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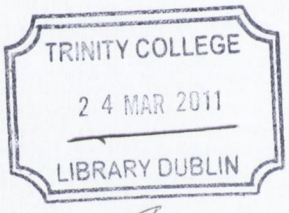
# A STUDY OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AMONG POST-PRIMARY PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS IN IRELAND

**A dissertation submitted to the University of Dublin in accordance with the regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Patricia Verity Swan**

**September 2010**



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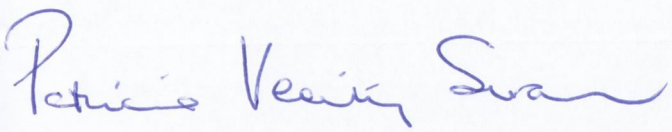

**Patricia Verity Swan** **September 2010**

## SUMMARY

## A STUDY OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AMONG POST-PRIMARY PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS IN IRELAND

### Problem

The research commenced with two exploratory studies (2001/2002) in Ireland and Texas into teacher employment patterns (teacher recruitment, teacher turnover and retention) at post-primary level in both Ireland and Texas. Principals were asked the question "Why do teachers stay in teaching?" The Texan principals claimed that they could and did make a positive difference in the experience of a teacher through instructional leadership, in marked contrast to the responses of the Irish principals to the questions on leadership who saw their role as mainly managerial / administrative. This led to an investigation of the effect of culture on teaching, which provided further information on principals' leadership. Following the statement by the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) 2005 that instructional leadership was the way forward in Ireland, the study focused on the nature of instructional leadership, its theory and practice.

### Aims

The aims of this study are:

- to clarify the term "instructional leadership" both in theory and in practice.
- to find out what elements, if any, of "instructional leadership" can already be found in post-primary schools in Ireland.
- to identify a model for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in post-primary schools in Ireland.

## Methodology

This is an illuminative evaluation study using grounded theory as a means of analysis. The tools chosen were i) interviews (qualitative tool) ii) questionnaire (quantitative tool).

## Stages in research

The research commenced with the two exploratory studies (2001/2002) on teacher employment patterns (including recruitment and retention) in Ireland and Texas when both Irish and Texan principals were interviewed. Irish teachers were interviewed in 2004 on teacher employment patterns by which time both culture and leadership were being examined by the author. Between 2006 and 2009 the research focused on instructional leadership. Interviews with Irish post-primary principals and three other educators together with a major literature review were undertaken before a survey of the views of Irish post-primary principals concerning instructional leadership was conducted in January 2009.

## Findings

The first stage of the research study found that the sample of teachers who were surveyed stay in school on account of the Herzberg satisfiers. The second and third stages found that the understanding of instructional leadership was confused both in the literature and in practice. There was some evidence from emerging data that there was a development in the understanding of the theory of leadership and its practice in the twenty first century. In general, however the literature does not define any of three inter-connected leaderships: educational leadership, curriculum leadership and instructional leadership. This is a serious matter since the theory and practice of instructional leadership is essential for good teaching and learning in the classroom as recognised internationally. Operational definitions are available which can be adjusted to suit the particular culture in which the school exists.

This may be especially relevant for post-primary education in Ireland, which has a very particular culture and tradition, making it very different even from the Irish primary sector in terms of innovation. Interpersonal relationships within the school were seen to have relevance in terms of the introduction and implementation of instructional leadership.

**Conclusions**

Instructional leadership - leadership of teaching and learning commences in the classroom in the relationship between teacher and students. The implementation of instructional leadership, which will allow the inquiry-based school to develop in a culture of generosity and improved teaching and learning for all its members, necessitates awareness building and training, based on stringent research, for all members of the school community.

## DEDICATION

**For Aisling, Dara, Sinéad, Maeve and Aoife**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to the following people without whose help this research study could not have been undertaken:

My supervisor Professor John Heywood

Dr Karen Mayo for arranging the exploratory studies research programme in Texas

The Director of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) Mr Clive Byrne, the President of NAPD Mr Ciaran Mc Cormack and members of the National Executive 2008/2009, Ms Catherine Sheils and Mr Michael Parsons, former President of NAPD for his help and advice.

Ms Sarah Heywood for her advice on statistics and the use of an SPSS programme

Mr John White, General Secretary of the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI) and Ms Maura Leydon Education Officer of the ASTI who both made literature available, Ms Bernie Judge, Education Officer of the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) for her comments

The principals and teachers both in Ireland and Texas

The many people connected with education that assisted me in private conversations, discussion, and informal interviews in Ireland, the UK and USA

Colleagues and fellow researchers in Trinity College

My family and friends for their unfailing encouragement and support through every stage of the research

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ASTI | Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland |
| BELMAS | British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society |
| CBR | Country Background Report |
| DES | Department for Education and Science |
| EFEA | European Forum on Educational Administration |
| ERIC | Education Resources Information Centre |
| ESAI | Education Studies Association of Ireland |
| H.Dip. Ed. | Higher Diploma in Education |
| ISLLC (US) | Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium |
| LDS | Leadership Development for Schools |
| NAPD | National Association of Principals and Deputy-Principals |
| NUI | National University of Ireland |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OFSTED | Office for Standards in Education |
| PCW | Programme for Competiveness at Work, 1997 |
| POR | Posts of Responsibility |
| SDP | School Development Planning |
| SMEI | Society for Management in Education in Ireland |
| TL21 | Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century |
| TUI | Teachers' Union of Ireland |
| TYO | Transition Year Option |

| | |
|---|---|
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US | United States of America |
| VEC | Vocational Education Committee |
| VSS | Voluntary Secondary Schools |
| WSE | Whole School Evaluation |

## GLOSSARY

*Assumptional Dialogues*: a process developed by Argyris and Schön, (1974, 1978) which provides "opportunities to raise the awareness and examine the largely unrecognised assumptions that currently underlie educational structures and practices and to generate alternatives to them". (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993, p.266)

*Celtic Tiger*: economy of Ireland during period of rapid economic growth 1995-2007.

*Continuous Professional Development*: education designed to advance personal understanding of one's vocation. Training is a part of this education.

*Growth Plan*: a programme used by the Texan principals (Texan sample) to assist and support teachers who experience difficulties in the classroom.

*"Happy school"*: used by interviewees in Ireland in 2004 and 2006 to denote total satisfaction with the teaching and learning culture in the school.

*Hidden curriculum*: the "unofficial instructional influences, which may or may not support the planned curriculum". (Bradley, 2004, p.10)

*Inquiry-oriented school*: a school dedicated to the pursuit of learning by all its members.

