

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine more closely some of the factors which may affect women's entry into educational management in Catholic schools by considering the career paths of some Catholic women lay primary principals in NSW. Using a case study approach, this research aims to give some individual lay Catholic women principals in the primary education sector a voice. Their situation appears to be very different to that of women in the state education system, both because their numbers go against the trend of low percentages of women in the principalship (Grady et al. 1994) and because their experience in a Catholic system of education is not always recognised by the research. Their status is often subsumed under the umbrella of women teachers. For too long women teachers and principals have been treated as a very homogeneous group and this has allowed broad generalisations about women in educational administration to be made.

Women in the Catholic sector may have had their career paths affected by factors particular to that sector. Most studies of educational management have concentrated on men and those which have placed women at the centre of the research have considered them within the public sector or in the secondary school. With several different factors in operation in

Catholic dioceses, the situation in Catholic schools and for Catholic women may be very different (Christie and Smith 1989; Chapman 1984b).

Women need to be allowed to speak for themselves. Too often their professional experience has been completely ignored in studies which omit references to gender. For this reason, in this study, women's experience is placed at the centre of the discourse (Shakeshaft 1989:335; Blackmore 1992:10). Views about female attitudes to career, management and teaching in Catholic primary education in a rural diocese are explored in depth.

Background to the Problem

The situation of women in the Catholic sector has been of interest to me because of my own position as one of a handful of lay women principals of Catholic secondary schools in the history of my diocese. The second area of interest in tackling the study was provided by Australian statistics on women principals. According to studies such as that of Grady et al. (1994), women appear to have a greater chance of achieving promotion to the principalship in Catholic primary schools. Although 79% of government school principals and 52% of independent school principals in primary schools are men, more women (59%) are principals of Catholic primary schools. These figures however, cannot be interpreted as a sign of greater support for women offered by the Catholic sector. The percentage of women primary principals in Catholic schools has dropped significantly (from 63%) since 1983 while it has risen significantly for women primary principals in state schools (from 15% to 21%) and independent schools (from 29% to 48%) in the same period (ibid. 1994:5). The reasons for the greater proportion of women primary principals currently in Catholic schools in

Australia provided another area which appealed for further study. As the statistics cited by Grady (1994) were supported within the diocese where I work (with 56% of the primary principals being lay women), reasons for the greater percentage of primary women principals within this diocese particularly appeared to be worth investigation.

Looking at my own career path too I was struck by its similarity to those described in the literature for women. As a Catholic woman principal, my path had not followed the pattern outlined in the literature (eg Skelton 1991) for men. Having always considered teaching rather than administration as my career path, I had not sought promotion until circumstances changed within the school where I was teaching. My path was characterised by an initial lack of ambition for promotion and an acceptance of it when the "lucky break" came. I was therefore interested in exploring other women's career paths and in allowing them to contribute to the debate on women in educational management as Catholic women have had little voice in this. I also wanted to hear their perception of "career" as they understand it in education.

Historically, women have been poorly represented in educational administration and surveys in Australia and world-wide (Chapman 1984; Smith and Piele 1989; Grady et al 1994; Ozga 1993; Ouston 1993) show that the number of women in educational leadership positions today is still low considering that the majority of teachers are women. In spite of affirmative action programmes, the situation has not improved. With restructuring in state systems, women are less likely to be represented in educational administration (Blackmore 1989:95). This is particularly noticeable in the case of the school principalship.

Many explanations are offered for this. Most would come under the heading of deficit theories which maintain that women themselves are to blame for the situation. Adler

(1993:25) refers to the myths about women teachers which were identified in a Warwickshire County study. These suggested that women were not qualified, not interested in furthering their careers, prioritised their children over their jobs, were tied to their husband's career and were uncommitted to teaching and administration outside school hours. Stereotypical views of women view them all as married with children and suggest that they are unstable and unsuited to the demands of administration (Ouston 1993:4). Their family responsibilities are seen to interfere with their administrative roles, making them less likely to want or to be offered further advancement (Shakeshaft 1987:84). Because of these family responsibilities, many women are said to be less mobile than men and so would find it difficult to relocate to take up promotions positions. Child bearing and rearing also enforce breaks in teaching for many women and lessen their qualifications and experience (and in the eyes of many, their commitment).

Affirmative action programmes can even be used to bolster these deficit theories about women and management. If with the assistance of positive discrimination programmes, women are not thronging into management, surely the fault must lie with them? This view appears to be supported by the literature which shows that many women do not actively seek promotion and that they often wait to be approached and offered positions (Shakeshaft 1987:85 - 91). Is this another example of blaming the victim when the cause may lie elsewhere? One alternative explanation could be that women wait until they know that they qualify before applying for promotion.

Societal factors make women's uphill climb to administration steeper than that of their male counterparts. Most role models and supervisors are male and many offer little support to women. Fewer female role models exist for women and few women have mentors to guide them (NSW Ministry on the Status and Advancement of Women 1994).

Consequently, networks of support are stronger for men. Research too has shown that women are less interested in playing politics (Shakeshaft 1987:141), often a necessary ploy in seeking promotion.

Women who do achieve positions of educational leadership are therefore often isolated and even harassed (Adler et al 1993:17). Many researchers document the problems faced by women from peers, staff and even students (Askew 1988:60, Shakeshaft 1987:205). That their position in administration is relatively uncommon obviously makes them a threat to these groups.

Women too are given less assistance in preparing for administration. Research has shown that women are allocated fewer positions of responsibility which would allow them to prepare for educational administration (Chapman 1988) and fewer opportunities are available to them to attend managerial inservice courses (Burton 1991:17).

Women and Promotion Paths in Education

In spite of these difficulties, many women do become school principals. The literature suggests that their path to educational leadership is different to that of their male counterparts. They are typically older when first appointed (Adler 1993:26) and they have not applied for as many promotions positions along the way. The literature also suggests that they have not actively sought promotion.

One reason offered for women not seeking promotion is that they reputedly dislike bureaucracy and like teaching so they are unwilling to move out of the classroom (Shakeshaft 1987:74). The rewards offered by educational administration are claimed to be unattractive to women as is the supposedly

masculine nature of management (Blackmore 1989:100). It is an argument which once more places the the onus on the woman for her lack of representation in management. Is this an explanation of the situation or a rationalisation?

Educational management is often viewed as quite separate from teaching. Teaching is seen to occupy a limbo region between wage and salary earners and has been described as a "semi-profession" (Acker 1989:123). Historically women have been encouraged to enter teaching as it has been viewed as an extension of the nurturing environment of the home (Evans 1988:63; Burgess 1989:80), a view which explains and promulgates the myth that teaching is a "natural" profession for women. The predominance of women in teaching supports this. For many women too, the availability of part-time and casual teaching allows them to combine home responsibilities with their teaching. Can teaching therefore really be looked upon as a career?

By contrast, management is viewed as a career choice, a conscious movement away from home. "Administration came to be associated with the image of the rational, logical and objective male" (Blackmore 1993:36). Views of management in many fields including education have been based on technicist and bureaucratic models such as those of Weber. Studies such as that of Mintzberg (1973) and Stewart (1982) (Ouston 1993:43) examined the work of male managers only and pretended to speak for all managers thus perpetuating the male world view. This androcentric view of administration and teaching has become so accepted that most men and women consider it a part of "the natural order".

For men the term "career" appears to relate to their paid work. Traditional concepts of career present it as a deliberate and conscious attempt to progress upwards by clearly defined steps through the hierarchy (Al Khalifa 1989:69). This traditional view would further suggest that only administrators have careers while teachers have jobs

(Shakeshaft 1987:65). Women's idea of career appears to differ and in many cases, must differ, as many women would consider they have two careers, motherhood and their paid work, while most men appear to have only one. The term "career" therefore needs to be broadened to include women's concepts of it (McMullan 1993:69).

Research into Women in Educational Management

Much of research on women in educational administration has taken place in public sector school systems for example Rimmer and Davies 1985; Greenwood 1988; Ouston 1993; Evetts 1990). In particular, the position of women in administration in secondary schools has attracted much interest as proportionally they are very underrepresented (Rimmer and Davies 1985). Some research has taken place in public sector primary schools for although there is a larger percentage of women in administration, their numbers in proportion to the number of women teaching in primary schools is still low (Evetts 1990; Evans 1988).

