher retention is to be increased. Tisher, et.al., (1979) reported on the first large scale national study carried out into the induction of beginning teachers in Australia. The study comprised three phases, including a survey by questionnaire in early 1977, interviews in mid-1977, and another survey by questionnaire late in 1977. Both beginning teachers and principals took part in the study.

The study arose because of concern over the quality of new recruits to teaching and how they managed during their first year in school. This in turn arose from a growing perception that pre-service training alone was insufficient to prepare teachers for their first experience of full-time teaching. Attention then began to focus upon the complex process of socialisation whereby teachers adjust to their new environment (see Carpenter, et.al., c1982).

Keeping in mind that since the study was completed the average length of pre-service teacher training has increased, the study found that more than three-quarters of all fourteen and a half thousand beginning teachers appointed in Australia in 1977 were trained in Colleges of Advanced Education (C.A.E.) and 64 per cent of these became primary teachers. On the whole, primary teachers had spent a greater amount of time in school practice teaching than had secondary teachers. Only 11 per cent of these beginning teachers took up their first appointment in a private school. The two most populous states, N.S.W. and Victoria, accounted for the destination of 65 per cent of all beginning teachers in 1977 (Tisher, et.al., 1979: 13-16).

Of the beginning teachers, 80 per cent were able to state a preference for where they wished to serve, although for a quarter of these their preference was not "satisfactorily" met. Despite the use of preferences, however, 71 per cent of the beginning teachers had no information about the school(s) they thought they might be interested in teaching in. This problem was overcome somewhat by 69 per cent of the beginning teachers visiting their school prior to the first term, half of these visits being initiated by the beginning teachers themselves. As far as notification of appointment was concerned, 45 per cent of the teachers received notification of their appointment, usually by mail, in the three weeks prior to the start of the first term. Only 35 per cent of the teachers had more than six weeks notice of their appointment. Non-government beginning teachers fared far better than their government counterparts, 83 per cent receiving notification of their appointment two or more months in advance (Tisher, et.al., 1979: 23-24).

Of the government teachers, one in five were transferred within "a few months" of their first appointment, with 12 per cent not getting to teach at their first appointment at all. However overall, 81 per cent of the beginning teachers were satisfied with their present appointment (Tisher, et.al., 1979: 26).

Responses to the principals' questionnaire indicated that 60 per cent of all schools conducted introductory meetings to acquaint beginning teachers with policies, procedures and curriculum matters. In all cases, someone was designated to act as the beginning teacher's orientation supervisor, with principals and deputy principals most frequently filling this role. However, nine per cent of beginning teachers said that no special professional meetings were held for them nor was a general staff meeting held on the first day of school, although 42 per cent of the beginning teachers had professional activities organised especially for them and the majority, 87 per cent, were briefed on the first day, although this may have been in a general meeting with other staff. Where such professional activities were organised, 57 per cent saw "much value" in them. Where regular activities were set up in the first few weeks, these tended to be more highly regarded than activities held later (Tisher, et.al., 1979: 26).

Tisher, et.al., (1979: 27-58) provided additional findings that indicated that only around one-half of the beginning teachers really undertook any form of substantive induction program. New teachers are regarded as "qualified" and once the initial orientation process was completed, the supervision of the beginning teacher did not appear to differ markedly from that of more experienced teachers. Only around one-quarter of the beginning teachers received any sort of reduction in teaching load to enable them more time to adjust to teaching.

There was some disquiet with both practical and theoretical components of teacher pre-service training from principals and beginning teachers. It was felt by some that the new teachers had missed out on the "basics" of teaching while there was also a suggestion that lecturers engaged in pre-service training needed more regular and meaningful contact with schools to prevent them from becoming "out of touch", a catch-cry commonly directed towards teacher training institutions.

Part of the problem highlighted by the study was that every school situation is different and it is thus very difficult to provide a pre-service course which will equip the beginning teacher for every eventuality. This in turn highlights the necessity for more to be done both at a school and system level to more effectively induct the individual beginning teacher.

Tisher, et. al., (1979: 46-53) noted three broad areas of concern. The first was in providing the beginning teacher with information about schools, professional duties and expectations, school curricula, school procedures and the like, something which employing authorities and school

principals believed was available in schools, yet 25 per cent or more of teachers surveyed believed was not. Various educational regions in New South Wales have taken it upon themselves to provide induction programs for beginning teachers. For example, the Metropolitan West Region has produced a comprehensive package of materials to assist the new teacher to find his or her "feet" in one of the traditionally less-favoured regions of the State (Department of School Education, 1990). The New South Wales Teachers Federation (1992) recently updated an information leaflet for teachers which first appeared "about thirty years ago", while in its July 20th edition of its journal "Education", advertised a one day course "for new or probationary teachers" to be held in September 1992, a little late for the beginning teacher appointed in that year.

The second broad area of concern was managing teacher tasks, with more than one-quarter of beginning teachers believing that they were not coping adequately with such tasks as teaching immigrants, teaching slow learners, teaching groups with a wide ability range, teaching specific skills such as reading, and motivating pupils. A further area of concern lay in communicating adequately with colleagues, pupils, principals, administrators and parents.

The authors made a number of recommendations to better induct teachers to their schools but at this point it should be noted that a major omission of this otherwise interesting study is the almost total failure, bar a brief mention of one teacher, to explore the link between teacher induction and teacher resignation, despite the well-known phenomenon of higher than average resignation rates in the first two years of teaching.

The following general "pointers" to the more effective induction of teachers were provided by the authors by way of concluding comments (Tisher, *et. al.*, 1979: 69-70):

Because induction is so closely concerned with the particulars of teaching in a real life setting, most of the special arrangements made to improve the process are probably best based in the school where the teacher is a staff member. The interplay of personal and institutional factors makes the process a complex one ... There is a place for courses designed especially for the preparation of induction counsellors (professional tutors). There is a need for action research to discover effective induction modes in a variety of schools having particular characteristics ... The effectiveness and speed of induction in the case of any one teacher will depend not only on the special arrangements made for that teacher but also on the organisational climate of the scheme. Insights into the induction of new teachers may have some applicability at other transition points in a teacher's career, e.g., on becoming a deputy principal.

In another Australian study, McArthur (1981) highlighted a number of findings regarding teacher induction emanating from a longitudinal study into the first five years of teaching carried out periodically between 1972 and 1978. Once again, the link between teacher induction and teacher resignation was not explored, save for a comment that some teachers "opt out" in the first few years of teaching and that some, in turn, decide to "opt back in".

The five year study outlined by McArthur (1981: 49-51) did however have some significant points to make concerning teacher induction and adapting to teaching:

the most traumatic adjustment in the occupational socialisation of teachers occurs during the first year of teaching. A much more stable period of internalisation of subcultural values occurs over the next few years. This is combined with increasing experience and self-confidence. Allowance must be made for the alternative explanation that self-selection is operating here: those who have trouble adjusting to a continuing career in teaching and the need to internalise the occupational values have opted out ... Related to the above finding was the observation that there was an overall strengthening in commitment or career orientation over time ... A minor difference was observed between teachers who remained in their first school over the five-year period and those who changed schools. Stability of tenure seems to be more likely to minimise increasing custodialism. It is possible that appointment to a new school involves a form of resocialisation.

McArthur (1981: 50-51) outlined a four-point plan to more effectively prepare and induct the beginning teacher based upon the findings of the study and advocated:

- (a) Making teacher training a more realistic and appropriate introduction to teaching.
- (b) Bridging the gap between pre-service training courses and initial teaching experience.
- (c) Improving the practical aspects of one's initial teaching appointment.
- (d) Making the initial year of teaching a less traumatic experience.

McArthur went on to elaborate upon each of the four main recommendations and it is interesting to note that many of these measures e.g., longer periods of practice teaching, internships, establishing a continuing relationship between the training institution and the school and teacher, giving beginning teachers reduced teaching loads, using experienced teachers as mentors, etc., are all either being currently implemented in New South Wales and elsewhere in Australia or are being debated and considered for possible implementation, partly as a result of attempts to restructure teachers' industrial awards.

As mentioned in the section dealing with teacher resignation, Quong (1991) set out to investigate teacher induction in the Northern Territory Teaching Service. As part of the study, questionnaires were distributed both to beginning teachers and to principals. Nearly 90 per cent of new teachers in the Northern Territory Teaching Service have been recruited from elsewhere (Quong, 1991: 21) and as a result of his study, Quong (1991: iii) found that:

the problems of inductees in Northern Territory schools are real and extensive and many of their needs are not being met formally through induction programs. The system-based induction practice of central, regional, and recall induction programs is highly commended. Current Northern Territory school based induction is, however, limited, with only a minority of schools offering such programs and/or mentor schemes of teacher support ... This research has also supported the concept of the context specific nature of induction. Inductees to Aboriginal schools and urban schools have different requirements ... For inductees in urban schools, the three highest ranking difficulties are assessing students' work, subject content, and dealing with individual differences. In contrast, inductees in remote schools emphasised dealing with individual differences, classroom discipline and motivating students ... inductees to both urban and Aboriginal schools perceived the same difficulties as being the three most important: the high cost of living, missing friends, and the lack of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Veenman set out to review research into the perceived problems of beginning teachers internationally from 1960 and found that (1984: 143):

The transition from teacher training to the first teaching job could be a dramatic and traumatic one. In the English and German literature this transition often is referred to as the 'reality shock', 'transition shock', 'praxischock', or 'reinwascheffekt.' In general, this concept is used to indicate the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of everyday classroom life.

Possible causes of this "reality shock" can be grouped into personal and situational factors. Personal causes may be a "wrong choice" to enter the teaching profession, "improper" attitudes, and "unsuitable" personality characteristics, while situational causes may be inadequate pre-service training, a "problematic" school situation with authoritarian, bureaucratic structures, inadequate staffing, shortages of essential equipment and supplies, absence of explicit objectives, professional isolation in the workplace, parents' expectations which stress the accumulation of knowledge, and multiplicity of roles and tasks expected of teachers (Veenman, 1984: 147).

As a result of his review of the international literature, Veenman (1984: 154) found that the major problems experienced by beginning teachers in the studies reviewed were, in rank order of frequency:

- 1 Classroom discipline.
- 2 Motivating students.
- 3 Dealing with individual differences.
- 4.5 Assessing students' work.
- 4.5 Relations with parents.
- 6.5 Organisation of classwork.
- 6.5 Insufficient materials and supplies.
- 8 Dealing with problems of individual students.
- 9 Heavy teaching load resulting in inadequate preparation time.
- 10 Relations with colleagues.
- 11 Planning of lessons and schooldays.
- 12 Effective use of different teaching methods.
- 13 Awareness of school policies and rules.

An additional eleven more minor problems were listed by Veenman. The author also found a "great" correspondence between the problems experienced by elementary and secondary teachers. Classroom discipline was by far the major problem for both groups, indicating that any teacher pre-service or induction program should stress this issue (see also McCahon and Carpenter, 1987).