*Irish sample 2001*: consisted of five post-primary principals (one of whom was an acting principal – the author) and two other educators. It was a biased sample as the interviewees were all former students of Professor John Heywood in Trinity College, University of Dublin (chapter 2.2.1).

*Irish sample 2004*: consisted of six post-primary teachers and one retired post-primary teacher. It was a biased sample as the interviewees volunteered to participate in the research (chapter 3.2.1).

*Irish sample 2006/2007*: consisted of five post-primary principals and three other educators. The sample was biased since the five post-primary principals were selected by NAPD as principals of "best-practice" schools in teaching and learning. The educators included a member of the NAPD executive and Professor Heywood (chapter 7.3.1).

*"King/queen of the castle"*: common phrase used frequently by interviewees in this study to denote traditional role of the teacher in the Irish classroom.

*Leadership terms*: see Appendix 3.

*Null curriculum*: those parts of the planned curriculum, abandoned due to the explosion of knowledge (Bradley, 2004).

*Operational definition and/or framework*: a definition making no claim to universal truth and acceptance but providing an opportunity to implement programmes in the immediate context of the school.

*Philosophy*: knowledge, beliefs (The Penguin A-Z Thesaurus, 2001).

*Pilot study*: preliminary study conducted by the author before each stage of the research (ie: Irish studies 2004, 2006/2007, 2009 and Texan study 2002) to identify flaws in research instruments.

*Planned curriculum*: the content of the teaching and learning programme to be delivered in the classroom.

*Practice*: implementation, action.

*Self-management*: the control of personal traits and behaviours by a person that can influence his/her actions (chapter 6.7.8).

*Texan sample*: consisted of six post-primary principals and two other educators (chapter 2.3.1). The sample was biased as the interviewees were selected by colleagues of Dr Karen Mayo in the Department of Education, Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

*"Texan scenario"*: The "Texan Scenario 2002", as it is termed in this thesis describes the common claim that the Texan principals worked with their teachers in classrooms in the interests of achieving optimum learning environments for their students who represented a wide range of abilities and social background in very large schools as compared with Irish post-primary schools. The Texan Principals undertook regular "walk-thrus" as a matter of course into all classrooms, knew what both teachers and students were doing in the classrooms and beyond, and assisted and supported those teachers who were experiencing difficulties.

*Theory*: idea, philosophy (The Penguin A-Z Thesaurus, 2001).

*Training*: instruction in skills pertaining to, and preparation for specific activity e.g.: teacher training, instructional leadership training.

# CHAPTER 1

# BACKGROUND TO THE THESIS: A PERSONAL STATEMENT

## 1.1 Introduction

In 2002 I discussed the possibility of doing a doctorate with Professor John Heywood. He suggested that I might like to consider implementing a comparative study of teacher retention as between Ireland and Texas. In 2001, he had undertaken a set of exploratory interviews in Ireland among senior education personnel in order to try and get an understanding of the problem and he made available his summary to me.

Professor Heywood's interest in the problem arose from the fact that when he was Head of Department and Director of Teacher Education in the University of Dublin he had set out to forge strong links with educators in the United States of America (US). This was partly for the purpose of "developing research contacts" in his fields of interest of assessment and engineering education, and partly "political" in order to pursue the interests of the Higher Diploma of Education (H.Dip.Ed.) graduates.

In 1986 when Ireland was just coming out of a recession there was a surfeit of trained teachers. A proportion of the graduates who trained for teaching in Heywood's Department had emigrated to the US where they tried to take up teaching positions. They found that the H.Dip. Ed. was not accepted as a teaching qualification and that they would be required to take the state examinations for teaching if they wished to teach in state schools. After discussions with personnel in the US Department of Education, arrangements were made for Heywood by the American Colleges of Teacher Education to visit a number of state administrators to discuss the issue. In this way he gained a substantial interest in the US system of education and he eventually joined and contributed to the annual conferences of the Association of Teacher Educators. Through these conferences he met a number of educators from different states including Dr Bill Peter from Missouri and Dr Karen Mayo from Texas.

Professor Heywood invited Dr Peter when he was on a visit to Ireland to address his M.Ed students and one of them, an American, Christine Holliday, when she returned home, evaluated Dr Peter's theories of teaching for her thesis. Dr Mayo invited

Professor Heywood to visit Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas where she worked. In the course of discussions it transpired that teacher retention seemed to be a problem in Texas as there was a very quick turnover of teachers. Professor Heywood wondered if there were any differences between Ireland and Texas that would be significant given that there appeared not to be a teacher retention problem in Ireland. He had undertaken the exploratory interviews in Ireland with the intention of obtaining similar information from a group of senior educators in Texas. He had not formulated any overall strategy for a comparative study and what he had done was in his words: "in the tradition of illuminative evaluation trying to determine what the questions might be."

The thesis begins at this stage for I accepted his offer to develop the research. The topic appealed to me as I had previously researched the induction of teachers (Swan, 1996), which had necessitated looking at teachers' careers, the organisation of schools and the role of the principal.

It is relevant to the thesis to note that in the period from 1990, Professor Heywood was also trying to develop a model of instructional leadership and that much of that work was done with members of the Educational Research and Methods Division of the American Society for Engineering Education.

Part 1 has explained how I came to undertake the research; Part 2, the next section, describes the methodology; part 3 explains how this thesis moved from a study of teacher retention to instructional leadership; part 4 gives a brief note about the organisation of the thesis.

## 1.2 Methodology

### 1.2.1 Introduction

When I took up Professor Heywood's invitation to develop his study of teacher retention in Ireland and Texas, I was faced with decisions about how best to proceed:

- Should I start afresh or should I start where Heywood had left off?
- How might I best start afresh, if I chose that option?

I realised that, having agreed to develop the research, the responsibility was mine and in that sense I would start afresh. I also realised from conversations with Professor Heywood that his exploratory interviews with principals and educators in Ireland in 2001 had produced very valuable educational data, not only in the area of teacher retention. To ensure complete familiarity with that data I decided that I would re-analyse the interview tapes and then decide on the next stage in consultation with Dr Mayo. That discussion resulted in some exploratory interviews in Texas in 2002.

At this early stage of the research, I was required, like any other researcher, to decide what type of methodology should be selected. I had to consider the relative merits of a quantitative or qualitative approach or a combination of both.