Little work has been undertaken on women in leadership in Catholic schools. Many reasons could be suggested for this. Historically, lay men and women are a new phenomenon in Catholic education as most schools were staffed by religious prior to government funding becoming available to Catholic schools in the sixties. When schools did employ lay people, the common pattern was to leave religious in administrative positions (Christie and Smith 1991:215). Lay people in administration in Catholic schools are therefore a relatively recent phenomenon.

Another reason for the relatively small amount of research work in Catholic education could be that the system is smaller and it is divided on a diocesan level which further

fragments it. Each diocese is autonomous and operates slightly differently and, although industrial demands have caused some uniformity, there is no national or even state system of Catholic education (ibid.1991: 215).

This has led to a different method of selection for teachers and administrators in Catholic schools, one which has been based on application and interview rather than on seniority. Catholicity has always been a strong selection criterion in the system and although there are many non-Catholic teachers, there are few, if any, non-Catholic school principals.

It is not clear how much these differences contribute to there being almost as many women as men in administration in Catholic education (Grady 1994:5). Despite the higher proportion of women principals in Catholic schools however, there is no cause for complacency as the proportion is still low compared with that of women teachers and the situation is worsening. Since 1983, the percentage of women in primary principalships in Catholic schools has fallen slightly while the percentage of women in secondary principalships has dropped dramatically (ibid 1994:5). Several explanations could be offered for this fall in the number of women secondary principals. With the amalgamation of single-sex secondary schools, a man was more likely to be appointed principal, a situation which parallels that of the state system (Doran 1982:5). These figures also do not take into account the large number of religious who have staffed and established schools. Although the situation in primary schools is different, as these have usually been co-educational and mostly have been established by parish rather than by a religious order, the drop in numbers of women principals from 63% to 59% since 1983 (Grady 1994:5) is still significant.

Research Questions and Focus of the Study

In tracking the career paths of lay Catholic women primary principals, the following research questions provided the foci of the study:

1. How did the women in question become principals of Catholic schools?
 - a. What were their career paths?
 - b. How long did it take them to become a principal?
 - c. How successful were they in applying for promotion?
2. What career expectations did they have when they entered teaching?
3. What support did they receive and what factors did they consider were influential in their achieving promotion?
4. What barriers to promotion did they face?
5. What are their perceptions of career?
6. What further career aspirations do they profess?

Sources of Data in this Study

To address these questions more comprehensively, it was decided to use a case study approach as this allowed for richer data to emerge. In addition, there has been little in-depth study of the case in point - the career paths of Catholic lay women principals. This approach would allow a rich source of empirical data to be tapped. The study would not offer any definitive statements on the reasons for the larger number of women in principalships in Catholic schools but it would provide opportunity for a "thick description" of women's experience. It would allow the women principals to

discuss their experiences in attaining promotion and their perceptions of career. It would also suggest directions for further study.

To collect data for the study and in accordance with triangulated techniques inherent in the case study approach, two methods were used. These would ensure greater depth of information and greater internal validity for the study. Written questionnaires were distributed to all Catholic women primary principals in one country diocese and semi-structured interviews were used as a follow-up with some of these women. These techniques and methods of selection of respondents are elaborated upon further in Chapter 3.

Field Setting

The study took place in a rural Catholic diocese in NSW, which, to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents, will not be named. This diocese provides Catholic primary and secondary education in a variety of settings from small towns and villages to large towns or cities. There are 23 Catholic primary and infant schools within the diocese and 14 of these had lay women principals during the time of the study. More than half of the primary schools (12) in the diocese are situated in large towns which support more than one Catholic primary school as well as a secondary school. The remaining primary schools provide the only Catholic education in isolated towns and villages throughout the diocese. Students from these schools must travel to a larger centre for their Catholic secondary education or find boarding accommodation.

Ethical Considerations

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, no person or place within the study is identified by name. Each participant was provided with a copy of the NHMRC Statement on Human Experimentation. Survey and interview data are identified by date and order of completion and they are kept in a secure place by the researcher. These considerations are elaborated upon further in Chapter 3.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because it allows individual Catholic women to contribute to the debate on career paths in educational administration where the white male standard has become the universal reality (Shakeshaft 1989:324). The study focuses on a group of lay women principals in Catholic primary schools and helps to reveal whether the stereotypical view of women in administration is relevant or whether it is merely a collection of rationalisations to explain the current situation.

Many studies have analysed the leadership styles of men and of women and have concluded that women are more likely to empower staff and to make schools more responsive to change (Pedlar, Burgoyne and Burdell in Ouston 1993:11). It is therefore very important for education that factors which inhibit women from moving into administrative positions be explored if the loss of women to these positions is to be arrested. The view that only males can administer or that administration is inherently masculine in style must also be challenged.

This study also considers the differences between Catholic schools and those in the public sector. It investigates whether there are additional factors which inhibit or enhance women's chances of promotion and suggest whether these need further exploration. Although Catholic schools appear to be supportive of women in administration, as seen already, the number of women in primary principalships has dropped significantly from 63% to 59% in the last ten years (Grady 1994:5). Within the same period the number of women in secondary principalships in Catholic schools has dropped dramatically from 45% to 29% (ibid:5). This could reflect the movement from religious to lay administration or it could also warn of a gradual movement towards a male administrative structure in primary schools.

By allowing Catholic primary women principals to discuss their experience, this study addresses these issues and suggests areas for further research.

Key Concepts

Androcentrism and patriarchy, structural inequality and the gendered division of labour are three concepts central to the thesis.

Androcentrism and patriarchy are used synonymously to refer to the expectation that male life experience is the norm. Such an androcentric view permeates social structures as well as supposedly scientific ways of thought. Women's views and experience are either ignored or judged in relation to a male norm and found to be deficient. Androcentrism therefore places subtle and often unrecognised barriers

between women and successful entry into traditionally male occupations.

Structural inequality refers to the way in which social structures and social expectations place women at a disadvantage when applying for positions which have traditionally been held by men. Women who hold two careers, motherhood and their paid work, must cope with factors such as the lack of support within the family and community for women and the expectation that all women operate primarily in the private realm of the home, making them incapable of functioning effectively in the public realm of paid work.

Structural inequality and androcentrism have led to the gendered division of labour where managerial positions and other positions of power are generally occupied by men. Such a well-established tradition sets up expectations about the place of men and women in the workforce and makes it more difficult for women to enter positions which have traditionally been the domain of men.

The terms "management" and "administration" are used synonymously throughout the study.

Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into eight chapters. Following this chapter is the literature review, Chapter Two, which examines previous research in Australia, England and America on women in educational management. The structural differences between the state system of education in Australia and the organisation of Catholic schools are examined in light of women's apparent greater success in

achieving senior administrative positions in Catholic primary schools. Reasons proffered by the literature for women's underrepresentation in management such as deficit theories and structural obstacles are discussed.

In Chapter Three the rationale for using a feminist framework and for adopting a case study approach are explained.

Chapters Four to Eight analyse the data collected from the fieldwork. Findings from the questionnaires and interviews are compared with findings from the literature. Chapter Four considers the women's early teaching careers. In Chapter Five career support mechanisms are examined. Chapter Six considers the obstacles on the way to promotion while Chapter Seven deals with career perceptions and aspirations.

Chapter Eight, the final chapter, revisits the research questions in Chapter One and provides some interpretation of the data collected. Implications of the findings, conclusions and suggestions for areas for further study are outlined.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A great deal of research has been conducted in the field of women in educational administration in Australia, England and the USA. This has resulted largely from the fact that, despite affirmative action programmes, there has been little increase in the number of women entering management levels. This is a trend which is common to most countries and many researchers have devoted their studies to investigating the problem.

This chapter reviews the statistics and the literature in Australia, England and the USA on women in educational administration. Theories on the lack of representation of women in management are analysed. The differences between state and Catholic schools, with particular reference to their appointment and promotions systems, and reasons for the lack of research into women in administration in Catholic schools are examined. Finally, possible explanations for the greater number of women in senior levels of administration in Catholic primary schools are explored. This analysis draws largely from a feminist approach which questions patriarchal assumptions on the issue and examines structural inequality and the gendered division of labour as possible explanations.

Survey Results for Women in Educational Administration

Surveys in Australia and world-wide (Chapman 1984 (a); Smith and Piele 1989; Grady et al. 1994; Ozga 1993; Ouston 1993) show that the percentage of women in educational leadership positions is still low compared with that of men. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the school principalship. With the movement to co-educational schools after the sixties, the numbers of women in the principalship diminished further (Doran 1982:5; Acker 1983:131). A report in 1979 by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board was moved to predict that there would be no secondary female principals in 1990 if the current trend were to continue (Sampson 1987:27-28). In the United States, a 1990 survey showed that although 75% of teachers were women, only 34% were elementary principals while 12% were secondary principals. This was a major movement away from the statistics in 1928 when women held 55% of the elementary school principalships (Pigford 1993:1).