Veenman (1984: 165) summarised the approaches that have been taken to teacher induction e.g. printed information about employment conditions and school regulations, orientation visits to the school, release time from teaching, peer support, consultations with experienced teachers, the use of mentors (discussed below), conferences/workshops, opportunities to observe others teach, team teaching, and so on, and notes that "relatively little" research has been done into the

effectiveness of such programs, despite the fact that beginning teachers typically rate such programs as "good" or "helpful". Perhaps this was a case of a token effort being made in some instances in the area of teacher induction, yet even this token effort being greatly appreciated by beginning teachers.

Veenman (1984: 168) concluded by noting that:

Even though we know what problems trouble beginning teachers, we still know little about the person-specific and situation-specific nature of these problems. Delineation of the kinds of problems and their relationships to the characteristics of teachers in the various types of schools and classrooms has hardly occurred.

Mentoring

As mentioned previously, many researchers and official reports have advocated the use of a "mentor", or experienced colleague, to assist in the induction of the beginning teacher. Hapt (1990), for example, sees the mentor as performing the functions of offering emotional support, providing suggestions about teaching methods, and information about some of the more intangible aspects of teaching relating to the mores and values of the school community. These measures, coupled with shared decision making, have potential to assist in the adjustment and retention of the beginning teacher.

However, Schnieder (1990) has highlighted some of the problems associated with mentoring, including the selection and training of suitable mentors, compensation for mentoring, release time for mentors and beginning teachers and their replacement with other teachers, and negative reaction from some teachers where the procedures for the mentoring program conflict with local cultural norms, for example, negative reaction to reduced teaching loads for mentors.

Walsh (1989) offered an account of a variation to the experienced teacher-beginning teacher mentoring relationship where recently retired teachers were utilised as mentors, an innovation which, if successfully implemented, has the potential to overcome some of the problems experienced with other programs.

As a result of the investigation of five mentor-beginning teacher relationships in four different formal mentoring programs in the state of New York, Bower (1990) concluded that if formal mentoring programs are to be successful, a number of important aspects should be addressed: that mentors should be self-selected, experienced and approachable people; that mentoring training is provided (see also Zimpher and Rieger, 1988); that considerable flexibility in a mentoring program is provided to cater for individual and situational differences; that the mentor and beginning teacher receive common release time, and that an early start is made to the

mentoring program, given the importance of the adaptation of the beginning teacher to his or her new situation.

In addition, a number of studies into the use of mentoring (see Harris, 1990; Parker, 1988, for example) have highlighted the fact that beginning teachers in rural and different types of urban schools have varying needs, the inference being that formal mentoring programs need to be flexible and capable of being tailored to the individual and his or her situation.

A number of researchers have also stressed the importance of the principal in determining the success of formal mentoring programs (see Caruso, 1990) and the need for the mentor and beginning teacher to build a personal and professional relationship (see Odell, 1990). In the early stages of a mentoring program, it may be necessary to overcome scepticism and to win the acceptance of both potential mentors and other teachers to assist in the success of the program.

A perhaps unexpected positive outcome of the use of mentoring in teacher induction has been reported by Killion (1990) who described how a mentor-beginning teacher program resulted in personal and professional growth and satisfaction for the experienced teachers who served as mentors, who gained both from the recognition they received and the collegiality engendered by the program.

Generally, the findings of the literature in the area of mentoring paint a positive picture of the potential of the measure to aid the induction of the beginning teacher and to reduce teacher resignation, although the link between the provision of mentoring and resignation needs further exploration. The major stumbling blocks to the introduction of mentoring appear to be the financial cost and the opposition from teachers' unions or teachers generally. Thus, there appears to be a need to demonstrate more fully the benefits accruing to successful formal mentoring programs.

Internships

A variation of the use of mentors and teacher induction programs is that of internship, where a teacher close to the completion of his or her pre-service training is allocated to a school on a part-time basis and on a reduced teaching load, possibly under the supervision of a mentor. Alternatively, the beginning teacher might be attached to the school for a "block" of time such as a month or even a semester, before returning to the training institution. Advocates of internship point to the benefits of a closer working relationship between training institutions and schools and the fact that the beginning teacher receives support from several sources and has the chance to reflect and withdraw from the school on a regular basis.

Opponents of internship point to the cost of such programs and the fact that it extends the duration of pre-service training. In addition, teachers' unions have seen such programs as strategies to overcome teacher shortages through the use of unqualified teachers. Criticism has also come from the practice of not paying mentors or providing them with only a small decrease in teaching duties to compensate them for their assistance in the program.

New Career Paths

As well as the issues which have been commented upon above, a further factor of possible significance to both teacher retention and resignation is that of the career paths open to teachers. Until the late 1980s in New South Wales, teachers would progress almost automatically along an incremental salary scale until they reached its upper level, usually after a period of around eight years. Any further pay increases past this point required either the completion of a higher qualification or inspection for promotion. Once this was obtained, the teacher continued in his or her previous position until a vacancy at the higher level became available. In effect, teachers thus waited on a "list" of suitably qualified fellow teachers until they had reached a sufficient level of seniority to obtain the position they sought in the geographical area or school of their choice.

There have been substantial changes to these practices over the past three or four years. Inspections for promotion purposes have ceased and an increasing number of promotion positions are now being filled by "merit" appointment, whereby the applicants for a position submit *curriculum vitae* and are "culled" on the basis of these to produce a "short list" of applicants to be interviewed. In some cases, the interview panel will include parents and members of the local community.

Possible Negative Aspects of Changes to Promotions Procedures

There are two significant impacts of the move towards "merit" promotion. The first is that a large number of teachers who were formerly placed upon "lists" and who were awaiting the accumulation of sufficient seniority to obtain a promotion in the school or area of their choice may now find themselves disadvantaged in comparison with younger teachers who have had more recent professional development experiences. These older teachers, who may have been inspected for promotion five, 10 or even more years ago, may feel bitter and disillusioned because "the rules of the game" have been changed for them mid-career.

In addition, affirmative action practices were also introduced for a time during the late 1980s in New South Wales public schools in an attempt to increase the number of women in promotions

positions and this caused quite acrimonious debate at the time. Resentment of the rapid promotion achieved by younger "high-fliers", particularly female, could have a serious impact on the morale of older members of the teaching service who perceive that they have been passed over for promotion. Certainly, anecdotal evidence to support this contention is commonplace, and it may be that these policies to alter the promotion system have contributed to teacher resignation.

Concern has also been raised by teachers and their union, the N.S.W. Teachers' Federation, over the fairness of the application procedure for promotion with its emphasis upon the submission of an acceptable "C.V.", the "short-listing" of applicants for interview and also the interview process itself. Where in the past an applicant for promotion, already qualified as a result of a two to four day inspection or assessment, would submit one consolidated application form, teachers are now required to submit a separate application for each position sought, and if an interview is granted, to travel to the region concerned where the interview is being conducted. As a result, some teachers have been out of school and away from their fellow teachers and students while being involved in the costly process of travelling to attend interviews in various parts of the state. Recent efforts have been made to streamline this procedure, but concern remains that teachers from outside a particular region may have little chance of securing a position ahead of the local teachers applying for the position, the implication being that the system may encourage nepotism (see Paige, 1991: 11).

Possible Positive Aspects of New Promotions Procedures

The second broad impact of the move towards "merit" promotion is quite possibly a positive one. As mentioned previously, teachers who desired promotion in the past had to present themselves for a quite rigorous assessment by an inspector. If they passed such an inspection, which many did not, the teacher found him or herself placed on the relevant promotions seniority list. Some of these "lists" contained literally thousands of qualified teachers and it could take years to obtain the desired promotion, by which time the individual teacher might well have lost some of his or her drive and enthusiasm.

It was not unusual under this system to see a person finally gain a position as deputy principal or principal only to reach retirement age within one or two years. It could be said that his (sometimes her) best years had been wasted occupying a more lowly position than he or she could have adequately coped with. A variation on this problem was the situation where a teacher was prepared to wait many years to obtain a position in a more favoured part of the state such as the north or south coast, leading to the problematic situation where both the "assistant" and "executive" teachers in these regions tended to be disproportionately older than their colleagues in other regions, which had relatively inexperienced staff.

However, with the move towards "merit" promotion, it could be argued that teachers can now be placed in a position when they are ready for it, and that schools and communities can now have some say in the hiring of suitable staff, assuming of course that effective selection procedures are adopted and that a vacant position is available. If at some time in the future the incumbent of a promotions position is no longer coping or no longer desires the responsibility, it could be possible to return to a lower or different position and thus people could be moved into and out of "hot spots" while they possessed the necessary drive and enthusiasm. In addition, it might be possible to obtain a better mix of youth and experience across the 10 educational regions of the state.

New Positions

A further variation on the previous "lock-step" approach to promotion is the creation of new "Advanced Skills Teacher" positions which would enable the best teachers, if able to be identified, to remain at least partly in the classroom where students and fellow teachers could have the benefit of their skills and experience, unlike the previous situation where the most able teachers had to leave the classroom and become administrators in order to obtain higher salary and status.

In N.S.W., "Leading Teachers" with the status and salary of deputy principals but with a part teaching load have already been introduced into public secondary schools and "Advanced Skills" positions above the top of the present classroom "assistant" teacher salary scale but below that for "Head Teachers" have more recently been introduced.

Career Ladders

The use of "career ladders" has been a fairly controversial innovation in educational systems in the United States, the idea being to allow teachers to plan their careers, to offer alternative modes of progression, and to offer incentive through more rapid promotion and "merit pay" as each higher "rung" of the ladder is reached. Reddick and Thomas (1985) reported on their study across 25 school systems in "Middle" Tennessee which utilised questionnaires from 516 teachers. The career ladder program under study utilised a five-step ladder from probationary teachers at the bottom to "career level III" teachers at the top of the scale.

The study yielded mixed results, with about half of the teachers surveyed believing that the program would improve the quality of instruction, but most teachers stating that they did not believe that the program would assist in either attracting or retaining more qualified teachers.

Perhaps surprisingly, about 85 per cent of the surveyed teachers said that morale was likely to suffer as a result of the pay differentials experienced by teachers on different levels of the ladder. There also appeared to be resistance to the idea of qualified, experienced teachers having to be assessed for competency and concern also over the adequacy of any evaluative system adopted to achieve this purpose.

Futrell (1986) has warned that one of the dangers of rushing into "career ladders" was that the collaboration between teachers which is desirable may be replaced by competition as teachers strive to climb the promotion ladder.

The Problem of Identifying "Merit"

"Merit" promotion requires, implicitly, the identification of sound personal and professional qualities. As a result, there have been calls for a greater emphasis upon "performance appraisal" over a longer period, rather than the previous inspectorial system where it was possible for both students and teacher to "put on a show" for several days. Teacher appraisal is a contentious issue, with teachers' unions fearing outside judgement and interference in the professional work of teachers and those in supervisory positions being unsure whether the purpose of the appraisal is to judge competence or improve performance. Certainly, "merit promotion", if it is to be effective, must be predicated upon the successful identification of such merit, which in turn requires a judgement. However, for the sake of professional development of teachers, whether promotion is desired or not, teachers need, and are in fact entitled to feedback as to their strong and weak points if improvement and professional development is to occur (Dinham: 1990, 9-10).