Traditionally, quantitative methodology (representing a positivist approach to knowledge) was seen as the production of data that "can easily be put into clear categories and summarised by numbers, which can then be subjected to statistical manipulation" (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.6). It is commonly associated with the scientific method. In contrast qualitative methodology, which is said to represent a constructivist approach to knowledge, produces "data in the form of complex stories, images, descriptions and such-like that cannot be easily put into categories or simplified" (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.6). Gall, Gall and Borg (2005, p.16), state that some researchers believe that "a combination of both types of methods can give the fullest picture of the nature of educational phenomena."

Similarly, Arksey and Knight's (1999, p. xi) view that methods and tools based on either methodology may be selected as most suitable to a particular purpose within a research programme, is also found in other recent methodology literature (Coleman and Briggs, 2002, pp. 14, 25; Rudestam and Newton, 2001, p.14; Bell, 1999, p.8). The selection of methods and tools, whether they are derived from qualitative or quantitative methodologies or from both, is an essential aspect of any research programme. The question of methodology must be addressed both at an early stage in the research programme and throughout the programme in the interests of its design, which should also be closely linked to the literature review (Arksey and Knight 1999, pp.180, 181). In contrast to the sole use of quantitative methodology to test an hypothesis, the use of qualitative methodology requires a recognition that hypotheses

may change according to the analysis of data, that revision of tentative hypotheses is a necessary part of the continuous assessment of data and that some questions arising from the data collections will remain unanswered. Such questions can well be the basis for other research programmes. Arksey and Knight (1999, p.171) refer to the compromise that is found in all research:

> Between what we wish to do and what we can do; between ideals and the need to get the work done; and between the search for the best possible interpretations and the ethical need to be mindful and respectful of research subjects.

In the course of the study Professor Heywood told me that he was of the same opinion as Arksey and Knight (1999). His view was that one did not have to be constructivist to adopt a qualitative approach. When he came into educational research he had been greatly influenced by the anthropological approach to evaluation proposed by Parlett and Hamilton (1972), which they called illuminative. He also told me that during that period, the idea of grounded theory emerged and that the two were related.

### 1.2.2 Illuminative evaluation

Parlett and Hamilton presented the original proposal for illuminative evaluation in a cyclostyled document that was circulated from the Centre for Educational Research at the University of Edinburgh in 1972. The term "illuminative": came apparently from an American sociologist Martin Trow who specialised in comparative higher education. Since it, and a published version in 1976, were impossible to obtain I had to rely on interpretations of it by Professor Heywood and others.

In the 1960s, Heywood had been asked to evaluate two science courses that were compulsory for arts students at the University of Lancaster. In both courses he had adopted the role of anthropologist and participated as a learner with the other students in the classes. Subsequently he became a participant-observer in the physics course. In the monograph, which described the work, he claimed that it was in the tradition of illuminative evaluation (Heywood and Montagu-Pollock, 1977). Comparing and contrasting the methods of traditional assessment with those used in illuminative evaluation he referred to the reliance, in the former, on attendance records, the marks recorded in coursework and tests, and discussion with their students. This left many

questions, such as "their personality, interest and abilities and attitude scales" (p.84) unanswered which could be ascertained by using illuminative evaluation.

Heywood and Montagu-Pollock (1977, p.245) described Parlett and Hamilton's view which arose from their criticism of the traditional "agricultural botany method". They quoted several aspects from Parlett and Hamilton's paper (1972), which had presented illuminative evaluation as a general research strategy:

> The choice of research tactics follows not from research doctrine but from decisions in each case as to the best available techniques: the problem defines the methods used, not vice versa [...] There are three stages: investigators observe, inquire further, then seek to explain [...] Obviously the three stages overlap and functionally interrelate; the transition from stage to stage, as the investigation unfolds, occurs as problem areas become progressively clarified and redefined. The course of the study cannot be charted in advance. Beginning with an extensive database, the researchers systematically reduce the breadth of their enquiry to give more concentrated attention to emerging issues. This 'progressive focusing' permits unique and unpredicted phenomena to be given due weight. It reduces the problem of data overload, and prevents the accumulation of a mass of unanalysed material. Within this three stage framework, an information profile is assembled using data collected from five areas: observation; interviews; questionnaires and tests; documentary background sources; psychological, social environmental and educational factors [...](Parlett and Hamilton (1972) cited in Heywood and Montagu-Pollock (1977 p.245)).

Parlett and Hamilton's statements on the aims of "illuminative evaluation" were also quoted:

> Its primary concern is with description and interpretation rather than measurement and predication. It stands unambiguously within the alternative anthropological paradigm. The aims are to study the innovatory programme: how it operates; how it is influenced by the various school situations in which it is applied; what those directly concerned regard as its advantages and disadvantages; and how students' intellectual tastes and academic experiences are most affected. (Parlett and Hamilton (1972) cited in Heywood and Montagu-Pollock (1977, p. 246).

Heywood and Montagu-Pollock commented that:

> The significance of the illuminative approach is its focus on both the system and the process. Above all it focuses on practice. (1977, p.246)

When I commenced the evaluative work on teacher retention in 2002, I did not foresee that the research would in fact become, by 2006, an illuminative evaluation of instructional leadership. In retrospect however the stages of this research programme (see Table 1, chapter 1.3) can be seen to be in the tradition of "illuminative

evaluation" where progressive intake of data is analysed and re-analysed in order to bring further clarification to the questions arising at each stage of the research.

Burden (1998, p.16), in an overview of the development of illuminative evaluation from its initial use by Parlett and Hamilton (1972), states that:

> the basic idea was simple: evaluation studies should throw light on what was going on; traditional experimental designs did not allow this to happen.

He states (1998, p.16) that illuminative evaluation sets out to be:

> anti-positivist in its assumptions; thoroughly context-bound; multi-faceted in its perspectives; illustrative of the mismatch that often occurs between rhetoric and action; helpful in its construction of a recognized reality.

These elements are found, under different names, in other types of research including: interpretative research, participative inquiry, case study research and ethnography as well as Burden and Williams' (1996, 17) SPARE wheel model, about which Burden (1998, pp.17, 18) writes:

> The SPARE wheel model meets the requirements of illuminative evaluation on a number of counts. Its first point of emphasis is upon the *Setting* (situation or context) in which any project or innovation takes place. It is our contention that the more thoroughly the evaluator(s) can construct a 'rich-picture' of the setting, particularly with regard to its historical and political aspects, the more likely the final report will be to reflect the perceptions of the critical mass of 'stakeholders'. This does not mean that the final report should paint this picture in detail, but should draw from it as and where appropriate.