The situation in Australia parallels these findings. In NSW in the period between 1971 - 1983, the percentage of female primary principals fell from 28% to 19% (Sampson 1987; Blackmore 89:95). Grady et al. (1994) confirm this overall trend for women although the figures vary considerably between the public, independent and Catholic sectors of education. A composite figure for women in primary education shows that they hold only 30% of the principalships (ibid:5) although women made up 74% of the total primary teaching force in 1993 (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 1993:Table 33). In Queensland, men have 65 times more appointments to the principalship (Milligan et al.1994:14) while in NSW in 1994, 81.1% of primary teachers in state schools were women

although more than two-thirds of non-teaching executive staff were men (Inquiry into Boys' Education 1994:17).

No matter which section of the education community is studied, the message is the same, both here and overseas. Typically, women are poorly represented in senior levels of educational administration.

Research in Australia, the United States and England

Many researchers in Australia have looked at the principalship and at the position of women in educational management. Studies by Chapman (1984(a)) and Grady et al. (1994) have analysed the numbers and backgrounds of men and women principals in Australian schools and have developed profiles of the "typical" principal. Chapman's ground-breaking work considered principals in state, Catholic and independent schools in all states of Australia. Grady's profile of the Australian school principal (1994) built on Chapman's research by using her questionnaire as a starting point. Results from 1112 principals Australia-wide were collated and organised into states, systems and primary and secondary levels of education. Experience, ages, gender and qualifications were considered and comments on aspects of the principalship were sought.

This is one of few studies which looks at a broad range of principals. Australian researchers such as Evans (1988), Blackmore (1992) and Blackmore and Kenway (1993), Burton (1991) and Sampson (1987 and 1991) have examined the reasons for women's poor representation in educational administration in Australia focussing on historical, political and social factors which have shaped women's participation. Several new reports compiled by government groups in NSW have considered particular issues such as the segregation of

work on gender lines (Koorey 1994) and the need for a mentor system for women (NSW Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women 1994). McLean and McKenzie (1991) have documented views of career by various sections of the teaching community. This last study is one of the few to allocate space to teachers in Catholic schools. All of these studies have looked at the difficulties experienced by women and tried to find historical, political, social and economic rationales to explain their lack of representation in administration.

Other researchers, such as Rimmer and Davies (1985), have chosen to study women in the secondary school as women there are particularly poorly represented in senior administrative positions. The situation in primary schools does not appear to be as difficult for women which may explain the concentration by researchers on women in the secondary system. In spite of this, numbers of women in senior management positions in primary schools are still low in comparison with the number of women in primary teaching. This has led the recent Australian report on The Inquiry into Boys' Education (1994), to recommend the employment of more male primary teachers and more women in management.

In the United States, Shakeshaft (1987), explored the historical role of women in the teaching force and considered the social and political forces which have helped and hindered them along the way. Many researchers such as Owens (1991), Ball (1987) and Smith and Piele (1989) have allocated sections of their studies to the issues of women and management. These latter works have mostly relegated women to a chapter. Women are not the central focus of study.

In England, a great deal of work has been completed on women in educational administration. The work of Adler, Laney and Packer (1993), Ouston (1993), Ozga (1993) and De Lyon and Widdowson Mignuolo (1989) considered feminist explanations

for male models of management and female views of career and the possibilities for change in social structures in their research. They built upon the work of Acker (1989 and 1983) who placed the issue of gender centrally in her study of women's careers. Her earlier study (1983) examined the supposed feminisation of teaching, particularly primary teaching, which had led to its undervaluing as a career in its own right. Evetts (1990) and Skelton (1989 and 1991) considered the world of primary school and the career aspirations of women and of young male primary teachers. Marshall (1984) discussed the dearth of women managers in areas outside education and rejected two viewpoints - that women must aspire to a masculine idea of management and that all men are oppressors. She asked that a new definition of management be considered which is neither the property of men nor of women. Al Khalifa (1989) continued the debate on the identification of leadership with masculinity and male authority and the consequent reluctance of women to undertake managerial roles.

The problem of definition permeates much of the research on women. Many researchers point out that not only are terms such as "career" and "management" defined and studied from a male viewpoint but they are based on male experience. Many supposedly scientific and value-free studies have been shown to have ignored the experience of women. Educational research has been criticised by Shakeshaft (1989:324) for looking mainly at the male experience for men have "forged forms of thought within an all-male world and, perhaps without realising it, have mistaken it for a universal reality". To address this problem, researchers such as Sue Scott (1985), Liz Stanley (1990), Stanley and Wise (1993), Dorothy Smith (1988) and Sue Middleton (1993) have started to explore feminist research methods. Many questions need to be answered here. Should feminist research methods always be qualitative? Are these methods merely research by women on women or do they need to be informed by "an acknowledged political commitment" (Scott 1985:83)? All agree however on

the need to employ a feminist approach in research involving women.

Women Administrators in Catholic Schools

Little work has been carried out on women in administration in the Catholic school. The percentage of women in administration is greater in these schools, although there are still fewer women proportionally in management. In Australia, Chapman (1984 (a)) and Grady (1994) have considered the Catholic schools separately in their analyses. They have found that women enjoy comparatively greater success in achieving the principalship in Catholic primary schools (Grady 1994:5), although there was a significant fall (from 63% to 59%) in the percentage of women in primary principalships in Catholic schools in NSW between 1983 and 1994 (Grady et al. 1994). This situation is not discussed by Grady and it could easily be ignored because the percentage of women principals in Catholic primary schools is still significantly higher than in state (21%) and independent schools (48%) (ibid. 1994:5) and by far the majority of teachers in Catholic primary schools are women. The figures must also be considered in the light of the significant increases in percentages of women in the primary principalship in state (from 15% to 21%) and independent schools (from 29% to 48%) within the period when the percentage dropped for women in Catholic primary principalships (from 63% to 59%) (ibid. 1994:5).

That little investigation has been carried out into the position of women in senior levels of administration in Catholic schools, could be explained partly by the fact that, unlike government schools, there is no national or even state system in Catholic education because of the division into autonomous dioceses (Christie and Smith 1991:215). In

addition, many Catholic schools are non-systemic which means that they operate more like independent schools. This segmentation makes it more difficult to study and make definitive statements about Catholic education. There is, however, some similarity between the way the dioceses administer schools and unity of purpose is provided by the paramount importance of the Catholic faith (ibid:225) within all these schools. Growth in the influence of industrial concerns, because of the influx of lay teachers into Catholic education, has also provided unity across Catholic schooling. Therefore some trends can be discerned in considering factors which affect all Catholic schools.

The current comparative success of women in Catholic primary schools could be attributed to many different factors although three major areas of difference between Catholic schools and the state system need to be considered. These are the diocesan system, the rapid increase in lay teaching staff and the appointment and promotions system.

Catholic education is based on a diocesan system where final authority is vested in the Bishop. Christie and Smith (1991:215) explain:

The differences reflect the particular historical formation of the diocese, the influence of particular bishops at any time and particularly the influence of religious teaching orders over time.

In addition to the diocesan system, many autonomous non-systemic Catholic schools, that were established by various religious orders, exist. These owe allegiance to the local bishop but have much greater freedom of operation than the diocesan schools. Each diocese and each non-systemic school therefore operates separately so there is no large centralised selection process for teachers and administrators.

Lay people are a recent phenomenon in Catholic schools and the changes to incorporate them have been swift. In NSW, there were 485 lay staff in schools in 1960 and this had

risen to 5 388 in 1985 (ibid:222). The number of lay principals rose from 2 in 1973 to 34 in 1986 in the Archdiocese of Canberra/Goulburn (ibid 215). In 1973, in Australia, 73% of teachers in Catholic schools belonged to a religious order although this had fallen to 5% in 1992 (The Bulletin 1992:35). This movement to lay people in the schools has also necessitated the growth of administrative systems for each diocese, a process which has developed over little more than twenty years. Industrial awards have ensured some uniformity across the dioceses and for non-systemic schools. In the early days, there was no award and no provision for the employment of lay teachers. One acquaintance, the first lay teacher in a small rural school, recalled being paid by the parish priest with an agreed rate from the church cleaning fund!