Initiatives such as the abolition of the "list" system, the ending of school inspectorial visits, and the introduction of affirmative action practices, "merit" promotion, new "Advanced Skills" promotion positions and teacher performance appraisal may well have the potential to have an impact, both positively and negatively, upon teacher resignation, depending, one suspects, upon the personal characteristics of the individual concerned and the method of implementation in each case.

However, the effects of these and any other measures taken to reform education will need to be carefully evaluated and the demonstrated benefits, if any, measured against the human and financial costs involved. Rosenholtz (1985: 350-354) considered this matter in an American context and put forth six "myths" about educational reform, which she then quite effectively refuted based upon research findings:

- Myth # 1: Pay teachers more and they will teach better.
- Myth # 2: Competition between teachers for career advancement and higher pay is a sound way to improve the quality of their teaching.
- Myth # 3: Career ladders and incentive pay will give teachers something to strive toward and thus will reduce attrition.
- Myth # 4: Career ladders will help teachers improve.
- Myth # 5: Career ladders and incentive pay will attract more academically talented people into the teaching profession.
- Myth # 6: Teachers who are promoted to career ladder positions can evaluate peers for subsequent promotion.

Rosenholtz (1985: 354) believes that many educational "reforms" such as those outlined above are politically inspired are doomed to failure because those responsible do not understand or fail to address the realities of school life and student and teacher learning, a cautionary note on which to end this section examining ways to increase teacher retention.

One Model of Teacher Retention

Chapman has examined the issue of teacher retention or persistence in some detail. As a result of studies into teacher satisfaction (Chapman and Lowther, 1982) and teacher attrition or resignation (Chapman and Hutcheson, 1982), Chapman (1983) proposed a model which attempted to examine the influences on teacher retention and later carried out research to test it (Chapman, 1984).

Chapman was concerned with the personal, social and economic factors responsible for teacher resignation and noted that "little research ... has addressed in more than an anecdotal way the important factors associated with teacher retention. Likewise, few models or theories have been offered to explain teachers' decisions to leave or remain ... Lacking clear models, much of the research that is conducted is not cumulative in impact" (Chapman, 1983: 43).

Chapman (1983) went on to propose a model which grouped the variables thought to influence teacher retention into four areas: "personal characteristics", including sex, socio-economic status, and race; "teacher training", including the amount of education, initial commitment to teaching, adequacy of teacher preparation programs/student teaching and first employment (teaching) experience; "professional and social integration into teaching", and finally, "career satisfaction". "External influences" such as employment climate and alternative career opportunities were also included in the model.

The purpose of the model as proposed by Chapman was both to guide inquiry and to suggest issues related to teacher pre-service training and school administration. The model was grounded in social learning theory, in which it is posited "that psychological functioning can be explained in terms of the interaction of personal characteristics, previous behaviour (e.g., learning), and environmental determinants" (Chapman, 1983: 46).

Chapman (1984) then tested the model with a sample of randomly selected teaching certificate holders who had graduated every other year from the University of Michigan between 1946 and 1978. A total of 5,764 graduates were contacted, yielding returns from 2,933 or 51 per cent. Of the 1,282 respondents used in the study, 620 started in and remained teaching in public schools, 421 started in teaching but subsequently left, and 241 prepared for but never taught. Of the remaining 1,651 respondents not used in the study, these had either started out and remained teaching in private schools, prepared for teaching but never taught, entering school administration or counselling instead, or were discarded from the study because of inadequate data or other reasons.

Discriminant analysis was used to study differences among the three groups -- those who started in and remained teaching, those who started in and subsequently left teaching, and those who prepared for but never entered teaching -- on measures suggested by the model. The general findings are summarised below (Chapman, 1984: 654-656):

Career satisfaction was found to be significantly related to persons' decisions to leave (or never enter) teaching.

Many of the variables related to voluntary attrition are not easily influenced by the administrator.

There was little evidence of a direct relationship between administrator behaviour and attrition. Some of the factors most related to teacher attrition, such as initial commitment, occur early in a teacher's experience, often prior to the point an administrator may be able to intervene. Other issues, such as salary or the availability of other jobs, are often outside the ability of an administrator's influence.

The factors most within an administrator's ability to affect (e.g. professional integration variables) show the least relationship to attrition.

Administrators may be able to influence attrition through shaping the 'tone' and quality of a new teacher's first teaching experience.

Of those who entered teaching, the quality of first teaching experience was more strongly related to subsequent attrition than was either their academic performance or the perceived adequacy of their pre-service preparation.

The single strongest predictor of retention was initial commitment to teaching, something with implications for teacher pre-service preparation programs.

One unexpected result was the relatively small contribution of professional integration variables (e.g., values, skills, and achievements) to the discriminant functions, especially given the importance of these in earlier studies.

Chapman (1984: 656) believed that his study supported the importance of the distinction between those who prepared for teaching and never taught and those who taught for a short time and left teaching. Both groups differed from career teachers. "Those who never entered teaching reported the least initial commitment to teach, the highest levels of job and life satisfaction, and greater mobility than career teachers. To begin as a teacher and soon leave seemed, on the other hand, to set people back in their career accomplishments." It may be that those who never entered teaching had no real intention to do so and were either simply gaining a qualification to use elsewhere or delaying entering employment.

Of those who left teaching within a short time however, these people may well have been unsure of their future or while committed to teaching, unsuitable for the role or suffering from inadequate preparation and/or induction. According to Chapman (1984: 656), those who left teaching seemed disillusioned and yet even after changing careers, still reported the lowest satisfaction with their job and education although strangely, they did report the highest level of overall life satisfaction, apparently because of a capacity to separate work from other life experiences.

Summary of Research Variables Identified by the Literature

In an attempt to bring together the findings of the literature reviewed to this point, the following tables list variables which the literature has suggested contribute to teacher resignation and teacher persistence and the allied areas of the literature such as teacher morale. These variables were utilised to form a consolidated list of research variables and both the draft model of teacher persistence and the interview schedule for the interviewing of resigned teachers.

In each case, the comprehensive list of variables gathered from the examination of the literature is indicative of the uncertainty and lack of consensus concerning the various issues. It is because of this large number of potential variables that it was decided not to utilise a questionnaire, but to utilise open-ended questions designed to reveal the major variables or influences responsible for teacher resignation and teacher persistence.

The four tables which represent the findings of the literature are: variables associated with the changing context of teaching, characteristics of the Australian teaching force, the status of teachers and community expectations and the teaching environment; variables associated with teacher morale, stress and burnout; variables associated with teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and finally, variables associated with research into teacher resignation and retaining teachers.

No attempt was made at this stage of the study to determine whether the various variables listed contribute to either teacher persistence or resignation as it was thought that this might well depend upon the individual concerned. For example, changes to the promotions system might act to motivate one teacher towards advancement while another teacher, perhaps more experienced, might consider resignation because he or she had lost the seniority that they previously enjoyed under the "list" system. In addition, certain variables appear in more than one table, for example pupil discipline and teachers' salaries appear more than once.

At this stage a simple division was made between "structural" and "human" variables although it was recognised that a more complex distinction might be made as the study progressed. This

distinction emerged from the findings of the literature review, which suggested that such phenomena as morale, stress, job satisfaction, and resignation are dependent both upon personal or human factors and structural or more extrinsic factors.

Table 1: Variables Associated With the Changing Context of Teaching, Characteristics of the Australian Teaching Force, the Status of Teachers and Community Expectations and the Teaching Environment.

(a) Structural Variables

School Based Curriculum Development
 Pre-Service Teacher Training
 Availability of In-Service
 Accreditation of In-Service
 Teachers' Salaries
 Class Sizes
 Funding for Education
 Community Involvement
 Accountability
 Emphasis Upon Educational Outcomes
 Examinations
 Youth Unemployment
 Post-Compulsory Retention
 Alternative School Subjects
 Centralisation of Curriculum
 Integration of Students With Disabilities
 Changes to Enrolments
 School Councils
 Technology in Schools
 Provision of Specialist Support Staff
 Provision of Resources
 Physical Teaching Environment
 Maintenance of Facilities
 Support for Post-graduate Study
 Communication With the D.S.E.
 Professional Associations
 Job Security
 Working Hours
 Holidays
 New Promotion Procedures

(b) Human Variables

Age
 Gender
 Pressure for "Relevance"
 Meeting Students' Needs
 Pressure to Provide "Basics"
 Coping With Social Change
 Pressure to Solve Society's Problems
 Coping With Less-Academic Students
 Integration of Students With Disabilities
 Multi-cultural Diversity
 Pace of Structural Change
 Emphasis Upon Management
 Technology in Education
 Emphasis Upon Excellence
 Promotion on "Merit"
 Likelihood of Promotion
 Parent and Community Involvement
 Greater Teacher Autonomy and Responsibility
 Non-English Speaking Background
 Performance in Pre-Service Training
 Support From Professional Associations
 Pressure to Up-grade Qualifications
 Standing of Education in the Media
 Public Satisfaction With Education
 Community Expectations
 Consensus Over Educational Goals
 School Ethos and Climate
 Statements of Politicians
 Status of Teachers
 Self-image as a Teacher
 Pupil Discipline

Table 2: Variables Associated With Teacher Morale, Stress and Burnout**(a) Structural Variables**

Pre-service Selection Procedures
Pre-service Training
Salary
Teacher Induction
Formal Recognition of Teacher Achievement
Formal Recognition of Student Achievement
Physical Teaching Environment
Formal Discipline System
Formal Pupil Welfare System
Formal Methods of Communication in School
Formal Process of Staff Development
Formal Program for Stress Reduction
Assistance with Time Management
Assistance With Behaviour Modification
School Rules, Regulations and Procedures
Articulated School Goals, Mission, Vision
Involvement in Decision Making, Planning
Delegation of Staff Responsibilities
Individual Workload
Non-Teaching Duties
Role Conflict or Ambiguity
Equity of Teaching Duties
Breaks for Teacher Rest and Relaxation
Formal Methods of Coping With Stress
Interruptions to Tasks
Alternative Employment Opportunities
Involuntary Transfer of Self or Others
Staff Appraisal and Supervision Methods
Post-Compulsory Retention
Opportunity for "Horizontal" Movement/Job Enrichment
Determination of Unsatisfactory Performance of Self
Determination of Unsatisfactory Performance of Others