Burden (p.18) explains the different stages of research in the Spare Wheel model. These include the gathering of data, the analysis that he calls "reaction", rather than review, and the evaluation. He writes:

> In our early writings about SPARE wheel we referred at this point to a *review* process or even the gathering of results. In retrospect it feels more appropriate to follow action with *Reaction*. Basically, what do the participants think and feel about what is going on? What is their level of involvement and commitment to the success of the project? Where do they see its strengths and weaknesses lying? By taking this kind of approach we are able to provide another surface to the prism through which we are trying to make sense of what we see and what we hear. The final aspect of our model is the very process of *Evaluation* itself, by which we mean the placing of value upon our findings and presenting them in a way, which we consider will be helpful to those who must decide on what should happen next.

Burden, p.18) also identifies the difficulties that face researchers who attempt illuminative evaluation:

> One big problem for any researchers attempting to break out of their positivist chains is that they also have to give up the security that is provided by traditional experimental and quasi-experimental designs. In many respects taking an illuminative approach can be akin to flying by the seat of one's pants. Taking an ethnographic approach for example can literally involve gathering a large amount of data without having the faintest idea what you're looking for. Insights are supposed to gradually emerge or (if you're lucky) leap out at you from the various kinds of data that you collect. Thus, the emphasis is shifted from the setting up of the experimental design and sampling procedures to the quicksand of data analysis. Many naive researchers, in their delight at the apparent freedom afforded by post- positivist approaches, have floundered and sunk when faced with the problems of how to make sense of their data and how to present this in a way that an audience of stakeholders and other interested parties will find credible and possibly even useful. For here is the qualitative researcher's dilemma; unless the outcome of an illuminative evaluation meets those criteria, it can hardly be said to be illuminative.

What became clear in the review of illuminative evaluation was the importance of a suitable procedure for data analysis. This was found in grounded theory.

### 1.2.3 Grounded theory

Grounded theory, a methodology in which theory is developed from data, was identified by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in contrast to "logico-deductive" theories (Dick, 2005). A useful overview of the development of grounded theory is given by Dick (2005) who notes that subsequently, Glaser and Strauss adopted different approaches to the theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Glaser, 1992, 1998). Dick (2005), having stated his preference for Glaser's approach, outlines the methodology: data are gathered from observation, conversation and/or interview; a comparison is made between each set of data to allow for identification of categories; memos are written by the researcher for himself/herself (to assist memory) as part of the coding of the categories until saturation occurs. Meanwhile theory emerges on a continuous basis to be considered by the researcher. The review of literature in an emerging, grounded theory study is different from that in other studies as Dick (2005) shows. He makes a distinction between the place of literature in emergent, grounded theory studies and traditional research studies since in the former, he advises, literature should be accessed *"as it becomes relevant"* (Dick, 2005, his italics). He also refers to Glaser's (1978) advice that wide, general reading in the area of research should be undertaken in order to avoid any prejudice to the initial data analysis.

Arksey and Knight (1999 p.162) note that grounded theory:

> provides a common methodological framework for qualitative research. Whether grounded theory is actually used as much as it is referred to is another matter. It may well be that some, but not all of its elements are used. Essentially, the development of grounded theory involves constantly searching, comparing and interrogating the first few transcripts to establish analytical categories that address the research questions, that are mindful of the research literature, and which will allow the greatest amount of the data to be coded without either forcing them into categories or having categories that are so sprawling to be virtually meaningless.

Giving an example of the indexing (coding) procedure, they review possible procedures for analysis of data, including the use of software, and conclude, "for many small-scale research projects manual indexing will be sufficient and speedier" (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.163).

### 1.2.4 Data analysis procedures used in this research

Although I had not yet recognised that the research I was undertaking was illuminative evaluation, I decided initially on a qualitative methodology approach. I recognised that subsequently some quantitative tools might be used if appropriate. The interview method was chosen as a means of obtaining data on teacher retention in Texas. I had already used this method in previous research into teacher induction (M.St. 1996) and was aware of the need for careful procedures (Arksey and Knight, 1999; Coleman and Briggs, 2002; Bell, 1999; Munn and Drever, 1990), which took account of bias, subjectivity and ethical considerations.

I chose to use a tape recorder for the interviews in 2002 in Texas and continued its use in subsequent interviews in 2004 and 2006/2007. I also took notes during the interviews to ensure that a "back up" was available if the tape failed, and made an initial draft of the main points immediately after each interview. This ensured that I was able to incorporate any queries into the next interview and in that sense the comparison procedure, a necessary stage in grounded theory procedure, was implemented. A full transcription was made later. During the course of the research programme, I became aware of different views on the use of tape recorders and transcription.

Dick (2005) modifies Glaser's (1992) opinion that neither tape recorders should be used nor full transcriptions made, stating that if a tape recorder is used then notes taken by the interviewer during the interview will suffice rather than a full transcription. Those notes will be used during the subsequent analysis of the tapes. Although I accept that a full transcription is time consuming, it does allow for all the data to be considered initially and as in the case of this thesis, material not considered immediately relevant was available for subsequent re-analysis. Thus interesting comments on instructional leadership in the 2002 interviews became crucial to the development of the study in 2006.

### 1.3 From retention to instructional leadership - a history

Having first decided to develop Heywood's exploratory research into teacher retention in Ireland and Texas, I re-analysed Heywood's data from his exploratory interviews in 2001. The data was in the form of audiotapes together with some references to teacher motivation (Evans: 1998,1999; Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman: 1959). In Heywood's two-page summary of the audiotapes, he drew attention, as did Evans (1998, pp. 36,37) to the possible relevance of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation. My re-analysis also showed the relevance of Herzberg's two-factor theory, but there seemed to be other aspects including leadership and gender, which deserved further investigation.