This system of employment in Catholic schools has been quite different to that of the state system. The state system (Chapman 1985a:3) has been characterized by:

... a high degree of centralized control, a clearly defined hierarchy of authority and an extensive set of regulations designed to ensure fair, equitable and uniform treatment of members of the teaching service and efficient, equitable distribution of personnel to schools.

Unfortunately these "regulations to ensure fair, equitable and uniform treatment of members of the teaching service" disadvantaged many women. The legacy of service-based requirements and the continuing influence of the mobility and transfer factors mean that women are less likely to be appointed (Milligan 1994:20).

Some changes to this centralised system for promotions positions were introduced in the state system but these have not been greeted with enthusiasm by groups such as The NSW Teachers' Federation because of increased workload for schools and the threat to the position of many teachers. A report in Education (Simpson March 1994:4; Simpson April 1994: 3-4), the official journal of the Federation even questioned whether Equal Opportunity was afforded by local

selection as men could benefit from the system, particularly through their fulfilling of male stereotypes of leaders. Milligan (1994:32) also considered whether "cronyism, sexism, racism and inefficiency" will be effects of such a selection process but he was not convinced, citing a study by Taylor which showed that not only were women's chances increased but the applicants found the process "highly educative" (ibid:33)

Catholic schools, because of the lack of a centralised system, have always allowed women to apply for jobs locally and transfers have rarely been demanded by the employer (Christie and Smith 1991: 223). By 1985, 74% of the lay staff in Catholic schools were women (ibid:223). While religious women made up only 8% of the staff of Catholic primary schools in the same period, they still retained 38% of the principalships (ibid:226) although no account of this figure was included in the findings of the 1987 Working Party for the NSW Catholic Education Commission Investigating Barriers to the Appointment to Senior Executive Positions in Catholic Schools. Religious and lay women were included together, giving a distorted picture of the success of women as principals (ibid 226). Grady (1994) does not differentiate between lay women and religious nor between systemic and non-systemic schools which may again affect the figures as many religious women have remained in charge of schools, particularly non-systemic ones, because their order established them in the early days of Catholic education. Not only do they have a historical tie to the school, but their financial commitment to it has been and continues to be strong.

The offer of employment at the local level and the desperate need of trained teachers to fill gaps left by the religious withdrawing from the schools may have encouraged women to apply for teaching positions in Catholic schools. The absence of a lock step seniority structure also provided opportunities for upwardly mobile Catholic men to enter administration

(Christie and Smith 1991:226). This free market situation may have also encouraged more women to apply for promotions positions (ibid:230) and consequent disadvantages experienced by women through breaks in service and lack of seniority may have been minimised. There were however, several less attractive features to be considered. For many years, until the greater organisation of the industrial award, the wage system in Catholic schools was lower than in the state system (ibid:219) and assistance by teachers' aides and other ancillary staff (eg cleaners) has not been available to the same degree as in state schools. Security of tenure was also not as strong in Catholic schools (Christie and Smith 1991:236) and regular appraisal periods for all those in management still occurs. In addition there are fewer non-teaching principals in all primary schools (Freeman 1990:17). This begs the question as to whether women were attracted by different rewards in applying for positions in Catholic primary schools (Christie and Smith 1991:219).

Because of the diversity between dioceses, the appointment system has of necessity been very different. Applications are usually advertised and invited in writing by the Catholic Education Office in the diocese. Catholicity is as important a criterion for the position of principal as are professional qualities, a fact which precludes application by non-Catholics (Christie and Smith 1991:225). At least one referee is required to be a priest (Chapman 1984 (b):27). Chapman (ibid. 27) also emphasises that

A major criterion for selection is the applicant's ability to work with the church's representative at the parish level, the parish priest.

A shortlist is created by the Catholic Education Office (C.E.O.), having checked with the referees and with other sources. Interview panels will usually include a priest, a member of the Catholic Education Office and one or more community members. Finally, the appointment decision must be ratified by the Bishop and the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education.

It cannot be denied that there are special problems at interviews for women applicants for promotion in the Catholic system. Those applying for promotion must face a panel which is likely to be male dominated as supervisors and CEO personnel are usually male and the priest is a required member of the panel. Parent representatives may often be the only women members on the panel (Grant 1989:47-8), a trend noted by Chapman too in state school selection panels (Chapman 1985:77). The lack of women of similar education and ability on these panels has proved very difficult for women teachers (Sampson 1991:135). Strong emphasis is placed on the wife and mother role in Catholic church teaching and married Catholic women applying for positions may be at a disadvantage (Christie and Smith 1991:228,235). Consistency across all interviews (Chapman 1985:77) and the elimination of discriminatory questioning requires training and preparation for panels (McNamara 1995:56), a difficulty for lay people and priests.

The priest's powerful role as gatekeeper for the church can, despite his lack of experience in educational matters, exert great influence on the selection process. All of these factors would appear to make it less likely that women should be successful, although a working party appointed by the Archdiocese of Sydney did not find any procedural barriers for women in the selection process (Christie and Smith 1991:233). This does not mean that attitudinal barriers do not exist or that individual schools may have specific gender agendas (ibid 233). However, as Milligan noted (1994:32), women are currently faring well under this system.

The influence of the priest as manager of the school cannot be underrated. Although their salaries are paid by the Catholic Education Office for the diocese, principals must work closely with the priest. The priest may assist with the financial running of the school, take an active part in enrolment decisions and the hiring of staff and even become

involved in curriculum areas. Demands are also placed on the principal to become involved in parish life. Disputes with the priest can therefore place the principal in a very difficult position as the priest is placed in a managerial role above that of the principal. Whether the principal be male or female, the male is in the position of authority in most Catholic schools.

Because of these differences in their employment situation, women managers in Catholic schools will be aware of religious pressures not experienced by women in state schools although they will not escape the broader historical, political and social issues which affect all women.

Approaches to the Underrepresentation of Women in Educational Administration

Most writers tackle the question of underrepresentation of women in senior levels of administration and suggest reasons for this. Although they write from different viewpoints and represent different countries and cultural settings, their conclusions are remarkably similar. Explanations can be divided into three different groups. Firstly, women are judged in relation to a male standard and found wanting, that is, that they possess some deficiency which makes them unsuited for the demands of management. Secondly, current social structures make it difficult for women to succeed, that is, structural barriers, such as the expectation that women will be primarily homemakers, exist which militate against women's attainment of management positions. Finally, feminist theories explain that concepts which are supposedly value-free are instead based on masculine experience and are antagonistic to women. Each of these explanations will be examined in turn.

a) Deficit Theories

Many observers of women in management discuss deficit theories which maintain that women themselves are solely to blame for the situation. This explanation supports the patriarchal viewpoint which sees women's lack of representation in senior levels of administration as a reflection of their inadequacy. Structural causes, such as the demands placed on many women to hold two full time careers, management and motherhood, with very little family or community support, are not considered. Stereotypical views of women, which suggest that they are unstable and unsuited to the demands of administration, abound (Ouston 1993:4). Women are charged with being under-qualified, lacking in self-confidence and not interested in furthering their careers, prioritising their children and home instead of their jobs, taking career breaks and being tied to their spouse's career (Adler 1993:25). Acker (1983:124) concludes that,

most researchers portrayed women teachers as 'damaging, deficient, distracted, and sometimes even dim'.

Within the constructs of deficit theory the conclusion must therefore be that if a woman can change herself or her circumstances, she will no longer have difficulties in gaining promotion. Affirmative action programmes, while appearing to support women, further emphasise that the problem lies with the woman as she cannot succeed even with the assistance of positive discrimination.

The problem is that deficit theories place the blame for the situation totally on the woman and disregard the obstacles inherent in social structures. The difficulties experienced by women with children illustrates this. Within the constructs

of deficit theory, women are discussed in family/work conflict terms. This is based on the model of women who must balance motherhood and teaching. Whether they work part-time, casually or full-time, women are seen as less committed to their paid work. Their home life is said to infringe on their teaching, making them more liable to take breaks in service and less able to undertake training courses or assist with extra-curricular tasks.

In this context Grant (1989:45) recounts the story of the governors of a school who refused to ratify a young woman's appointment because she had young children and too many family commitments. Women teachers are therefore perceived in terms of these conflicts (Acker 1983:131) which are said to make them reluctant to undertake administrative positions. Porter (1995), Sampson (1987) and Shakeshaft (1987) examine this conflict and the effect that this may have on women's careers.

b) Structural Obstacles

Family responsibilities produce real and perceived difficulties for women who wish to undertake a career in educational management. Many women are said to be unwilling to take on the extra demands of administration (Al Khalifa 1989:84) and to be less mobile than men, making it difficult for them to relocate to take up promotions positions. Such structural barriers for women need to be addressed by society more fully. Assistance with child care and the more equitable division of household labour between men and women would go some way towards addressing this.