(b) Human Variables

Age
Gender
Physical Health
Length of Teaching Experience
Sleep/Fatigue/Exhaustion
Time Pressures
Aggression
Tension
Depression
Use of Drugs/Alcohol
Special Life Changes
Involvement in Further Study
Non-Teaching Commitments
Challenge of Teaching
Personal Motivation
Student Motivation
Feeling of Effectiveness
Sense of Power and Control
Ability to Concentrate
Ability to Plan
Ability to Make Decisions
Ability to Determine Priorities
Ability to Cope With Change
Sense of Detachment
School Ethos and Climate
Group Morale
Congruence With Group Morale
Congruence With School Goals, Mission, Vision
Cliques and Sub-groups
Cooperation With Peers
Leadership Style of Superiors
Feedback on Progress From Superiors
Support by Peers/Superiors
Approachability of Superiors
Encouragement of Special Interests
Help to Solve Personal Problems
Relationships With Peers
Relationships With Subordinates (if any)
Relationships With Students
Relationships With Parents and Community
Recognition by Others of Achievement
Opportunity for Promotion
Self-fulfilment
Pupil Achievement
Pupil Behaviour
Informal Methods of Communication in School
Personal Absenteeism
Stress Induced by Teaching
Stress Induced by Personal Life
Personal Expectations
School Expectations
Community Expectations
Financial Pressures - School
Financial Pressures - Personal

Table 3: Variables Associated With Teacher Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

(a) Structural Variables

Age/Grade Taught
 Delegation of Staff Responsibilities
 Involvement in Decision Making, Planning
 Formal Recognition of Teacher Achievement
 Salary
 Letters of Commendation
 Formal Verbal Commendation
 Gifts/Incentives
 Committee Appointments
 Opportunities for Advancement
 Promotion Methods
 Merit Pay
 Career Ladders
 Routine Teaching Duties
 Job Enrichment
 Appraisal and Supervision Methods
 School Policy
 School Administration
 Physical Teaching Environment
 Class Sizes
 Formal Methods of Communication in School
 Formal Methods to Enhance Teacher Performance
 Identification of Teachers' Needs
 In-service
 Opportunities for Further Study

(b) Human Variables

Age
 Gender
 Achievement
 Goal Achievement
 Self-actualisation
 Self-esteem
 Task Identification
 Recognition
 Responsibility
 Prestige
 Power
 Freedom to Select Curriculum
 Freedom to Select Teaching Methods
 Freedom to Select Assessment Methods
 Feedback from Principal/Superiors
 Feedback from Parents
 Feedback from Students
 Feedback from Peers
 Interpersonal Relations - Students
 Interpersonal Relations - Peers
 Interpersonal Relations - Superiors
 Role of Principal
 Personal Life
 Task Orientation
 Ability to Persuade Others
 Ability to Learn New Things
 Level of Student Achievement
 General Behaviour of Students
 Attitudes of Society Towards Education
 Attitude of Students Towards Education
 Attitudes of Parents Towards Education
 The Status of Teachers Within Society
 School Ethos and Climate

Table 4: Variables Associated With Research Into Teacher Resignation and Retaining Teachers

(a) Structural Variables

Pre-service Training
 Teachers' Salaries
 Teachers' Working Conditions
 Materials and Supplies
 Additional Allowances/Inducements
 Merit Pay
 Flexible Career Paths
 Inducements for Further Study
 Reduction in Duties
 Geographical Area
 Social and Recreational Facilities
 Ties With Local Community
 Primary
 Secondary
 Subject Taught
 Formal Teacher Induction
 In-School Support Structures/Staff
 In-service
 Mentoring by Senior Staff
 Employment Conditions e.g. compulsory posting
 Experience of Fellow Teachers
 Staff Turnover in School
 Staff Shortages at School
 Actual Enrolments
 Projected Enrolments
 Involvement in Decision Making, Planning
 Delegation of Staff Responsibilities
 Age/Grade Taught
 Class Sizes
 Non-Teaching Duties
 Lack of Class-free Time
 Promotion Opportunities
 Appraisal and Supervision Methods
 School Policies and Procedures
 Non-academic Subjects
 Administration of School/Department
 Pre-service Training
 Discontinuation of Position/Forced Transfer
 Alternative Work Opportunities

(b) Human Variables

Age
 Gender
 Initial Appointment
 Length of Teaching Experience
 Early Teaching Experiences
 Teaching Methods
 Isolation From Family/Friends
 Change in Family Status
 Isolation Within the Classroom
 Travelling Time
 Previous Leave Taken
 Competence of Principal
 Support from Principal
 Support from Peers
 Recognition for Effort
 Job/Career Satisfaction
 Organisational Skills
 Analytic Skills
 Interpersonal Relations - Peers
 Interpersonal Relations - Students
 Interpersonal Relations - Superiors
 Receptivity of Students
 Student Behaviour
 Level of Student Achievement
 Coping With Less-academic Students
 Motivating Students
 Relationship With Community
 Discrimination and Bias by School
 Pre-service Success/Academic Ability
 Initial Commitment to Teaching
 Present Commitment to Teaching
 Opportunity for Promotion
 Adequacy of Pre-service training
 Relocation of Spouse
 Family Commitments
 Physical Health
 Pupil Discipline
 Desire to Teach in Another Location
 Desire to Teach in Another System
 Break From Teaching
 Staff Cohesion and Collegiality
 Challenge of Teaching
 The Status of Teachers Within Society
 Self-Esteem
 Pressure to Solve Society's Problems

Research Methodology

Introduction

To summarise the review of literature to this point, the majority of studies involving teacher resignation examined above have tended to employ a quantitative methodology in that questionnaires were typically used to provide data which was subjected to statistical analysis.

Where official reports and documents from educational authorities have been examined, these have been concerned, in the main, with an aggregated level and have tended to concentrate upon teacher loss rates and projections of teacher supply and demand and the need to either train certain numbers of teachers or obtain them from other systems. In addition, departments of education sometimes publish statistics showing teacher shortfalls in certain subject disciplines and geographical areas. As a result, some qualitative variables, notably those pertaining to personal characteristics including feelings and personal expectations, relationships and experiences, may have been neglected in such studies and government reports.

As stated previously, while these studies have proved to be useful and interesting, it was felt that there was a missing element in this approach and thus a gap in the total literature in that the individual experiences and context of the respondents to the various surveys have not been fully considered. Resignation research had tended to concentrate upon the rates of resignation and the stated reasons for resignation rather than the personal feelings and experiences of those involved. It has tended to deal with the symptoms rather than the causes of resignation. It was thought that it has been overly simplistic to nominate a single reason such as "dissatisfaction" for the resignation of a teacher when in fact the decision to resign could well be the result of the complex interplay of structural and human factors over a period of time.

This study sought to redress this situation through the deeper exploration of feelings, experiences and relationships and of the forces and tensions, both human and structural, which might lead teachers to resign. In this respect, the study was more interpretive than normative.

Because of the wide variety of potential influences on teacher resignation and persistence identified in the literature review and because of the desire to explore the personal side to resignation, it was thought that the interview utilising largely open-ended questions to enable the subjects to tell their own stories was the most appropriate method of data collection.

Further, it was felt that the telephone interview, with its ability to sample subjects from a wide geographic region, in this case the 10 educational regions of the state of New South Wales, was preferable to the face-to-face interview, although as will be seen later, face-to-face interviews were utilised in three of the 57 interviews conducted with former teachers.

Theoretical Context

As far as the theoretical context of the study is concerned, the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Getzels (1979), Campbell, *et.al.*, (1982), Morgan (1980; Ed., 1983), Hammersley (1984), Husen (1985), Hycner (1985), Long, *et.al.*, (1985), Wolcott (1985), White (1986), Foster (1986), McCarthy (1986), Macpherson (1987), Smith (1987), Cohen and Manion (1989), Schwandt (1989), and Strauss and Corbin (1990) were all of value in helping to define the purpose of the study as it related to varying epistemological stances and approaches.

As a result of the findings of the literature review and the difficulty in gaining understanding of the phenomena of teacher resignation and teacher persistence which has been demonstrated, it was determined to adopt a more qualitative, subjective and interpretive methodological approach to the study, with the relationships between key variables emerging from the data gathered by largely open-ended interviewing in an inductive manner, an approach which Glaser and Strauss (1967) termed "grounded theory" and one which has been further refined and widely utilised since then (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Schwandt (1989: 398) considered the values inherent in both quantitative and qualitative paradigms of inquiry and found that the values inherent in quantitative approaches to research were "prediction", "primacy of method", "manipulation and control", "consensus", "rationality", and "detachment and impartiality", while the values inherent in qualitative approaches were "interpretation", "primacy of subject matter", "emergence and portrayal", "pluralism", "rationality, serendipity and intuition", and "personal involvement and partiality". It is the values and philosophy inherent in the latter that made qualitative methods seem most appropriate given the purpose and context of the study.

The view taken in this study was that knowledge is not "hard, real and capable of being transmitted in tangible form" but more "softer, more subjective, spiritual or even transcendental ... based on experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature" (Cohen and Manion, 1989: 7).

In the context of the study, teachers were not viewed as just responding mechanically to their environment, and thus there was an emphasis on nominalism rather than realism, and on anti-positivism rather than positivism, on voluntarism rather than determinism, with a methodology

which was ideographic rather than nomothetic (Burrell and Morgan, cited by Cohen and Manion, 1989: 9).

Mary Smith took up the issue of context in qualitative research, noting that (1987: 174):

Qualitative research is based on the notion of context sensitivity. What sets qualitative research apart most clearly from other forms of research is the belief that the particular physical, historical, material, and social environment in which people find themselves has a great bearing on what they think and how they act. Acts must be interpreted by drawing on those larger contexts. Qualitative researchers reject the notion of universal, context-free generalisation ... Objectivity in the conventional sense is an illusion; the subject's intentions, beliefs, views of the researcher, and interests must be considered. A further implication of the belief in context sensitivity is a deemphasis of standardised or general research methods. The social scene is thought to be so complex that one cannot anticipate it sufficiently to select a priori a single or even a few meanings for a construct ... and adopt a uniform way of measuring it.

It was thus felt that people, including teachers, construed their world in different ways, and that the organisations within which they operated were an invented social reality, with people acting both singly and in concert. The study was interested in exploring power relationships, and the conflict that occurs due to the diversity of thought and action, with an interpretive focus on the individual and his or her relationships within the unique social reality or context that each person is part of and carries with him or her.

Reflexivity was actively encouraged in that each person interviewed was asked to turn back their thoughts to the time prior to when they entered teacher training, to reflect on their experiences during teacher training, to recall what it was like when they began teaching, to recall their feelings and experiences over the course of their career, whether it was short, long or disrupted, and to describe the circumstances leading to their ultimate resignation. They were also asked to reflect on how their experiences as a whole in education had affected them, how they felt about education now, and what it would take to induce them to work once more for the N.S.W. Department of School Education (See Appendix 1).

These thoughts, experiences and feelings are both a product and a source of the multiple social realities that each individual encounters in his or her private life, school, community, and society. Theory arising from this reflexivity was thus emergent, in that it was "grounded" in the data generated by the research act. A tentative model of teacher persistence had been proposed as a result of the findings of the literature review, but this was extensively shaped and modified by the carrying out of the primary research process.

Being a case study of the feelings and experiences of 57 teachers who left one particular educational system in one particular period of time, the study and the theory inductively developed from it can be considered substantive rather than formal, formal being used in the sense of universality of application. It is hoped, none the less, that the study has made a

significant contribution to the understanding of both teacher resignation and persistence and that the matters raised have wider application than just the case study in question.