In March 2002 Dr Mayo, as a guest of Professor Heywood, visited Ireland when I had the opportunity to discuss the proposed research with her as mentioned earlier (chapter 1.1) She invited me to Nacogdoches to progress the comparative exploratory studies in teacher retention. It was essential to ascertain what questions should be asked in a later and larger comparative study if that could be financed. She agreed to arrange for me to meet principals in schools located between Nacogdoches and Houston on the eastern border of Texas. I understood that the sample, which would be selected by her colleagues in the Department of Education, Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas, was biased just as Heywood's sample had been biased. (The Irish sample 2001 was drawn from former students and colleagues of Heywood). During the visit, I would be able to talk with University teachers and school superintendents about the problem of teacher retention

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Teacher Retention-comparative study** | | |
| **2001** | **1** | Exploratory interviews post-primary principals in Ireland (Heywood). |
| **2001/2002** | **2** | a) Re-analysis of data by the author.<br>b) Exploratory interviews - principals in Texas (Swan, Heywood and Mayo).<br>"Instructional leadership" was identified as an interesting element during the interviews and principals were asked for an explanation.<br>*(The Texan principals claimed not to have retention problems in their schools, which was a different pattern of retention from reported US pattern).* |
| **2002 – 2003** | **3** | Literature review on teacher retention and related topics accompanied this work. |
| **2003-2005** | **4** | Writing up the report published in EFEA (European Forum on Educational Administration) 2005. |
| **Culture, Leadership** | | |
| **2003 -2005** | **5** | The author, who continued to investigate why the retention pattern was different in Ireland, where there was apparently "no retention issue", was inspired by the literature and by the interviews, to look at culture and leadership. Instructional leadership was identified as an interesting element in the Texan interviews, 2002. Texan principals claimed to have no retention problems in their schools unlike other parts of Texas and USA. This was an unexpected response in the light of the initial conversations between Heywood and Mayo, Chapter 1.1, p. 2. |
| **2004** | **6** | Exploratory Interviews with teachers in Ireland. The retention issue was examined with teachers but culture and instructional leadership factors were examined too as interesting and possibly significant in identifying differences in retention patterns. Were there elements of "instructional leadership" in Ireland as Texan principals also claimed not to have retention problem? |
| **2003 – 2005** | **7** | Literature review on culture and leadership accompanied this work. Ministerial Statement 2004 on leadership in schools. |
| **2005** | **8** | *Moratorium on research 2005 to 2006* NAPD (National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals) statement. |
| **Instructional Leadership**<br>*(becomes main focus 2006-2008)* | | |
| **2006/2008** | **9** | Exploratory studies in instructional leadership commenced, using three-pronged approach: interviews, questionnaires and literature review focused on instructional leadership. |
| **2006/2007** | **10** | 1) Interviews: educator, NAPD member, Professor Heywood, Irish post-primary principals (chapter 7).<br>2) Questionnaire to teachers 2007 attending course in Sligo education centre<br>3) Literature review 2006-2008 (chapter 6)<br>Preparation for discussion with NAPD executive. |
| **2007/2009** | **11** | Questionnaire for teachers in 2008 attending Trinity College Dublin followed by invitation to do action research |
| **2009** | **12** | Questionnaire for post-primary principals and deputy-principals: findings to be shared with interested parties Chapters 8,9,10 |
| **2009** | **13** | Final Report. |

**TABLE 1. Timeline: The illuminative evaluation research (2002-2009) with some explanatory comments**

I knew that Dr Mayo, who had been president of the Texan division of The Association of Teacher Educators during this period, was very familiar with education in Texas. She subsequently provided me with some relevant published material.

The literature study that I commenced in April 2002 in preparation for the visit to East Texas was intended to look at a whole range of factors that might influence teacher retention. Although it had become clear from Heywood's data that a teacher retention problem (in terms of teachers leaving teaching within five years of entry to the profession) did not exist in Ireland, it was also clear, as would be stated in the Country Background Report (CBR, 2003) which was prepared for the Organisation for Economic and Cultural Development (OECD, 2005), that little was known about it. Another problem, as reported by the Irish principals, was related to school leadership. How could those teachers be motivated who had no alternative but to stay in their schools despite their lack of enthusiasm for teaching?

In November 2002 I went to Texas for one week to conduct the interviews with the Texan principals as arranged by Dr Mayo's colleagues. Professor Heywood who was already in the US came to Nacogdoches, sat in on the interviews and visited the schools. Dr Mayo, who introduced me to members of the Department of Education of Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, also brought me to several functions in the University. She sat in on one interview and made herself available for discussion each evening, following the day's interviews.

The initial analysis of the data, which immediately followed each interview, showed that the Texan principals used the term "instructional leadership" very frequently in response to the questions about retention. They were therefore pressed to explain what they meant by the term and its relevance to retention. The Texan principals claimed no less than the Irish principals, that they had many problems in their schools but stated that they could solve those problems, which included teacher retention problems, through the use of instructional leadership. The fact that the Texan principals' stated aim for their schools was to have optimum teaching and learning, where all children had the opportunity to learn well in a happy environment, was important. These were very large schools by Irish standards with a wide range of ability and socio-economic background.

Some Texan principals referred to their work with the immigrants from Central America with whom they worked to achieve success in the mandatory annual tests. This was a particularly difficult task when the student was already fifteen or sixteen years old and having had little formal education.

On return to Ireland I undertook a detailed evaluation of these interviews, according to the methodology described in chapter 1.2 and chapter 2.1, and in tandem continued the literature review on teacher retention both in Ireland and in Texas. At this stage I had every intention of pursuing the exploration of teacher retention issues. The next step in this exploration was to be interviews with teachers in Ireland to ascertain their views on teacher retention in preparation for a wider and larger study of teacher retention issues both in Ireland and Texas. The comparative nature of the studies appealed to me, as there is value in considering issues from different points of view, a necessary step in any rigorous research programme. The literature review on teacher retention provided further information on the relevant themes arising. A summary of the literature review was given in a paper (appendix B) published in a Bulletin of the European Forum on Educational Administration (EFEA). It read:

> From the general review of literature a number of issues were identified as relevant to the current research including school staffing problems (teacher recruitment, shortage, turnover and retention), teachers as professional educators within new models of schools suited to the twenty first century, teacher attitudes to change, teacher motivation, organisational analysis and leadership. Since the initial hypothesis had been based on Herzberg's theory, an enquiry was made into the application of that theory to educational matters.
> (Swan, Heywood and Mayo 2005, p.77)

The comparative studies in retention confirmed that there was no problem of retention in Ireland since teachers stayed in schools very often until retirement. More unexpectedly, no problem of retention was found in the sample of schools in Texas which was contrary to what Heywood believed was the case. This meant that the samples in Ireland and in Texas differed in their retention patterns from the US (including the state of Texas generally, as Dr Mayo had stated in the conversation with Professor Heywood) and the United Kingdom (UK). I wanted to ascertain the reasons for this but at this stage (2003/2004) domestic responsibilities precluded the long period away from home, which would have been required to pursue that question in Texas.