There is no doubt that unpaid work is a greater burden for women than for men. Porter (1995:13) cites an Australian Bureau of Statistics Report (1991) which calculated that married women in jobs did 35 hours per week unpaid work

while married men did 16 hours per week. Although married women are seen to be less committed, a study of women managers by Porter (Porter 1995:13) shows this is not true as 75% worked more than 45 hours per week and some a lot more with little support from their partners or from paid help.

Child bearing and rearing also enforce breaks in teaching and administration for many women and lessen their experience, qualifications, preparation (and commitment in the eyes of many). The National Union of Teachers in England estimated in 1980 that 65% of women teachers broke service for maternity leave and subsequent research indicated that this has a negative effect on their career achievement (Grant 1989:44). This break in service often corresponds with the period when their male counterparts are taking their first steps towards promotion (Freeman 1990:16). Women who became headteachers were found to have had shorter breaks or to have undertaken part-time work during their leave (Evetts 1990:102). The lock step inflexible structure of many education systems (Chapman 1985 (a): 3-4) disadvantages women while the greater flexibility of Catholic school appointments which are locally based on merit, application and interview (Chapman 1984b: 22) may be a factor which assists women to achieve promotion in Catholic schools.

The perceived lack of status of part-time work is another structural barrier for women. Part-time and casual teaching is undertaken mainly by women. Ouston (1993:3) noted that in recent government surveys in England 85% of part-timers were women. 86% of part-time teachers in Australian primary systemic Catholic schools in 1985 were women, mostly because it can be accommodated with their roles as child-rearers (Christie and Smith 1991:225). Does this explain the low esteem in which such teaching is held? Part-time or casual teaching may be a good way to return to teaching and help balance the demands of a family and school but it is not a recognised path to administration. Part-timers

and casuals can be seen as less committed and less serious about their work (De Lyon 1989:76) and they often face reduced status and pay (Freeman 1990:16). Despite this, research has shown that "many employers were getting close to full-time value from their part-time employees" although it was not often recognised (Price 1994).

Evetts (1989) is one of the few researchers to discuss the benefits of a break in service for women. She found that the women in her study reported an increase of confidence as they had gained a better understanding of the needs of young children and a greater confidence in dealing with parents (ibid:195). In her sample the women returned to work in part-time and casual teaching positions which allowed them to keep in touch with teaching and make their later return to full-time teaching less daunting. This break in service was viewed positively by the women concerned but it would not have been seen in the same light by employers (Shakeshaft 1989:112).

This stereotypical view of women as married with two competing lives leaves all women in a no-win situation. Unfortunately, most studies treat women as a homogeneous group. Society decrees that motherhood should be women's most important priority and that teaching is "supplemental" for them (Blackmore 1992:35). This of course suggests that these women's commitment to teaching and administration is therefore diminished. However, "if women teachers are married, apparently no men ever are" so their married male counterparts are seen to have one career only - teaching or administration (Acker 1983:129). According to Marshall (1984:54), "Social value is attached to the work men do" as men can perceive their academic lives as separate from their "personal" lives (Scott 1985:76). Are men seen to be more dedicated merely because they have fewer commitments out of school (Grant 1989:46)? Paradoxically, a recent study of married men's career prospects showed that they were improved by having wife and family to support them rather

than a dual career marriage (Arndt The Australian 31/12/1994), a finding which supports that found in Evans' study (1988:65). A survey in 1984 in England found that nearly three-quarters of the men teachers studied relied on their partners to provide some care for their young children although this was true for only 11% of the women teachers (Grant 1989:41).

In all of this women are judged according to a male timetable and work pattern, an impossibility for those women who are married and have children. Women are the prime carers of children and they bear the burden of household tasks. The difficulties of balancing motherhood and a career in education persuade many women to undertake part-time or casual teaching. Experience gained here is not a recognised path to promotion and is viewed as a sign of their lack of commitment to their paid work. Balancing full-time teaching with motherhood is viewed in an equally negative light, as motherhood is considered by society to be the most important and it should leave little time for teaching. Not all women face such difficulties as not all women teachers are married or have children yet all women are judged in terms of family roles (Acker 1983:127).

Another structural reason often given for women's underrepresentation in senior administration is that they are less qualified than men for promotions positions. There does appear to have been some truth in this although the situation is changing. Porter (1995:9) notes that women tended to have lower levels of education in their areas of expertise than men in equivalent positions. Many reasons have been offered for this from family commitments to harassment by spouses when women undertake further study (Kelly 1994:170).

The situation is changing as several studies have found. Grady (1994:14) notes that a higher percentage of women (25%) principals are undertaking further study while only 14% of men are involved. A greater percentage of principals in

Catholic and independent schools are involved in these studies also. The percentage of women and men who have attained a second higher education award is almost the same (86%) (ibid. 12). A recent study by Birrell et al. from Monash and La Trobe universities (The Australian 29/3/1995) shows that women have a greater and more successful participation rate in higher education, including postgraduate study. A similar finding was made in Canada where the number of female graduates had increased their representation "more than seventeen-fold" since 1968 while the proportion of male graduates had halved (Rees 1991:10). In spite of the greater qualifications of women candidates applying for superintendents' positions, the Canadian study found that those in educational administration claimed there was a shortage of qualified women, leading the researcher to speculate that "perhaps the problem is not of credentials but one of perception" (ibid:11). Another study found that school boards were "inclined to favour male candidates even though (they) acknowledged that the credentials of the women were superior" (Owens 1991: 96).

Qualifications are not merely a matter of formal courses. Leadership experience and administrative experience are essential for any candidate for promotion. Such experience is gained in the workplace and how these tasks are delegated depends very much on superiors. Women again encounter obstacles here as they are less likely to be targeted for support. Networks of support are male dominated as more men than women occupy management positions. Women who do seek promotion are not offered as much preparation for administrative positions because managerial tasks are delegated to their male colleagues and fewer women are able to attend inservice courses outside school time because of family commitments. Their lower access to networks of support, the lack of female role models and mentors and even harassment inhibit their likelihood of success. Each step along the way to promotion from application to interview is fraught with difficulty.

Several researchers have considered the variation in delegated tasks between men and women in schools and found that differences exist here (Rimmer & Davies 1985:160). Sampson (1987) found that more men (73%) than women (57%) were delegated organisational and administrative tasks and that the tasks allocated to women were more child and library orientated (Sampson 1987:34). Paradoxically, two English studies (Ouston 1993:33; Adler 1993:23) showed that women were asked to do complicated cross-school but low-profile jobs which were not easily labelled and which obscured their management skills. Davidson (Ouston 1993:34) confirmed that women were given caring tasks such as welfare roles rather than curriculum responsibilities. Again, these tasks were neither high-profile within the school nor recognised preparation for administration. According to Sampson (1987:36) this often led young women to be marked as unsuitable for administration by their male principals and made the women themselves feel lacking in experience for promotions positions. Chapman's study (1988) of decision-making committees in Victorian secondary schools showed that 61.4% of men compared with 38.4% of women were involved in these committees. She concluded that, as men still hold the majority of management positions in the schools, with the principal wielding most influence (1988:68), they see themselves and other men as having the "senior status, responsibilities, confidence and skills" necessary for the position (1988:47).

Attendance at inservice courses is also lower for women, with men attending significantly more courses concerned with administration especially those of two or more days duration (Sampson 1987:36). The reason for this is not clear although an English study (Ouston 1993:33) reported that many women had been refused permission to attend such courses. In addition, these courses are often timetabled outside school hours which makes attendance at them more difficult for women with children. In Australia, a

Commonwealth Government department survey discovered that supervisors considered long-term career development for men in approving study assistance for them. Sex of the applicant was "a more salient characteristic than organisational position" in considering whether an applicant should attend (Burton 1991:17). Veir (1993:67) detailed the low numbers of women admitted to educational leadership programmes in the United States and proposed a system for greater access.

The greater number of men in management positions militates against women as networks of support are male dominated. "In building a career in education it has been safer to form alliances with males" as they are likely to become more powerful (Porter 1986:15) and this can be very difficult for women. Historically male collegiality helped to maintain power structures beneficial to male dominance in administration (Blackmore 1993:39). Women have also shown an unwillingness to become involved in the politics of the workforce, a necessity for success according to the literature (Shakeshaft 1987:141; Hutchings, The Australian, 22/1/94).