Further, it is hoped that this largely qualitative, interpretive study complements the previous research in this field which has been conducted to date from something of a different methodological perspective.

It is interesting that despite the differences in methodological approaches mentioned above, the study did confirm much of the previous research findings in the field, illustrating the principle of equifinality, or reaching the same theoretical destination through different means. However while there was confirmation of previous research findings, there were also new discoveries and insights resulting from the methodological approach employed, as will be seen later when the results of the study are outlined.

What follows is an examination of the literature pertaining to the particular methodological approach employed in the study. This examination begins by considering the use of the case study in research and the question of grounded theory, before considering the interview, including the technique of the telephone interview. This is followed by a consideration of content analysis of data, and then the conduct and results of one case study involving teacher interviews.

The Case Study

Cohen and Manion (1989: 128) believe that:

the subject matter of the world in which the educational researcher is interested is composed of people and is essentially meaningful. That world is subjectively structured, possessing particular meanings for its inhabitants. The task of the educational researcher is very often to explain the means by which an orderly social world is established and maintained in terms of its shared meanings.

Cohen and Manion (1989: 124) contend that "interpretive, subjective dimensions of educational phenomena" are "best explored by case study methods". The purpose of the case study, according to Cohen and Manion (1989: 125):

is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit (or group under study) with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs.

Many of the studies cited in the literature review employed a case study methodology in that a certain group of teachers from a certain institution or system had been surveyed, interviewed or observed. This study of the resignation of teachers from the N.S.W. Department of School

Education also employed such a methodology, although not strictly in the observational sense, coupled with the interview and grounded theory techniques. In this research project, the case study was of one group of teachers who had resigned from one educational system during a given time period. It was not a case study in that teachers at one particular location were studied in an ethnographic sense, although there were elements of ethnography and naturalistic inquiry in the conduct of the study.

Briefly, in the area of case study, the work of Meek (1987), Angus (1987), Adelman, *et.al.*, (1976), Lakomski (1987), Wild (1981), Bell and Roberts (Eds., 1984), Cohen and Manion (1989), Lincoln and Guba (1990) and Walford (Ed., 1991) proved to be of value, highlighting both the benefits and pitfalls of such an approach. Owens (1982) provided an introduction to naturalistic inquiry while Macpherson (Ed., 1987) provided general reading in the area of conducting educational research while also providing a series of illuminating histories of research case studies (see also Cohen and Manion, 1989: 124-151; and Walford, Ed., 1991).

Meek (1987: 197) provided a personal view of the case study approach, one purpose of which was to gain "comprehensive understanding" of the group or community under investigation. Meek noted that the case study approach involves elements of both clinical supervision and ethnography and that "the best that can be achieved ... is a dialogue between the theories and conceptualisations of the observer and the material events, themselves vague, changing, unfolding and contradictory". Meek made the important point that every case study is unique and rather than this posing a problem, it is in fact an important benefit of the method, despite the fact that while the case study could possibly be repeated, it cannot be replicated in a scientific manner, and thus the findings of this study into the resignation of teachers from one system will be mainly pertinent to that case study, although lessons would hopefully emerge with implications for teacher resignation and teacher persistence generally.

Meek (1987: 208) also noted that rather than merely studying a group or cohort, the researcher was actually analysing social forces of power, conflict, change and values, which impinge upon the case study. Data is obtained from concrete sources and also from the interpretations and impressions of the researcher, so much so that:

In a case study it is difficult to know if your composite picture of the community or group even resembles the 'real thing'. The researcher's interpretation must be consistent with the evidence, and members of the group studied must find some resemblance of themselves in the written account. But there is no appeal to 'objective' authority.

Despite the fact that there was no discrete group or community under investigation in this study, but rather a case study of a group of teachers from a particular system in a particular time frame, the warning from Angus (1987: 40) concerning the danger of the researcher becoming so involved in the case study as to be said to have "gone native" and to have lost all traces of objectivity and distance due to personal and emotional involvement did require consideration.

Angus believed that to avoid this problem, it was very important "to develop a partial sense of detachment, or critical distance".

Lakomski (1987) had a number of cautionary points to make in regard to "cultural" or "interpretive" approaches to research, which she contrasted with "traditional" organisational theory. The author (1987: 117) noted the vital importance of interpretation with cultural analysis, which can reveal complexities but sometimes may not "enable us to make a rational choice between sometimes opposing options". Lakomski (1987: 125) extended this argument when she stated that "Cultural analysis, which is primarily interested in understanding people's values, interests, and reasons for doing things, can lead to very different practical proposals and courses for action." One of the major problems with such an approach, according to the author, was the inability of the interpreter to divorce his or her own preferences in the course of the analysis (see also Wild, 1981), a point which was well taken in this present study where the researcher was a former teacher and was currently involved in teacher pre-service and postgraduate education.

Bell and Roberts (Eds., 1984: 5) spoke of a pluralism of methodology in social research and pointed to "the break-up of what is referred to as the hegemony of positivist epistemology ... So instead of one, and only one way of doing sociological research, there are now many". The authors used a collection of essays to examine some of the problems posed by research and provided contrasts between alternative approaches. The editors noted (1984: 3) that each approach "recognises the sterility and impossibility of attempts to launder any research totally of 'bias', and that the research process should take on board ... the larger political ... realities".

Thus it was the feeling of these writers and others that even if it were possible to conduct a purely "objective" and "scientific" study, this would run the risk of not fully addressing and recognising personal, organisational, social and political factors and forces, matters of real concern to this study, given its theoretical context and aims.

Judging the Quality of Case Studies

Lincoln and Guba (1990: 53) noted that "The emergence of alternative paradigms to guide inquiry has raised serious questions about how the quality of such inquiry might be judged". As a result of their consideration of this issue and drawing upon the work of others, the authors advocated four criteria to judge the quality of the product of such inquiry, these being "resonance", "rhetoric", "empowerment", and "applicability".

Lincoln and Guba (1990: 53-54) argued that:

case reports, rather than more technical reports, are the logically best form for reporting on alternative paradigm work ... because they provide an appropriate vehicle for the 'thick description' ... which is so essential to an understanding of context and situation; they serve as metaphors useful to the reader to stretch and test his or her knowledge; they provide the information and sophistication needed to challenge the reader's current construction and enable its reconstruction; they serve as 'idea catalogues' from which the reader may pick and choose in ways relevant to his or her own situation; and, most important, they provide the vicarious experience from which the reader may learn (as we do from all experience).

Of the four criteria advocated by Lincoln and Guba, "resonance" was defined (1990: 54) as:

criteria that assess the degree of fit, overlap, or reinforcement between the case study report as written and the basic belief system under-girding that alternative paradigm which the inquirer has chosen to follow ... Any case study is a construction itself, a product of the interaction between respondents, site, and researcher. As such, the construction is rooted in the person, character, experience, context, and philosophy of the constructor. That constructor, the inquirer, has an obligation to be self-examining, self-questioning, self-challenging, self-critical, and self-correcting. Any case study should reflect these intensely personal processes on the part of the researcher.

The second criteria, "rhetorical criteria", were defined by the authors (Lincoln and Guba, 1990: 54-56) as those criteria "relevant to assessing the form, structure, and presentational characteristics of the case study". Lincoln and Guba cited Zeller, who postulated four such criteria of "good writing", these being "unity", "overall organisation", "simplicity or clarity", and finally, "craftsmanship", which included the fact that the writing "has power and elegance", "is creative", "is open and problematic", "is independent", and "should demonstrate the writer's emotional and intellectual commitment to craftsmanship", "display courage" and finally, "it should display egalitarianism".

By "empowerment criteria", the authors meant (Lincoln and Guba, 1990: 57):

the ability of the case study to evoke and facilitate action on the part of readers. Such criteria include fairness, educativeness, and actionability ... or the power of such an inquiry to enable those whom it affects directly or indirectly to take action ... At the least, empowerment implies consciousness-raising ... It means making clear what action steps are indicated by the inquiry.

The fourth group of criteria for judging case study reports, "applicability criteria", are defined (Lincoln and Guba, 1990: 57) as those:

which assess the extent to which the case study facilitates the drawing of inferences by the reader that may have applicability in his or her context or situation. (Inferences, however, should not be confused with generalisations, which are context-free and time-free laws regarding human behaviour.)

Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967), although primarily concerned with sociological research, provided a stimulating alternative to what has been termed "logico-deductive theory". The authors argued persuasively for "grounding" theory in the actual research process itself, rather than verifying existing theory through rigorous testing.

According to the authors (1967: 5-6):

grounded theory is derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of the data ... Generating a theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of research ... We believe that grounded theory will be more successful than theories logically deduced from *a priori* assumptions.

The authors (1967: 17-18) addressed the issue of the supposed "clash" between quantitative and qualitative methods with the comment that:

there is no fundamental clash between the purposes and capacities of qualitative and quantitative methods or data. What clash there is concerns the primacy of emphasis on verification or generation of theory - to which heated discussions on qualitative *versus* quantitative data have been linked historically.

The authors (1967: 37) talked of "theory as process", rather than as a beginning point for verification, and opposed forcing theory or categories onto data, arguing that categories employed in the analysis should "emerge" from the data, as "Working with borrowed categories is more difficult since they are harder to find, fewer in number, and not as rich".

In grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 43):

Joint collection, coding, and analysis of data is the underlying operation. The generation of theory, coupled with the notion of theory as process, requires that all three operations be done together as much as possible. They should blur and intertwine continually, from the beginning of an investigation to its end.

This process of joint collection, coding and analysis is termed "theoretical sampling" and the process of data collection is "controlled" by the emerging theory. The authors advocate being "theoretically sensitive" so that the researcher can "conceptualise and formulate a theory as it emerges from the data ... A discovered, grounded theory ... will tend to combine mostly concepts and hypotheses that have emerged from the data with some existing ones that are clearly useful" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 46).

The authors (1967: 79) made a distinction between "substantive" theory, grounded in research into one substantive area such as teachers in one system, and grounded "formal" theory,

possibly arising from the important general implications of this theory, for example in the area of worker satisfaction or teachers generally.

Glaser and Strauss (1967: 237) argued that:

The practical application of grounded sociological theory, whether substantive or formal, requires developing a theory with (at least) four highly interrelated properties. The first ... is that the theory must closely *fit* the substantive area in which it will be used. Second, it must be readily *understandable* by laymen concerned with this area. Third, it must be sufficiently *general* to be applicable to a multitude of diverse daily situations within the substantive area, not just to a specific type of situation. Fourth, it must allow the user partial *control* over the structure and process of daily situations as they change through time.

Because grounded theory techniques were so central to this study, greater detail on the method is provided in Chapter III, which describes how the research was conducted, and which draws heavily upon further development of the work of Glaser and Strauss as represented in Strauss and Corbin (1990).