What was important was that the teacher retention study had shown that the Irish principals and the Texan principals who were interviewed responded very differently to the questions on retention. The Irish principals emphasised their managerial/administrative role while the Texan principals referred to their practice of instructional leadership. Since the Texan principals had claimed that, through the exercise of instructional leadership, teacher retention was no greater problem than any other problem, and all problems once identified could generally be solved, then it seemed sensible to find out more about their interpretation of instructional leadership. Details of the exploratory interviews (2001/2002 and 2004) are given in chapter 2 and chapter 3. Table 1 (chapter 1.3, p.10) shows the progress of the project between 2001/2002 and 2009 in its thirteen stages.

My attention was drawn particularly by the response of the Texas sample because of my experience over thirty years of work, as a teacher and deputy principal in a North Dublin post-primary school. That experience included the co-ordination of Higher Diploma in Education (H.Dip. Ed.) courses for trainee teachers in the school; my elective pursuit of courses in management and leadership which resulted in a qualitative research study of the induction of teachers, new to the school (M.St 1996); my involvement in professional bodies such as the vice principals' association of voluntary secondary schools (VSS); and my membership of a teacher trade union. Notwithstanding the fact that I was one of the interviewees and the only female in the Irish sample of 2001, it seemed to me that Heywood's data showed that the Irish principals were severely constrained in what they could do about optimum teaching and learning in the schools.

The "Texan scenario", as it is termed in this thesis described the common claim that the Texan principals worked with their teachers in classrooms in the interests of achieving optimum learning environments for their students who represented a wide range of abilities and social background in very large schools as compared with Irish post-primary schools. The Texan principals undertook regular "walk-thrus" as a matter of course into all classrooms, knew what both teachers and students were doing in the classrooms and beyond, and assisted and supported those teachers who were experiencing difficulties.

The information on the "Texan scenario" had emerged by accident during the interviews in Texas on teacher retention in reply to questions about the reasons for the particular pattern of retention in the sample schools. The visitors from Ireland, Professor Heywood and I, were aware that the sample had been selected by colleagues of Dr Mayo as "best practice" schools from which interesting and relevant ideas on teacher retention might be heard, but they did not know in advance that the principals would claim that there was no problem with retention due to the practice of instructional leadership.

The fact that both sets of interviewees, the Irish principals in 2001 and the Irish principals in 2002, reported no retention problem, despite their very different response to the questions, also suggested that I should find out more about the culture of teaching and education in both jurisdictions. It seemed possible that the different cultures would have an effect on work in the schools and particularly on leadership in schools. This view was partly based on my own experience of a change of domicile, early in my teaching career. Schein (2004, p.1), who stated that "dynamic processes of culture creation and management are the essence of leadership", concludes, "leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin". Culture can in my experience be a hindrance or a catalyst to the change, which had become an important aspect of educational leadership in the latter part of the twentieth century. Peters and Waterman's *"In Search of Excellence"* (1982) demonstrates this point in respect of industry. The fear of change can also prevent innovation. The problem for the Irish principals was that they had within their schools, teachers who were unhappy in teaching and for whom they could apparently do very little in terms of motivation. With that problem in mind, I was very interested to hear what the Texan principals had to say about their means of dealing with such teachers through the practice of instructional leadership. I was familiar with the term "instructional leadership" from conversations in 1992 with Mr Pat Diggins (Education Centre Drumcondra) concerning educational leadership in Irish schools. The term "instructional leadership" was used by Leader and Boldt (1994, p. 96) in their study of the workload of principals in second-level schools in Ireland, of which Diggins wrote:

> This study shows that Principals are so busy coping with the urgent business of running schools that they have little time or energy to become reflective visionaries and educational leaders.
> (Diggins in Leader and Boldt, 1994, back cover)

In a study of the instructional leadership of a primary school principal, Fitzmaurice (1997) offers an operational definition of the role. He states that:

- The instructional leader leads others in a process of change through school planning which involves: identification of instructional or curriculum areas that need change/improvement/innovation
- Preparation and planning process which prepares the ground by pooling resources, selection through consensus and designing a plan
- The implementation of change in the classroom
- Review and assessment

His detailed explanation of the role is quoted in full in chapter 5.4.2

The term "instructional leadership" was also used in the report of the National Convention on Education, 1993 (Coolahan, 2005), in the White Paper on Education, *Charting our Education Future* (Department of Education and Science, 1995) and the Department of Education and Science Circular (07/03) on appointments to posts of responsibility in primary schools. The Leadership Development for Schools team (LDS) which was created by the Department of Education and Science (DES) in 2002 to offer professional training in leadership for school leaders emphasises instructional leadership in its programme.

The data from the comparative exploratory interviews of 2001/2002 and the wide general reading between 2002/2004 which is a necessary part of grounded theory procedure (Dick, 2005) as noted earlier in this chapter (p.7), informed the interview schedule which was prepared for the interviews with Irish teachers in 2004. I had seen instructional leadership to be crucial to the Texan principals in their response to the questions about teacher retention in the interviews of 2002. Therefore I included a question on instructional leadership in the interview schedule, which was designed to find out the opinions of the Irish teachers on teacher retention in 2004.

In 2003 I had the opportunity to discuss the progress of the exploratory studies with Dr Mayo when she was a delegate at the Society for Management in Education in Ireland and the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (SMEI/BELMAS) inter-visitation in Ireland. I also received an invitation from another American delegate to return to West Texas (San Antonio) to meet

teacher educators there. The importance of instructional leadership in teacher retention seemed to be immense in the eyes of the Texan interviewees in 2002 – what the Texan teachers would say was to be discovered in a further interview stage subsequent to the Irish interviews, 2004. This stage did not take place for the reasons given below.

In my meetings with Professor Heywood during 2003 I was arguing that there was more to the retention issue than simply confirming the relevance of Herzberg's two-factor theory. For example: How did principals build environments which were encouraging and conducive to good learning? A principal would express this concisely at a later stage of the research (instructional leadership exploratory studies, Irish sample 2006) as "a happy school" which was reminiscent of comments by the Texan principals. Their use of the term "happy school" was used to describe schools where optimum teaching and learning was achieved. I checked what an interviewee meant when using such a phrase in the same way as I had pressed the Texan principals as to their use of the term "instructional leadership". In the spirit of illuminative evaluation, I always checked data from previous interviews and the literature in any relevant conversations (i.e.: informal discussions which can offer enlightenment and new ideas to be carried forward to more formal discussions and interviews).

I do not think that I deliberately set out to conduct an illuminative evaluation study of teacher retention. But in retrospect I see what I was doing to have been in that tradition. During 2002-2005 I tried to find out as much about the topic of teacher retention as possible. I therefore had conversations with a former Minister of Education in Ireland, Dr Michael Woods; Professor Coolahan, National University of Ireland (NUI) Maynooth; teachers in England and several post-primary principals in England, one of whom had had experience in both the state and private systems.