Networks that exclude women provide another barrier. Sometimes women are actively excluded from associations (Pigford 1993:6) but often the networks are informal and, as administration is dominated by men, women have less access. Veir (1993:67) cites an American study on the selection of school principals which demonstrated that the "old boy network" was "responsible for most of the present-day educators in administrative positions". Marshall (1984:38) notes the difficulties for a woman head of a health centre when she did not have access to these networks. The importance of the informal network should not be underestimated. Because of this, many researchers (Marshall 1984:56; Al Khalifa 1989:85; Adler 1993:125) recommend single sex training to provide opportunities for women's networking.

Sponsors and mentors are important to many aspiring administrators and again these are mostly male. Skelton (1991:284) maintains that while women receive sponsorship in times of teacher shortage, young men are more likely to receive the patronage of older males "regardless of external conditions", an idea which is supported by other research (Evetts 89:200). For many women the idea of a mentor is "alien and the reality unknown" (Adler 1993:32). McKenzie blames the masculine nature of organisational culture which has met the needs of men and formed old boys' networks to assist men achieve promotion for this situation (McKenzie 1995:2). Her study of 500 women in Australia shows that less than 25% had a mentor to guide them although 80% expressed the need for one (McKenzie, 1995:15). The report by the NSW Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women 1994 identifies mentoring as one of the important factors in career success. Several studies cited in the report note that all of the successful women managers had a mentor who was significant in their career (ibid. 1994:6). One male manager (ibid 1994:6) was moved to say:

Work still tends to be a boys' environment and an effective mentoring program can be a way to break this barrier down.

Women therefore, because of the dearth of female mentors, need to find a male mentor. The importance of such "gatekeepers" (Evetts 1989:197) in recognising and encouraging individuals to go for promotion cannot be overestimated. Women headteachers in Evetts' study mentioned the influence of inspectors and principals in providing the initial impetus for them seeking promotion (ibid. 197).

Finding a mentor does not solve all problems for a woman. A male mentor may pressure a woman to do things in a male power and control way, may patronise her and cause her to lose contact with her female network (NSW Status of Women 1994:13). The sensitivity of sponsorship of a woman by a man

may also be a difficulty for both parties (Jamrozik 1994:32-3).

Women have few female role models in administration. Research has noted the importance of female role models and the negative value of male role models for women (Shakeshaft 1987:115). Just as primary teaching is dominated by women and has been seen as an 'unnatural' career for young men (Skelton 1991:287), management, which is mostly in the hands of men, is judged by many women aspiring to promotion as well as by those holding the power to promote as being at odds with femininity (Shakeshaft 1989:113, Blackmore 1989:100). The masculine culture of schools where "authority equals strength and power and discipline is seen in terms of control" (Askew 1988:56) is also less appealing to women (Blackmore 1989:95). Following the male model can place women in jeopardy as women who are assertive, who trumpet their desire for promotion are not well received (Shakeshaft 1987:90). Women who do succeed are deemed to be exceptional which leads to expectations that the male type of administration is more natural (Rimmer and Davies 1985:186)

Women's invisibility as potential administrators is another major structural and symbolic factor (Evetts 1989:199) that leads Acker (1989:17) to speak of the need for them to "trigger" networks by making themselves visible. To do this, women need to have the confidence in their ability to enter such a male dominated area. Finding support to build that confidence is not easy. The "social messages" which encourage teachers to apply for promotion are received more frequently by males than females (Sampson 1987:37; Marshall 1984:33; Burton 1991:18; Bolman and Deal 1992:326; Skelton 1991:287).

Other societal factors such as subtle undermining or overt harassment by male pupils and teachers and lack of support or even hostility by families, colleagues and friends are

discussed by most researchers. Women are often placed in a school culture where "authority equals strength and power and discipline is seen in terms of control" (Askew1988:56), a situation which makes it difficult for them to operate. This leads to their being undermined or "rescued" by men (ibid 60) which again places them on the outer edges of the school culture. The domination of discussion by men which increases the invisibility of women has been discussed by many researchers (ibid 64). Society has only just started to tackle the issue of sexual harassment. It has been such an invisible problem that one male principal's response to a complaint was, "We didn't have problems with sexual harassment in the school until the Women's Group was formed" (Askew 1988:67).

Although some reorganisation of structures, such as single sex training to provide opportunities for women's networking, can benefit women, it does not solve all the problems. Programmes such as affirmative action, which aim to reverse structural inequality in society, can, although they could be seen as more supportive of women, subtly undermine them. Further credence is given to the notion of deficiency when these programmes do not appear to have a marked effect in increasing numbers of women in administration. The "pervasive ideology of individual choice" in western democracies (Acker 1983:28) suggests that all things are possible and with the assistance of affirmative action programmes, the problem should be solved. Such liberal interventionist approaches (Blackmore 1989:95) compound the difficulties for women. They do not merely place the onus on women to achieve success for themselves but they suggest that those who attain leadership positions can open the floodgates for others, provide role models for younger women and girls and so break down the barriers to women in administration. Blackmore (ibid: 95) points to the failure of this approach in the last two decades and suggests that the issue is more complex than "merely a matter of numbers". She disputes the idea of a numbers game claiming instead that

feminism must challenge "the norms, institutions and structures of masculine dominance" (ibid 96). Similarly, Porter (1986:16) challenges the notion of feminine dependence.

c) Feminist Explanations for the Underrepresentation of Women in Management

Feminists argue that programmes to overcome the overt structural barriers to women's full participation in management are not sufficient. The more subtle difficulties caused by the patriarchal nature of western society where "the nature and social role of women are defined in relation to a norm which is male" (Weedon 1987:2) must be addressed. Such patriarchy should not be seen as an accidental aberration but "an essential component of exploitation" (O'Brien cited in Blackmore 89:106). This patriarchal world view has become so ingrained that it is accepted with little questioning. Non-recognition of the gender bias in many areas of society is a particularly insidious force where ideas and decisions are deemed to be factual, technical and scientific.

The "pervasive ideology of individual choice" (Acker 1993:128) has been criticised by feminists who maintain that the labour market is divided clearly on gender lines and women, in addition to the overt structural problems which prevent them embarking on a career in management, must counter views of them as less capable than men and unsuitable for many positions, such as those in management. This has two effects. It inhibits many women from applying for management positions as they perceive themselves to be lacking in the necessary skills and ability. Researchers have also found that women are less inclined to apply for occupations which are masculine in style. These occupations are wide-ranging and even encompass those such as managers which women have been encouraged to consider. Feminist

writers would argue that women have difficulty considering supposedly technical and value-free ideas such as "management" and "career" as part of their experience as they are gender specific, having been based on male experience and taking no account of women's views and life patterns.

i) Women's Self-Perceptions

It is true that many women teachers do not apply for promotion (Sampson 1987:29; De Lyon 1989:53). Why do women apply for fewer promotions positions? Surely affirmative action alone should encourage them? A low number of applications is typically the reason most often cited by employers when women are not placed in promotions positions.

Hawkesworth (in Burton 1991:15) contrasts the "primacy of choice" viewpoint with "the impact of cultural norms and group practices". The former argues that organisational processes deal fairly and even-handedly with everybody so that each individual is totally in control of his/her productivity but it overlooks the extent to which "the individual's impressions, desires, sensations and aspirations are socially constructed". This socialisation starts at birth to affect women's self-perception, particularly in the public sphere (Shakeshaft 1987:85). Marshall (1984:33) notes that socialisation causes women to rate their performances less highly and use "fewer internal, personal reasons" to explain their success. Men and women tend to rate men's work more highly and in experimental situations, women's success was explained as due to effort whereas men's performance was ascribed to ability (Burton 1991:18; Bolman & Deal 1992:326)). For the young men in Skelton's study (1991:287),

their perceptions of other people's estimations of their role afforded them a higher status than female teachers of the same age group.

Opportunities appear to be related to perceptions rather than to reality (Marshall 1984:24) as women managers were rated as highly or more highly than men on a structured analysis frame (Bolman & Deal 1992:328).