The Interview

As far as the tool of the interview is concerned, Beed and Stimson (Eds., 1985), Black and Champion (1986), Kidder and Judd (1986), Powney and Watts, 1987), Keats (1988), Cohen and Manion (1989), Breakwell (1990) and Walford (Ed., 1991) were consulted to provide essential background to the successful utilisation of this method.

Black and Champion (1976: 353) stated that "The interview is easily the most sociological of all research techniques ... because its very form is derived from verbal interaction between the investigator and respondent". The authors went on to describe the characteristic features of the interview, including the fact that verbal interaction takes place with the interviewer, rather than the subject merely recording information. The relationship between the two parties is a structured, transitory one, with considerable flexibility possible in the format of the interview. The interview involves much more than simply two people talking and provides the functions of description and exploration "to provide insights into unexplored dimensions of a topic" (Black and Champion, 1976: 359). This view is also shared by Kidder (1981).

Some factors which can influence the success of the interview include the personal qualities of both interviewer and interviewee, the nature of the problem under investigation and the setting or conditions of the interview. Black and Champion (1976) and Kidder (1981) suggest that if enough is known about the problem, it is advisable to determine a series of questions which each respondent will receive in the same fashion, a method termed the "structured" interview (see also Cohen and Manion, 1989: 309). It is important to delimit the questions carefully so as to focus on the problem under investigation and because of constraints of time and cost. A

mixture of closed and open questions are commonly used and in the case of the latter, it is important that the interviewer elicits a complete response from the subject. Piloting or pre-testing of the questions should be used to assist in the formulation of the interview questions and to monitor and develop interviewer competence. It is important to create a friendly, non-threatening atmosphere, the interviewer being a prompter and recorder, not an adversary.

Breakwell (1990: 79-80) has provided a list of cautionary points regarding the actual wording of the interview questions, which:

- Should not be double-barrelled.
- Should not assume something before going on to something else.
- Should not include jargon or complex words.
- Should not be leading.
- Should not include double negatives.
- Should not require comment on hypothetical situations e.g. 'How would you feel ... '.
- Should not act as catchalls e.g. 'Tell me everything you know about ... '

Breakwell (1990: 80-81) also provided some guidelines for the interviewer (see also Powley and Watts, 1987: 33-51):

- Make yourself thoroughly familiar with the schedule of questions.
- Ask all questions of all respondents.
- Decide what each question is meant to tap.
- Do not seek unrelated or irrelevant information.
- Be consistent in recording the answers.
- Give each respondent an equal hearing.
- Expect occasional challenges to your authority.
- Answers in face-to-face interviewing should include the non-verbal component as well.
- Avoid encouraging dependency in the respondent.

A number of writers have summarised the advantages of the interview (see Keats, 1988; Cohen and Manion, 1989: 308) which include the rapid provision of information and the fact that the researcher can ensure that the respondent correctly interprets the questions. As well as the flexibility mentioned previously, the interview also enables the investigator to have control over the situation, while also having access to non-verbal cues which assist in checking the validity of information. The relative magnitude of data reduction is great because of the use of coding. In addition, the reliance on the writing skill of the respondent is not the problem that it can be in the case of questionnaires.

Possible disadvantages of the interview, aside from those of time and cost mentioned previously, include the validity of verbal responses, the recording and coding of responses, and the need for the interviewer to maintain his or her "performance", regardless of fatigue or distraction. The establishment of rapport and "breaking the ice" are also important. At a more general level, while advocating the use of the interview in educational research, Powney and Watts (1987) were critical of the "cavalier" approach to interviewing taken by some educational researchers who have not applied sufficient rigour to the task, with the result that some research

reports do not contain interview schedules, nor do they outline how interview questions were determined, interviews conducted, and responses recorded, coded and analysed. To the uninitiated, the interview seems as natural as conversation, but unless rigour is applied to the task, the findings from any such research are problematic.

Cohen and Manion (1989: 310) stated that three major qualities are required of ethnographers as interviewers: "trust" between interviewer and interviewee "that promoted a bond of friendship, a feeling of togetherness and joint pursuit of a common mission"; "curiosity" on the part of the interviewer "to know, to learn people's views and perceptions of the facts, to hear their stories and discover their feelings", and "naturalness", where "one endeavours to be unobtrusive in order to witness events as they are, untainted by one's presence and actions, so in interviews the aim is to secure what is within the minds of interviewees, uncoloured and unaffected by the interviewer".

As far as the technicalities of utilising the interview are concerned, Cohen and Manion (1989: 320-321) recommend a number of essential tasks for the researcher. The first task requires the researcher to begin by "outlining the theoretical basis of the study, its broad aims, its practical value and the reasons why the interview approach was chosen". The general goals of the study can then be translated into more specific objectives. This step helps to ensure that the right types of data are gathered to answer the research question.

The second stage involves the actual formulation of the interview schedule itself, which involves transforming the research objectives into the specific questions that make up the schedule. The authors suggest that the researcher begin the formulation of the questions by writing down the variables to be dealt with in the study. Thought should also be given in this second stage to the question format and the response mode. This is to ensure that the questions best reflect both the objectives of the study and the study variables previously identified.

Once the interview schedule has been formulated, the next stage is the setting up and conduct of the interview, which includes briefing the subject, establishing rapport, and administering the interview schedule. Whether the interview has been taped or responses recorded during or after the interview, the next vital stage involves coding and scoring the interview data. Interview schedules can be pre-coded, or coding can occur after, in which case content analysis of the data will be required to generate the codes or categories of responses. Finally, the researcher analyses the data in light of the research objectives (for a similar approach see Breakwell, 1990: 71).

In summary, as Keats (1988: 107) has stated, provided sensible precautions are taken:

the interview can have an important place in the researcher's repertoire ... the use of interviewing as a research tool will not only provide useable, reliable data but also provide the interviewer with an enriching experience in human interaction.

The Telephone Interview

In this study, it was decided to utilise the telephone interview for the purpose of gaining access to a cross section of respondents from across the geographical extent of the 10 educational regions of the state of New South Wales, access which would have been extremely unlikely, not to mention costly, if face-to-face interviews had been utilised.

Powney and Watts (1987: 5) noted that the telephone interview, while used by some researchers in education, had not as yet been extensively adopted as a research tool. Cannell (1985: 63) noted that for some time in social surveying, there had been a tendency for researchers to "look down our noses at telephone surveys" and that the province of telephone interviewing was largely that of market research where cost was a prime consideration. However, Cannell also noted that governments and academic groups have increasingly turned to the telephone interview as a legitimate tool of social research: "the more we began to look at it ourselves the more we saw that telephone interviews has a real potential in data collection. We have now poured a lot of resources into looking at them in great detail".

Borg and Gall (1983) also considered the use of the telephone interview and reviewed research which had been carried out using this method. They believed that it has a number of real advantages over the personal interview, particularly where the target population is spread over a large area, providing that a number of precautions are taken.

Advantages of the telephone interview include: reduced travelling time and hence cost; the ease of entering data due to the central location; less likelihood of falsification of data by delegated research assistants because of the central location; no cost if the interview subject fails to answer; greater frankness on the part of respondents, and the fact that it is easier and in some cases safer to telephone rather than make a personal visit. In addition, while it may be more difficult to establish rapport over the telephone, the subject may feel less threatened, particularly if the subject matter is of a sensitive nature (see Nias, in Walford, Ed., 1991: 151). A review of research comparing telephone surveys with personal interviews carried out by Groves and Kahn (1979: 8-11) supported this contention (see also Breakwell, 1990: 84 for a list of the "pros" and "cons" of telephone interviewing).

Groves and Kahn (1979: 7) noted an additional advantage of telephone interviews in that coding and analysis can begin near the start of the interviewing period and problems with questioning and coding and analysis revealed, unlike the case with questionnaires where

completed forms tend to arrive in bulk. Groves and Kahn (1979: 5) also noted the cost advantages of telephone interviews in that "With travel eliminated ... we are freed from the need to cluster the design and can sample ... throughout the population without increasing the cost of research". Borg and Gall (1983: 448) concluded that:

In summary, research has shown that telephone interviewing reaches nearly the same proportion of the target population, obtains nearly as high a percentage of returns, and produces comparable information at about one-half the cost of personal interviews.

However as mentioned previously, there are a number of cautionary points which need to be noted when utilising the telephone interview. Of major importance is the attention that needs to be paid to framing the interview questions, although "In those educational research studies where the respondents are professional educators, the problem of phrasing questions in language common to both interviewer and respondent is not usually serious" (Borg and Gall, 1983: 451).

Borg and Gall also stressed the importance of the respondent appreciating the purpose of each question that is asked, otherwise there is a risk that the respondent will adopt an evasive or even hostile attitude. The authors suggested a series of additional points to consider when utilising the telephone interview. The first few minutes of the telephone interview should be devoted to "small talk" in order to relax the respondent and establish a measure of rapport. It is essential, as with other forms of research, to assure the respondent of confidentiality.

It is advisable to pause after each answer to enable the respondent to collect his or her thoughts and possibly elaborate. The authors advised against over-reliance on closed questions and also noted that it was undesirable to contradict or appear to cross-examine the respondent. Borg and Gall also warned against asking a stream of seemingly unrelated questions which have the effect of changing the subject and interrupting the flow of the interview.

Groves and Kahn (1979: 149-150) made the additional point that some research has found that people tend to give shorter, more truncated answers on the telephone than they do in a face-to-face interview. To overcome this problem, a number of writers have noted the need for short, non-intrusive encouragement e.g., the use of "I see", "Mm", "Right", "Can you tell me more about that ... ?", and so on.

Because of the potential difficulties mentioned above, Borg and Gall (1983: 451-455) stressed the need for a pilot study which should draw upon the target population, during which the researcher should be alert to possible communication problems and should carefully assess the methods planned to code and analyse the interview data. It might also be considered necessary to conduct a number of personal interviews to cross-validate the methods of data gathering and analysis, advice taken in this study.

Keats (1988: 28) also considered the telephone interview, although in less detail than Borg and Gall and Groves and Kahn. She made an additional significant point however:

The difference between [telephone interviews] and face-to-face interviews lies in the necessity to convey all the meaning without any additional nonverbal clues. Many interviewers do not even have the use of a written interview schedule because the content of the interviews cannot be predicted. There is thus a greater demand on auditory discrimination and on memory than in face-to-face interviewing.

With face-to-face interviews of course, it is possible, with the subject's permission, to make an audio tape of the interview or even a video tape, greatly assisting in the accurate transcription of the subject's responses and providing the opportunity for more closer attention to nonverbal behaviour. However this is not possible, at least in Australia, where it is illegal to tape telephone conversations under most circumstances. In addition, experience has shown that some subjects are inhibited by taping or filming. There is thus a greater burden on the researcher to accurately transcribe open-ended responses if successful analysis of the responses is to be achieved.