The issue of teacher retention as found in the responses in the comparative exploratory interviews of 2001/2002 had brought me to a point where during 2003/2005 I was considering its relationship not only with instructional leadership and culture but also with teaching and learning as the essential concerns of teachers and

principals. The desire to explore these relationships led me therefore to find out more about teacher motivation, leadership and culture as explained in chapter 2.

In searching for reasons why teacher retention patterns in both Ireland and the Texan sample differed from those in the UK, USA and Texas generally I had moved by 2003 to the second phase of the research programme, the reading of literature on instructional leadership (McEwan, 2003) and culture (Schein, 2004). This reading showed me that the practice of instructional leadership as claimed by the Texan interviewees, both principals and educators also had some significance for problems, other than teacher retention, associated with school leadership in Ireland (appendix C).

In 2005 my involvement in Rotary International in Ireland increased as I was elected District Secretary, a job that was compatible with the domestic responsibilities mentioned above. This appointment necessitated deferring the research programme for one year (2005-2006). A further six months extension was granted due to the aforementioned domestic reasons in 2006. However finance aside the domestic responsibilities meant that it was unlikely that I could go to Texas for three months to undertake firstly the second half of the second phase of the exploratory studies (i.e.: the interviews with teachers in East Texas); secondly to try to find out more about instructional leadership as practised by the Texan sample of principals; and thirdly to learn more about the practice of other principals in Texas for whom teacher retention was reported in the documents which Dr Mayo gave to me as mentioned in Swan, Heywood and Mayo (2005) to be a problem.

Meanwhile in 2005 a political development confirmed my view, which had been developing between 2003 and 2004, namely that instructional leadership deserved greater attention in terms of stringent research in Ireland.

The event was the publication by National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) in 2005 of a policy document that their leaders discussed with the then Minister of Education and Science.

The submission to DES, from NAPD, stated:

> The core activity of a school is teaching and learning and yet the administrative workload is a serious impediment to the Principal and Deputy Principal being able to act as instructional leader
> (NAPD, 2005)

and identified the way forward as "instructional leadership". In 2004, the then Minister for Education and Science had stated at the NAPD Conference that Principals were to be "leaders of education", not administrators. As stated above, the term had been used previously in government documents and several research studies (Leader and Boldt, 1994; Fitzmaurice, 1997; Hackett, 1996; Kelleher, 1997).

It was clear to me that a major study of various aspects of instructional leadership in Ireland was required and that I had already by chance set out on that road. The leadership types as they emerged during this illuminative study between 2002 and 2009 are listed in the appendices (appendix C). In 2006 I decided that I must undertake a literature review, focused on instructional leadership. This had already been one theme in my reading during 2003/2005 as it had been found to be important during the course of the interviews in Texas in 2002. I would concurrently undertake interviews with principals in Ireland (Irish sample in 2006) in order to find out their views of instructional leadership. These would be exploratory studies leading to a major survey of principals in Ireland as to the practice of instructional leadership. I also hoped to undertake subsequently a survey of teachers in Ireland to ascertain their response to instructional leadership. The data from the 2004 teacher interviews had already provided me with the views of teachers on instructional leadership and suggested areas to be examined in larger surveys. Two years later, instructional leadership was discussed further and in the latter case practised, in the spirit of illuminative evaluation, by teachers participating in the in-service course in instructional leadership organised by the Division of In-Service Education of Trinity College Dublin (Sligo Education Centre, 2007 and Trinity College Dublin, 2008). Due to time constraints in 2008 the large survey of teachers was not undertaken. The survey of Irish principals was conducted in January 2009 following a pilot study in December 2008.

## 1.4 Organisation of thesis

The exploratory studies on teacher retention undertaken in 2001, 2002 and 2004, which were to be an important source of data when the focus of this thesis became instructional leadership in 2006, are described briefly in chapters 2 and 3.

# CHAPTER 2

# COMPARATIVE EXPLORATORY STUDIES IN TEACHER RETENTION IN IRELAND (2001) AND TEXAS (2002)


## Abstract

In this chapter the author describes the exploratory comparative research studies of teacher retention, 2001/2002. The origin of the study, methodology and findings are presented. The data relating to instructional leadership are presented, as that would be very important when the focus of the study became instructional leadership in 2006. The contrast between the replies of the two samples, the interviewees in Ireland and the interviewees in Texas in 2002, influenced the course of the research 2002-2005 as the author was looking for reasons for the contrasting opinions. The data on culture and teacher motivation from that stage of the research are presented. The next stage of the research is identified as being the interviews with teachers in Ireland.


## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the comparative exploratory studies in teacher retention of 2001 in Ireland and of 2002 in Texas are briefly described, noting where appropriate their relevance to instructional leadership. As stated in chapter 1, the first exploratory study was conducted by Heywood in Ireland during 2001; the second exploratory study was conducted by Swan in Texas, 2002. It is to be noted that bias existed in these exploratory studies for three reasons. Each participant in the Irish study had undertaken post-graduate research in Heywood's department and a member of the Department of Education in the local university selected each participant in the Texas survey. The author participated, as an interviewee, in the Irish survey. This meant that the author was aware of the questions in the 2001 survey before commencing the academic work following her decision to develop the work on teacher retention.

The outline of the 2001 and 2002 studies is given in this chapter because a key finding, relevant to this thesis, was that "the role of the principal as manager in Ireland [...] and instructional leader in Texas requires more investigation" (Swan, Heywood and Mayo, 2005).

When the report and subsequent joint paper was written, I did not envisage that I myself would investigate instructional leadership. When the focus of the research did become instructional leadership, the data from the exploratory studies were re-examined. Therefore in this chapter, I have focused on presenting the data, which relates to instructional leadership. Data relating to teaching and learning are also included as being aspects of school leadership (appendix C). How instructional leadership was found to relate to other forms of school leadership will be charted in subsequent chapters.

| **Interview Schedules: Topics included in "conversations" with interviewees** |
|---|
| **Table 1 Stage 1:** 2001 Exploratory interviews Ireland by Heywood |
| Why do teachers stay in teaching in your school? |
| Reasons for answer gave rise to conversation on teacher retention |
| Any other comments |
| **Table 1 Stage 2a: Re-analysis of the 2001 exploratory interviews by Swan** |
| **Table 1 Stage 2b:** 2002 Exploratory interviews Texas by Swan |
| Do teachers stay on in your school? |
| Answers in the affirmative followed by: |
| Why do teachers stay in teaching in your school? |
| Reasons for answer gave rise to conversation on teacher retention and other issues including instructional leadership: |
| What do you mean by instructional leadership? |
| What do you do as instructional leader? |
| Any other comments |

**TABLE 2. Interview schedules: Topics of "conversation" for exploratory interviews into teacher retention (2001/2002), relating to Table 1, stages 1.2a, 2b (chapter 1.3)**

The interviewees both in Ireland in 2001 and Texas in 2002 were very generous with their time and interested in not only giving very full answers to the open-ended questions but also speaking about their careers and related matters. They were keen to give their views on education generally and were very interested in the idea of comparative research. Although each interview was expected to take about one hour, it was often the case that interviewees had more relevant comments to make, so they were given that opportunity. The schedules for the relatively unstructured interviews are given in Table 2 above.