Women are not expected to succeed or to aspire to administration and for some the possibility is not even considered. In the interests of their own mental health, many other women do not seek impossible goals. Those who express an interest in promotion prior to appointment have encountered little support or have found it to be counter-productive (Burgess 1989:87; Shakeshaft 1987:90).

ii) The Gendered Division of Labour

a) Management vs Teaching:

Management is one area which is held by many organisational researchers (Ouston 1993:43) to be rational and value free, a gender neutral step in the hierarchy. However organisational theory, upon which many concepts of educational administration are based, has been criticised for its gender blindness (Blackmore 1989:93). Organisational practices and theory have been built "with men's typical life patterns as their foundation - including men's reliance ... on domestic support" (Burton 1991:14). They fail to recognise the gendered division of labour in organisations where women's position is defined in a negative manner (ibid.104). This "long standing proletarianization" of women workers ensures that any job they undertake is inferior or of less status (Casey and Apple 1989:179). A report by the OECD supports these findings (Milligan et al. 1994:14). This has relegated women to becoming a reserve army of labour (Blackmore 1992:25), ready to answer the call when men cannot fulfil the need but able to return to the family and disappear from the statistics when they are no longer required (Evetts 1990:95). They are

often 'loosely connected' to the workforce and most easily shed in times of stress (Milligan 1994:29).

Many researchers have noted the accommodative strategies which, in times of teacher shortage, assist women to return to teaching and which offer equal encouragement to men and to women to apply for promotion (Evetts 89:200; Skelton 1991:284; Acker 1983:130). Evetts (1990) noted that most of the headteachers in her study were appointed in the period of expansion of the sixties and seventies in England. This impetus has not continued there. Similar findings have been documented in Australia. The report on women's and men's work in 1994 in NSW (Kocrey 1994:6) found that men and women are still segregated by occupation, with managerial and administrative positions still dominated by men. Teaching is an occupation which is clearly split on gender lines - women make up the majority of teachers but the minority of administrators (Milligan 1994:9). Such sexual division of labour contributes to "the reproduction of patriarchal and/or capitalist social order, especially by providing models to students of male-female power relations..." (Acker 1983:134).

The situation has not always been so. In the early days of public education, teaching was one of the few areas which offered women the hope of a profession and of promotion. Blackmore (1993) and Shakeshaft (1987) trace the promise offered to women in the early history of teaching in Australia and America. Blackmore (1993:37-9) discusses the case of Julia Flynn to illustrate how difficult it was for women to succeed in a male dominated world. Flynn was a successful educator who appeared to be on the road to even higher promotion. She was appointed as the first female Assistant Inspector of Secondary Schools in Victoria in 1914. However, her path from there on was marked by constant bureaucratic and ministerial interference. Because she was a woman she was deemed unsuitable for management. This argument later shifted to her personal inadequacy and finally, when she

protested, to her psychological incompatibility with the position.

The situation unfortunately has shown little improvement for women in the ensuing years. Although women have continued to enter teaching in large numbers and there are 150 000 women in schools in Australia (Milligan et al. 1994:5), only a small proportion of them have managed to move into administrative positions. Fewer men have entered teaching, with many of these having chosen it as their second career option (Shakeshaft 1987:70) or because "teaching was a useful qualification to have" (Skelton 1991:282) but most have moved on to administration comparatively quickly.

Because women have been accorded a lower status in our society than men, the predominance of women in teaching, the likening of teaching to child-minding (Skelton 1991:280), the compatibility of the hours with family responsibilities (Evetts 1990:100), the availability of part-time work and the expectation that most women will have breaks in teaching have devalued the profession (Acker 1983:125). It has been viewed as an extension of the home and of mothering, a part of the private realm, not a profession in its own right. Rimmer & Davies (1985:154) discussed the pervasiveness of socially constructed "female gender scripts" which maintain that women are primarily wives and mothers.

Primary teaching in particular, because of its involvement with young children, is seen as a feminine domain (Evans 1988: 63, 71). In NSW in 1993, only 25.5% of primary teachers were male. (National Report on Schooling 1993:Table 33). Burgess (1989: 80) speaks of the "rhetoric of primary education" which likens the classrooms to the rooms of the house and the whole system to a family where women can fall into the trap of viewing themselves as "mother" to their class and so be disinclined to apply for promotion (Burgess 1989:86). This view of school as a family and the place of women, therefore allowed the highly regarded Plowden Report

in the UK in 1967 to express sympathy for "the 97 brave men out of a total of 33 000 teachers" in infants schools (ibid 81). Young male primary teachers in Skelton's study (1991:285) were aware that teaching was a natural occupation for women which suggested it must be an unnatural one for them, one factor which inspired them to apply for administration. Women are seen to operate in a private, family domain, so teaching, like nursing, social work and librarianship, which are all dominated by women, can only be seen as a "semi-profession" (Acker 1983:123). Porter notes the visibility of women in teaching and the invisibility of gender in the profession as it is analysed, criticised or occasionally congratulated (Porter 1995:6). This complements the invisibility of women's work in the home.

Management by contrast is viewed as a career choice, a movement away from the home and into the public realm (Burton 1991:20; Blackmore 92:12). Within schools this is reflected in the way work is divided into 'men's work' and 'women's work' and where most of the senior staff are men (Milligan 1994:9). In the words of Al-Khalifa (1989:85):

The association of masculinity, male authority and school leadership is pervasive in the life of the school.

There has been "an implicit, taken-for-granted assumption that leadership is basically a male activity" (Bolman & Deal 1992:325). One explanation for women's lack of application for promotion therefore suggests that women dislike bureaucracy and like teaching so they are unwilling to move out of the classroom (Shakøshaft 1987:74). The domination of educational management by men has discouraged many women from considering it as a possible life choice. Is this a rationalisation or an explanation?

Although women had hopes of filling leadership positions in the early days of universal education, school leadership has been dominated by men and this has imposed a masculine view of leadership in educational culture. Studies of

management in general such as those of Mintzberg (1973) and Stewart 1982 (Ouston 1993) have based their findings on the work of male managers only. Unfortunately, they pretend to speak for all managers, thus making male experience the universal reality. As Blackmore (1989:100) points out,

The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the 'givens' of leadership.

Blackmore (ibid:119) further contends that this masculine view of leadership is:

historically constructed and maintained by its ideological underpinnings of dominant theories of a value-free science and liberal political theory.

Much discussion about whether there are differences between male and female management style has occurred in the literature. A study by Eagly et al. (1992:91) has found that women principals were more "task oriented" and had "a more democratic and less autocratic style" than male principals. Adler (1993:113-4) agrees claiming that women had more contacts with people, were more visible in the school and used more cooperative planning. A masculine style stresses "the rational, unemotional, logical and authoritative aspects of human behaviour" (Blackmore 1993:34). Management has been viewed as "technicist, requiring rational problem solving techniques, strong task direction and detachment" (Hall 1993:35).

However, despite some studies (Bolman and Deal 1992:325) having rated women managers more highly than men, the masculine definition has been accepted and this has led to the definitions of the jobs themselves being described in "instrumental, rational, impersonal or ... highly political terms" (Burton 1992:11, Blackmore 1989:95). In England, the State Board was concerned that many women with the "qualifications, expertise and aptitude" did not apply for promotion. Those women who did apply expressed a preference for "more democratic styles of school organization and administration" (Blackmore 1989:95).

Women should not take the blame for this apparent lack of aspiration as Burton (1991:21) indicates:

... the relationships between motivation, aspiration, effort and opportunity are not located within the individual but are a function of the relationships between individuals.

Paige Porter (1995:4) cites a report from the Education Department in Western Australia which found that women teachers saw themselves as "a submerged culture within the organisation" which did not share their values and vision and therefore deterred them from considering applying for promotion. The association of masculinity with leadership can also discourage women from applying for promotion (Blackmore 1989:100). Not only can organisational structures be hostile to women but they can militate to "shape behaviour in such a way that they confirm their own prophecies" (Kanter in Shakeshaft 1987:91).

Although a study cited by Owens (1991:98) supports women as being better suited to the elementary principalship in America than men, it seems that "woman" and "leader" are viewed as two antagonistic and irreconcilable terms. A woman who displays culturally defined traits of femininity is perceived to be a poor leader whereas a woman who operates according to the male definition of leader is labelled unfeminine (Blackmore 1989:100). Teaching is seen to be compatible with mothering and so does not challenge femininity (Shakeshaft 1987:113).