Dicker and Gilbert (1988) provided a report of a study where, after some initial scepticism, the telephone interview was adopted as the most suitable technique to evaluate the piloting of an educational database. After considering both the potential benefits and possible problems associated with the technique that had been identified in the literature and which have been outlined above, the researchers undertook their study, and concluded (Dicker and Gilbert, 1988: 70-71) that:

Our experience of using the telephone to perform a quick, but thorough, evaluation for a client has proved to be a successful and fruitful one. However, as with the use of any technique for the first time, much was learnt whilst doing so ... Once the interview had commenced, following the negotiation of access to an interviewee and the purpose of the interview having been reiterated, the interviewer had a responsibility to the client ... to encourage the respondent to provide as much relevant information as s/he possibly could ... 'Illuminative' interviewing normally requires the interviewer to ask appropriate questions to probe areas which could reveal further relevant and fruitful evidence and information. Telephone interviews do not inhibit such a method of questioning ... We believe that our experience indicates that [telephone interviewing] ... could lead to a wider and larger range of interview subjects being chosen and thus lead to an improvement in the validity of the results studies obtain.

Content Analysis and Related Approaches to the Analysis of Text, Transcripts or Other Communication

Berelson (1952: 188) provided one of the earlier introductions to the use of content analysis, stating that "What content analysis as such does is to provide a more or less precise description of the content in terms meaningful for the problem at hand." Berelson believed that the purpose of content analysis was to describe and understand communication, be it written, verbal, pictorial, musical or gestural, and that content analysis can reveal the purposes, motives and

other characteristics of the communicators. Content analysis is concerned with two categories of information, "what" is said, and "how" it is said, and thus the researcher needs to be alerted in an *a priori* fashion for what might eventuate, hence the need to identify possible variables associated with various aspects of the phenomenon under study, to develop from this an appropriate instrument to gather the data required and to then analyse the responses of the subjects to identify which of these variables are most commonly associated with the various groups of subject interviewed.

Krippendorff (1980) also devoted a book to content analysis and made the point that content analysis is concerned with symbols, meanings, messages, and the functions and effects of these. However, while identification of possible variables is of potential value, as Glaser and Strauss (1967) pointed out, this can constrain the development of theory if taken to extremes. While it is of use to be alerted to possible eventualities, one should not become a "prisoner" of such *a priori* assumptions.

Berelson (1952: 132) also made the point that qualitative content analysis is likely to be more complex and involve more complex themes than quantitative content analysis and that if "The study does not deal with a large and representative body of material ... careful counting is probably not warranted".

There is however, some disagreement in the literature as to whether in fact content analysis is a quantitative device or not. Cohen and Manion (1989: 60), for example, believe that the basic goal of content analysis is to take a non-quantitative document and transform it into quantitative data. This view of content analysis could be attributed to earlier uses of the device where it was utilised to analyse documents, speeches and text for "hidden" meaning. Others, however, while seeing elements of this approach in the use of content analysis, see it performing more of a subjective and interpretive function.

Breakwell (1990: 86) commented on the use of content analysis in the analysis of interview data, and saw content analysis as:

Essentially ... defining a series of categories of answer in which you are interested ... Having established the categories ... it is possible to look at each interview for the presence or absence of exemplars of that category. This allows you to say how many people said things fitting into each category.

Breakwell (1990: 86) also noted that with the use of semi-structured or unstructured questions:

You may not wish to push responses into categories because this loses some of the individuality of the original statements. If this is so, you might consider using content analysis, but supplementing it ... with lots of quotations which show the depth and diversity of opinion expressed.

Breakwell (1990: 86-87) advised that when faced with the difficulty of dividing interview transcripts into "slices", the researcher should be guided by the nature of the original research questions. The author also suggested being alert to categories or themes that are surprisingly absent. Although Breakwell has not mentioned it, the researcher would also be advised to be alert for themes which are unexpectedly present.

Breakwell offered additional advice for those contemplating the use of content analysis of interview data, including the desirability of using an independent judge to check the interpretations made by the researcher, to authenticate these interpretations with the interviewees if possible through follow up interviews, and to always use all of the data as data collection is "emotionally and financially costly". Data should also be retained for comparison with subsequent research.

Hycner (1985) provided "Some Guidelines for the Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data". Hycner (1985: 279-280) stated that phenomenologists have "an appropriate reluctance ... to focus too much on specific steps in research methods for fear that they will become reified as they have in the natural sciences", yet there is a need for "concrete guidelines" in the qualitative analysis of data, although there will never be a "cookbook" procedure to suit every occasion. In his paper, based upon his own research and teaching experience, Hycner offered the following "guidelines" or stages, although the procedures provided by the author do assume taped interview responses:

1. *Transcription ...*
2. *Bracketing and the phenomenological reduction ...*
3. *Listening to the interview for a sense of the whole ...*
4. *Delineating units of general meaning ...*
5. *Delineating units of general meaning relevant to the research question ...*
6. *Training independent judges to verify the units of general meaning ...*
7. *Eliminating Redundancies ...*
8. *Clustering Units of relevant meaning ...*
9. *Determining themes from clusters of meaning ...*
10. *Writing a summary for each individual interview ...*
11. *Return to the participant with the summary and themes: Conducting a second interview ...*
12. *Modifying themes and summary ...*
13. *Identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews ...*
14. *Contextualisation of themes ...*
15. *Composite summary*. Finally, it is helpful and instructive to write up a composite summary of all the interviews which would accurately capture the essence of the phenomenon being investigated ... the 'world' in general, as experienced by the participants.

While some of the terms used by Hycner in his "guidelines" may be unfamiliar and some of the steps not undertaken in every research case study, the general thrust is compatible with other approaches to the analysis of interview transcripts and qualitative data generally. Hycner (1985: 294-210) also raised a number of "issues" which critics of phenomenological research have identified, and which every phenomenological researcher needs to address. These issues had particular relevance to the current study and will be explored in some detail.

The first issue is that of "randomness". According to Hycner, "experimentally-oriented" researchers find the fact that a random sample is not obtained, and in fact the researcher may even seek out a particular "type" of person for study, anathema, yet as Hycner (1985: 194) has stated, "It should be remembered that the phenomenological researcher is seeking to illuminate human phenomena and not, in the strictest sense to generalise the findings". The limited number of participants in phenomenological studies is also sometimes criticised, yet again Hycner (1985: 295) replied to this by stating that:

Doing this kind of phenomenological research for the most part requires that only a limited number of people be interviewed given the vast amount of data that emerges from even one interview. The focus is of course on qualitative issues, not quantitative ones

Given the non-randomness and typically small number of those taking part in most phenomenological studies, the "generalisability" of such research is also sometimes criticised. Hycner (1985: 295) addressed this concern by stating that:

in the process of even investigating the experience of one unique individual we can learn much about the phenomenology of human being in general. Even within experimental research there is a long and respectable history of studies done with a sample of one.

A further criticism of phenomenological research is that of the "accuracy" of descriptions. One cause of this criticism is that frequently, respondents adopt a "retrospective viewpoint" in that they are recalling past experiences. However, Hycner (1985: 295-296) believes that this is largely unavoidable in any form of verbal or written account and that it may in fact be an advantage in that the respondent has had the opportunity to reflect over past feelings and experiences. A related criticism is that of "confabulation", in that a respondent "fills in gaps" in his or her memory from a subjective viewpoint or in a manner that he or she believes will "please" the interviewer. It might also be that there is a degree of "psychological defensiveness" on the part of a respondent. Hycner (1985: 296) conceded that there are potential problems in this regard, but that instances of confabulation and psychological defensiveness are in fact of value to the researcher if he or she has the ability to discern these, and that in any case, interviewing a number of participants will help to "differentiate confabulation or defensiveness from the experience itself".

Another common criticism of phenomenological research relates to the possible "subjective" influence of the researcher. Hycner (1985: 296-297) responded to this issue by stating that:

The entire scientific orientation of the phenomenological researcher is very different from that of the natural scientific viewpoint ... Objectivity in this [phenomenological] approach means trying to be as comprehensive as possible in responding to the whole phenomenon ... and utilising a method or methods which will be as 'faithful' ... to the phenomenon as possible.

Objectivity can also be sought by the use of means such as "independent judges" or "raters".

A further criticism of phenomenological research is that of validity. Hycner (1985: 297-298) stated that there is no easy answer to this question and that, as in other forms of forms of research, validity ultimately comes down to the consensus of those working in the field, although there are a number of levels of validation:

I would suggest that the first validity check is the participants themselves. They are able, at an experiential level to validate the findings of the research, that is, whether the findings are valid for them. The next level is the researcher him/herself. The researcher needs to evaluate whether the findings 'ring true' ... The findings should also be evaluated by the research committee. This brings in a certain 'objective' or trans-subjective agreement. The findings should also be checked against the current literature ... Finally, the researcher needs to submit the findings to the scientific community and lay community.

Hycner (1985: 298-299) admitted that replicability, an "essential feature" of scientific research, is not as well established as a principle or practice in phenomenological studies, partly because many such studies are pioneering in nature:

Clearly much needs to be done in terms of 'replicating' studies. However, the phenomenological researcher is not willing to fall into the natural scientific error of trying to have such a meticulously 'objective' and therefore replicable method that there ends up an inverse relationship between the replicability of results and the meaningfulness of the findings. A balance must be struck between the two.

The absence of control groups in phenomenological research has also been criticised by some, but Hycner (1985: 299) was particularly dismissive of this criticism, believing it:

patently absurd to suggest that there could be some way of controlling for a person's experience when what the phenomenological researcher is primarily concerned about is the investigation of the very uniqueness of human experience.

The absence of hypotheses in phenomenological research has also been criticised. This too was rebuffed by Hycner (1985: 299):

What experimental researchers fail to make explicit enough is where these hypotheses come from. For the most part they come from such 'unscientific' experiences as hunches, intuitions, insights, suspicions, etc ... There is a certain 'dishonesty' built into the whole 'face objectivity' of stating hypotheses. Also, the phenomenological researcher has the opposite orientation. That is, s/he wants to be as open to the phenomenon as possible without constricting his/her perspective by placing the phenomenon on the promethian bed of hypothesis testing.

The absence of prediction in phenomenological research has also been questioned by some critics. Hycner (1985: 299) however, noted that:

It should be obvious that the phenomenologist does not believe that the most meaningful aspects of human beings can be predicted ... The phenomenologist is more concerned with a comprehensive and depthful understanding of a phenomenon ... this will advance science and human good will to a far greater extent than the dimension of 'predictability' per se.

A final "issue" or criticism of phenomenological research identified by Hycner (1985: 300) is the absence of "interpretation" and comprehensive theory. Hycner felt that it was "obvious" that:

the phenomenological researcher's primary thrust is to understand, and as much as possible not to interpret according to some already developed theory. The latter is the kind of reductionism that the phenomenologist is most concerned about avoiding since it has been such a serious error in much traditional research. Phenomenology is still relatively new and still at a foundational stage and there is not enough of a body of knowledge to attempt a more comprehensive integration of theory ... at the core of phenomenology is the very deep respect for the uniqueness of human experience and that this ever present uniqueness will always make the attempt to develop a totally comprehensive theory of human experience an ultimately futile one.