When leadership is described as value-free, scientific and available to all, women's absence from the ranks of administrators can be explained by their "irrationality, subjectivity and emotionality" (Blackmore 1989:119) and by their apparent lack of motivation towards promotion. In Julia Flynn's case, the Director of Education defined administrative work as necessarily masculine and therefore inappropriate for her (Blackmore 1993:37). Her protests at this treatment

were used to bolster his argument that she was unsuitable because of her "psychological unsuitability" (ibid:38) although her desire for promotion could not be challenged.

b) Careers vs Jobs

Just as management has come to be a term associated with men, the definition of career has a strong masculine bias. It has been said that administrators, who are mostly men, have careers while teachers, the majority of whom are women, have jobs (Shakeshaft 1987:64-65). Skelton's study (1991:287) with young men in Primary schools in England demonstrates that the young men had already set promotional goals for themselves to escape from teaching and enter administration. Similar "unlimited success" perspectives which focused on a set of career goals and a career timetable were found among young male teachers in Australia (Schools Council 1990:118). It appears that men enter teaching to administer while women enter teaching to teach (Shakeshaft 1987:87).

The definition of career as, "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence", although widely accepted, has been challenged by many researchers (Ouston 1993:28; Acker 1989). Such masculinist definitions have dominated views of career and have limited questioning of the concept. Al Khalifa (1989:69) notes that the male concept of career in education is an upwards linear and unbroken movement away from the classroom into management, a definition which does not accord with the reality for most women in teaching. Administration is therefore viewed by men as a career while teaching is merely a job.

This male view of career has been accepted as "an objective notion which relates to the rational structures of an organisation" (McMullan 1993:69). That it is 'an objective notion' suggests it is part of the natural order and this leads to women's success being judged according to a male

timetable of promotion (Grant 1989:44). Experiences used to define career and document career routes come from men, a reflection once more of the patriarchal nature of our society as for many women promotion is unknown or has had to become a mid-life focus (Shakeshaft 1987:61). Most women have little control over their timetable. Over 65% of women in England have experienced breaks in service, often at that period of their lives when men have started to embark upon their career path (Grant 1989:44). According to Blackmore (1989:106):

The ...uniformization of success standards is thus read as indicating that women lack motivation to succeed and has the ironical effect of maintaining the inequity of their work situation.

Not only do structures militate against women, but 'failure' to follow the male path is interpreted once more as deficiency.

Most women in teaching do not receive promotion so their path is flat in structure (Acker 89:10). This appears to be goalless and uninteresting, a view supported by the Australian Schools Council report (Connors 1990). "At present teachers' career futures stretch out across a featureless plain with very little on the horizon." (ibid:104). The Council, while paying little attention to the domination of the profession by women, is referring to the few avenues for divergence in teaching aside from administration, a path which removes teachers from the area in which they may excel. The structures within teaching again militate against women.

If the definition of career as a series of hierarchical steps is accepted, most women teachers are without career and, by implication, aspiration and qualifications. Feminist researchers would disagree claiming that women have a different rather than a lower aspiration (Ouston 1993:28). Shakeshaft (1987:87), citing a woman principal, maintains that,

Success is not measured in moving from job to job in a vertical continuum.... it is measured by the quality of any job held.

Evetts (1990:66ff) discusses five types of career for women - accommodated, antecedent, two stage, subsequent and compensatory. In four of the five career types, family and out-of-school life have taken precedence. Sometimes, as in the two stage and subsequent career models, a career in teaching and administration must wait until family responsibilities diminish. However, the women in Evetts' study (1990) did show a commitment to pursuing a career in education although they were older than their married male counterparts at each step on the promotional path.

The Definition of Career in Catholic Schools

The definition of "career" in Catholic education is claimed to be different to that which operates in the state education sector. Christie and Smith (1991:219) reject the emphasis on remuneration and status, maintaining that,

... fulfilment of a vocational aspiration predicated on deeply felt personal, professional and spiritual values....has been responsible for motivating faith filled lay people to work in the Catholic education systems.

Indeed, remuneration did not appear to have been as strong a driving force for women in state schools in seeking promotion (Sampson 1991:134) and it certainly did not provide an impetus for Catholic women when lay people first moved into Catholic schools. Until the mid 1970s, salaries for lay people lagged behind those of teachers in the state system and women's salaries lagged behind those offered to men (Christie and Smith 1991:219). The desire to teach in the Catholic system would have been one of the features which attracted teachers. (Another would have been the ease of

gaining a position as the demand to fill the vacuum left by the religious would have been great.) Salaries for teachers in Catholic schools have now achieved parity with those of their state colleagues and the qualification requirements are similar for Catholic and state schools.

It is, however, still important that those applying for positions in Catholic schools, whether they are Catholic or non-Catholic, have a strong commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school. This requirement has not diminished. By 1997, teachers in the Sydney diocese who teach Religious Education (this includes all primary teachers) will be required to undertake a course in religious studies (Connell and Lewis Sydney Morning Herald 2/5/1995). A commitment to the Catholic ethos is essential for school leaders (Christie and Smith 1991:225) as the demands upon a Catholic school principal come not only from the school community but also from the wider parish community. This necessarily affects views of career in Catholic schools.

It is not clear whether such a view of career may also be a factor ensuring a larger percentage of women in administration in Catholic schools compared with state school systems. Catholic women cannot escape the social pressures which affect other women. Those who are married must balance a dual career and the inevitable breaks in service for child rearing. Although, when compared with the percentage of women in primary principalships in the state sector (21%), the percentage of women in the primary principalship is higher in Catholic schools (59%), they are still poorly represented compared with the percentage of women teaching in Catholic primary schools (82%) (National Catholic Education Commission Report 1994:63-64).

Summary and Conclusions

All the statistics cited agree that there are significantly fewer women than men in educational management and many explanations are offered for this fact. Most popular explanations which focus on deficit theory such as women's unsuitability, lack of qualifications or ability could be categorised as rationalisations. Research shows that women have always been interested, capable and as well qualified as men for teaching and administration.

Structural inequity must shoulder much of the blame. Women have to contend with widely accepted negative views of them as uncommitted to any career outside the home and family. Such views are ingrained and unquestioned in a patriarchal society, as Porter (1995:19) indicates:

As long as it is believed that it is only women and not men who 'have to choose' between the job and family, the gendering of the power structure will continue to be reproduced in some form.

In addition to their paid employment, married women and those with children undertake most of the unpaid work in the family and men typically rely on this to support them in their career. Although not all women are married, women are viewed firstly in a family role, trapped between that and their paid work and therefore unable and unwilling to be committed. Child-bearing and rearing enforce breaks in service, making them less experienced than their male counterparts and loyalty to the family makes relocation for promotion difficult or impossible.

The patriarchal nature of our society and the gendered division of labour place further barriers in the path of a woman who wishes to pursue promotion. Work is still split on gender lines with most management positions occupied by men (Koorey 1994:6). Networks of support are male dominated, inservice courses and tasks which would prepare

teachers for administration are more often allocated to men and role models and mentors are mostly male.

Many ideas which are held to be value-free in our society have been based on the experience of men. Management and career are two such ideas. The organisational culture of schools reinforces the view of management as a masculine concept as the teaching positions are mostly filled by women while the managerial positions are filled by men. Just as the young men in Skelton's study (1991:287) viewed primary teaching as an unnatural realm for them, so women will feel uncomfortable, "a submerged culture" (Porter 1995:4), in a masculine administrative culture. Definitions of management which have reinforced this view have been formulated on a male style using "instrumental, rational, impersonal or ... highly political terms" (Burton 1992:11; Blackmore 1989:95) and studies have shown that many women are disinclined to apply for administrative positions when such views of management are promulgated.

Women in Catholic schools appear to have a greater chance of achieving administrative positions and, although these women must also overcome societal barriers in achieving promotion, the different nature of Catholic schooling would appear to have a positive effect on their chances. Several possibilities need to be explored. The structure of Catholic systemic education and the application system, which is organised through the local community and through the diocesan system, both of which are smaller and more flexible than the state bureaucracy, may have assisted women to gain promotion. The culture of Catholic education may be more woman-friendly through the influence of women in the religious orders. Women applying for promotion in Catholic schools may have different personal goals than their state counterparts. Catholic women may also have benefited from labour market forces in the growing Catholic education sector.

The literature and first-hand experience testify that for too long educational administration has been concerned with the needs of white male administrators in state school systems. Their experience is not universal although the androcentric viewpoint taken in research would suggest that it is. This androcentric view affects not only the conclusions but also the methodology of research into women in educational administration. To countermand this it is essential that any study which hopes to avoid an androcentric viewpoint, adopt research methods which allow for the incorporation of women's experience.

The following chapter will outline the theoretical and methodological considerations for adopting a feminist standpoint and a case study approach which worked to gain an insight into the career paths of the lay women primary principals in a rural Catholic diocese.