One Case Study Utilising Teacher Interviews

Nias, in "Primary Teachers Talking: A Reflexive Account of Longitudinal Research", provided an illuminating personal case history of a research project involving interviews with a cohort of primary school teachers which eventually extended over a period of some 15 years, and which highlighted many important aspects of both the case study and the utilisation of and analysis of the interview, an account which had a great deal of relevance to the present study.

After providing background to the origins of her project, Nias (in Walford, Ed., 1991: 149) described the conduct of the interviews, including telephone interviews in some cases, where the intention was "to capture, as nearly as possible in the words of teachers themselves, a detailed and comprehensive picture of the subjective reality of primary teaching" before turning to the analysis of the data (in Walford, Ed., 1991: 153-154):

I nibbled into, chewed and began to digest the huge quantity of data which I had accumulated. Two things made this a formidable task. To start with, I was overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of data. The open-ended nature of much of the questioning and my search for concrete examples also meant that there were few ready-made categories built into the interview responses. Second, therefore, I was faced with sifting relevant information from conversations about many unrelated topics. I wanted to use 'grounded theory' ... to allow my ideas to emerge from the data, but this seemed a very daunting task.

Nias (in Walford, Ed., 1991: 155) then described how categories, such as the role of the head teacher (principal), tentatively emerged and how "I refined and sub-divided them, looking for internal consistency, searched for contradictions and negative instances and went on piling up examples until I was thoroughly convinced that a category was saturated". Nias then explained that the next task was to "consider the significance of these 'grounded' themes to an understanding of the subjective reality of teaching". Gradually, as a result of this process of analysis and reflection, sub-themes and patterns eventually emerged.

Because of the mass of data, it was necessary when writing up the results of the project for Nias to select illustrative examples, with the researcher setting herself "an arbitrary limit of three or four illustrative comments for any given point", while being aware that a great deal of data could not be directly used and probably never would be (in Walford, Ed., 1991: 161).

Nias acknowledged (in Walford, Ed., 1991: 162) that her research might be branded as:

naive, subjective and opportunistic. Yet it also has its strengths. First, the simplicity of the research design and the relatively uniform format in which the data were presented has freed me to concentrate upon what the teachers themselves had said ... Second, the extent and quality of the information I collected challenged me to search for and eventually find connections and relationships between apparently isolated ideas ... Third, the fact that I have worked for so long on the material has enabled my ideas to grow slowly, albeit painfully.

Nias made the point throughout the account of her research that frequently her work was dominated by chance, accident and opportunity and that reflection played an integral part in the research process. What occurred was far removed from an ordered, objective scientific experiment, yet the results were rich and rewarding.

Relationship of the Proposed Study and Previous Work

Summary

The review of the literature above highlighted the fact that more needs to be known about teacher resignation from an individual, human perspective. The methodology typically employed by researchers has consisted of questionnaires completed by respondents followed by statistical analysis of the responses. These have revealed a multiplicity of possible reasons why teachers resign but a neglect, on the whole, of the personal characteristics and experiences of these former teachers.

While this study certainly took heed of the research that had already been conducted in the field of teacher resignation, it was thought that the use of interviews and more open-ended responses focussing upon experiences, feelings, relationships, forces, tensions and structures, would yield new insights into what can be considered at the present time to be an area clouded by myth, rhetoric and in some cases the pronouncements of vested interests.

Previous work carried out into teacher resignation and areas impinging upon this had proven to be valuable, in that it has enabled the major variables potentially affecting teacher resignation and teacher persistence to be identified, the interview schedule to be formulated, and the draft model of teacher persistence outlined later to be formed.

Human and Structural Factors Which Might Influence Teacher Persistence and Resignation

The following variables or factors had been suggested as possibly contributing to teacher resignation and teacher persistence, based upon the review of the literature. In some cases, the variables identified as possibly affecting teacher retention are simply "mirror images" of the same factors affecting teacher resignation, for example effective school communication and ineffective school communication, while in other cases, separate sets of factors affecting resignation and retention have been identified by some writers in the literature. As mentioned previously, the distinction between "human" and "structural" factors was a tentative one and had been suggested by the findings of the literature review. At this stage, the model of teacher persistence developed was not an explanatory one, nor was an attempt made to arrange potential factors into some sort of hierarchy, as it was the intention of the study to limit the extent of *a priori* assumptions to enable the development of the final model through the use of grounded theory techniques.

Generally, it was found that factors contributing to teacher satisfaction were mainly work or task oriented, while factors contributing to teacher dissatisfaction are predominantly related to the working and wider environment. However, at this stage it was thought that to make too fine a distinction between resignation and persistence factors might prove to be counter-productive. Rather, it was preferred that the influences or variables responsible for each be identified in an inductive fashion and be tested and undergo modification as a result of the pilot study and the grounded theory analysis of the additional interviews following this.

Following Table 5 which presents the consolidated list of variables possibly affecting teacher resignation and/or persistence, a draft model of teacher persistence is presented. This model contains the division mentioned previously between structural and human factors, with additional divisions of the system, the school, and the community in the former, and relationships, the task of teaching, and personal mental and physical state in the case of human factors in the latter.

In the case of structural factors it is noted that there may be difficulty in attributing the major source of each variable. For example, "emphasis upon examinations" might be mainly attributable to the school for a lower primary teacher, but for a teacher in the senior secondary school the major source of this variable might be the system. On the other hand, for a primary teacher, the "basic skills tests" implemented in Years 3 and 6 in N.S.W. might be considered to be system based.

In the case of human factors, aspects of the task of teaching such as goal setting and planning are obviously closely associated with personal factors and indeed, the state of one's relationships. It transpired that the draft model of teacher persistence which had emerged from the review of the literature did undergo major modification as a result of the conduct of the study, but it did serve a purpose in providing a bench mark or starting point, and did assist in the formulation of the interview schedule, while because of the multitude of possible variables identified, it suggested the need for a more open-ended approach to data gathering to enable major variables and categories to emerge inductively from the study. As such, it served its purpose.

Further discussion on how the research was conducted is found in the following Chapters.

Table 5: Consolidated List of Variables Revealed by the Literature Review as Possibly Affecting Teacher Resignation and/or Teacher Persistence.

(a) Structural Variables

Selection Procedures - Pre-service	Communication - In School
Selection Procedures - School	Communication - With Employer
Pre-service Training	Communication - With Community
Teacher Induction	Formal Recognition of Teacher Achievement
Mentoring by Other Staff	Formal Recognition of Student Achievement
Locations Taught	Student Discipline System
Experience of Fellow Teachers/Executive	Student Support/Welfare Systems
Staff Turnover in School	School Regulations/Policies/Procedures
Social and Recreational Facilities Available	Involvement in School Decision Making
Articulated School Vision/Mission/Goals	Changing School Enrolment
Ties With Local Community	Delegation of Responsibilities
School Councils	Equity of Duties
Ties With Other Schools	Job Enrichment
Teachers' Union Policy/Activity	In-service Availability
Professional Associations	Promotion Opportunities - Elsewhere
Job Security	Promotion Opportunities - School
Teachers' Salaries	Alternative Employment Opportunities
Merit Pay	Opportunities for Further Study
Multi-cultural Diversity	Support for Further Study
Career Ladders/Planning	Role Conflict/Ambiguity
Flexible Career Paths	Interruptions
Special Conditions of Employment	Formal Program of Staff Development
Forced Transfer	Integration of Students With Disabilities
Determination of Unsatisfactory Performance - Self	Alternative School Subjects
Determination of Unsatisfactory Performance - Others	Centralisation of Curriculum
Working Hours and Holidays	School Based Curriculum Development
In-service Accreditation	Post-Compulsory Retention
Identification of Teachers' Needs	Youth Unemployment
Age/grade Allocated	Examinations - Emphasis on
Class Sizes	Outcomes - Emphasis Upon
Teaching Tasks	Accountability
Non-Teaching Duties	Funding - General
Class-Free Time	Funding - School
School Leadership/Administration	Formal Program of Time Management
Resource Provision	Formal Program of Stress Management
Specialist Staff Provision	Formal Program of Behaviour Modification
Breaks for Rest and Relaxation	Physical Teaching Environment
Support Staff Provision	Staff Supervision and Appraisal Methods
Maintenance of Facilities	

Table 5: Consolidated List of Variables Revealed by the Literature Review as Possibly Affecting Teacher Resignation and/or Teacher Persistence.

(b) Human Variables

Age	Achievement - Personal
Gender	Achievement - Students'
Non-English Speaking Background	Recognition by Others of Achievement
Family Commitments	Leadership Style of Superiors
Isolation from Family/Friends	Approachability of Superiors
Special Life Changes/Change in Family Status	Support by Peers/Superiors
Length of Service	Encouragement of Special Interests
Pre-Service Experiences/Performance	Help With Personal Problems
Early Teaching Experiences	Interpersonal Relations - Family
Primary/Secondary Subject Specialisation	Interpersonal Relations - Peers
Age/Grade Taught	Interpersonal Relations - Subordinates
Travelling Time	Interpersonal Relations - Students
Initial Commitment to Teaching	Interpersonal Relations - Community
Present Commitment to Teaching	Informal Methods of Communication in School
Personal Morale	Sub-Groups and Cliques
Physical Health	Parent/Community Involvement
Challenge of Teaching	Control of Class
Satisfaction of Teaching	Receptivity of Students
Personal Motivation	Behaviour of Students
Personal Expectations	Coping With Individual Differences
Goal Setting	Integration of Students With Disabilities
Concentration	Meeting Students' Needs
Detachment	Pressure for Relevance
Social Life/Recreation	Pressure to Teach Basics
Personal Organisational Skills	Prioritising
Personal Analytic Skills	Planning
Reaction to Supervision/Appraisal methods	Decision Making
Feedback on Personal Progress	Autonomy/Power/Control/Responsibility
Likelihood of Promotion	Ability to Learn New Things
Congruence With School Goals/Mission/Vision	Ability to Influence Others
Competence of Principal	Coping With Social Change
Discrimination or Bias Experienced	Coping With Educational Change
Teaching Methods - Own	Emphasis Upon Excellence
Teaching Methods - Peers	Emphasis Upon Management
Isolation Within Classroom	Accountability
School Ethos and Climate	Pressure to Solve Society's Problems
School Morale	Attitude of Community to School
School Cohesion and Collegiality	Attitude of Society to Education
School Expectations	Status of Teachers in Society
Student Expectations	Media Opinion of Education
Community Expectations	Political Opinion of Education
Ability to Motivate Others	Involvement in Further Study
Self-Esteem - as a Teacher	Non-Teaching Commitments
Self-Esteem - as a Person	Financial Pressures - School
Stress Induced by Teaching	Financial Pressures - Personal
Stress Induced by Personal Life	Relocation of Spouse
Use of Drugs/Alcohol/Medication	Desire to Teach in Another Location
Absenteeism	Desire to Teach in Another System
Previous Leave Taken	Desire for Break from Teaching
	Desire Never to Teach Again

Figure 2: A Draft Model of Teacher Persistence