A summary with questions arising from the data concludes the chapter.

## 2. 2 Heywood's exploratory study in Ireland: Swan's re-analysis

### 2.2.1 The first exploratory survey in 2001 conducted by Heywood

The first exploratory study consisted of non-structured interviews with the principals of five post-primary schools in Ireland, one of whom was an acting principal (myself), and with two other educators who due to the nature of their work could give a wider view of the matter. The first of these was the education officer for a religious order; the second was the director of an education centre. (Details of the schools, principals and managers and identifying codes, to be used later in the text, are set out in Table 3, chapter 2.2.2, p.23). Heywood in 2001 had tried to make his small sample as representative of the different types of school in the post-primary sector as possible (appendix A). At the same time he recognised the inherent bias in the sample. Each interview was taped, analysed immediately following the interview and then re-analysed by Heywood shortly after all the interviews were completed. As explained in chapter 1, I analysed and re-analysed the tapes in March 2002 and it is my analysis, which is given below.

### 2.2.2 Swan's re-analysis in 2002 of the first exploratory study in 2001.

The Irish interviewees seemed to see themselves as managers and administrators, rather than educational leaders. There was little reference to teaching and learning outcomes in classrooms.[1] Instead the interviewees expressed their concerns about the way in which schools were managed. They stated that there were many teachers who had taught for many years in the same school due largely to the seniority system[2]. This system in VSS had created a generation of teachers who had no prospect of achieving a post of responsibility. Staff-rooms were peopled by teachers who loved their jobs as well as teachers who would have preferred to work elsewhere, either in a different school or a different area of work. The interviewees recognised the difficulties of some teachers at different stages of their careers but did not offer a uniform package of solutions.

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[1] Teaching "simply goes on"– informal private conversation between post-primary principal and the author in 2003.

[2] The posts of responsibility system in some Irish post-primary schools (voluntary secondary schools) were allocated traditionally on the length of service in a school. Changes in this system have occurred in recent years (Education Act, Government of Ireland, 1998; Programme for Competiveness at Work (PCW) agreements, 1997).

| INTERVIEWEES | PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE | SCHOOL TYPE | LOCATION | NUMBER OF STUDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A principal | Teacher | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| B acting principal | Teacher | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| C principal | | Community* | Suburban | 900 |
| D principal | | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| E principal | | Vocational | Rural | 700 |
| F senior educator | Principal | | | |
| G senior educator | Principal abroad | | | |

**TABLE 3. IRELAND: "Conversations" with Irish principals in the interviews, 2001**

It appeared that ineffective teachers, although creating problems for the principals could continue to work because the principals believed it was not possible to take remedial action. There was a hint that male and female principals might exercise authority differently although the different response could have been due to other variables including former experience, training and type of school. Although the work of trade unions was recognised as having a positive influence in improving the "terms and conditions" of their members, the relationship between a principal and trade union could be difficult where a teacher's work was deemed ineffective. The involvement of parents where mentioned was seen as beneficial although the interviewees did not think that teachers would necessarily agree. The fact that no mention was made of instructional leadership confirms in retrospect the finding that there were few references to teaching and learning in the interviews. It appears that the post-primary principals were unfamiliar with the official documents published in Ireland during the nineteen-nineties, which referred to instructional leadership. These documents are listed in chapter 1. 3, p. 15.

While re-analysing the data from the exploratory studies of 2001, the author was aware of the possible effects of gender[3], temperament and attitude on the answers of the interviewees apart from the obvious differences between schools already described in the author's earlier research (Swan, 1996).

The author noted from the conversations with the Irish principals that whereas teacher retention was not identified as a problem, there were many other challenges for them in the daily management of their schools and motivating their staff. All the interviewees regretted the lack of mandatory in-service training and professional development. In preparation for the interviews in Texas, topics that were identified in 2002, in the re-analysis of data of the Irish sample of 2001 as seeming to have particular bearing on teacher retention and which required further investigation were included in the interview schedule prepared for the Texan study.

**2.3 Swan's exploratory study in Texas in 2002**

2.3.1 The second exploratory study conducted by Swan in 2002.

The second exploratory study took place in November 2002 when the author undertook non-structured interviews in East Texas with the principals of six post-primary schools (two high schools and four middle schools), an assistant superintendent of a school district and a university educator responsible for training courses for prospective principals. Both the assistant superintendent and the university educator had had experience of principalship in high schools in Texas. Of the eight interviews, six were face to face, and the other two were by telephone. (Details of the participants with identifying code are set out in Table 4, chapter 2.3.2, and p.26).

The author analysed and re-analysed the tapes, which included the two telephone interviews following the same procedures as used for the analysis of the Irish tapes. The interviews, having been taped, were transcribed immediately after the interview so that any items, which required clarification, could be followed up in subsequent interviews.

[3] The responses of male and female principals to teacher retention; the differences in teacher retention rates between male and female teachers

A simple method of sorting and coding the data was selected whereby the tapes were transcribed for a second time before the transcript of each interview was checked for distinct points relating to teacher retention. These points were noted down before an attempt was made to pair them with similar points in other interviews. The list of points was then examined again to produce a shorter list of main topic headings. A similar method is described in Coleman and Briggs (2002: p. 272) who refer to a study described by Arksey and Knight (1999, p.165) of 178 teachers who were asked if they saw teaching as a profession.

Although the questions put to each group of interviewees in individual interviews, first in Ireland and then in Texas, were similar, based on the opening question in the Irish survey "Why do teachers stay on in teaching?" the answers from members of each group were very different. For the sake of clarity for the interviewer from Ireland, each interviewee in Texas was asked a preliminary question, "Do teachers stay in teaching?" This question was then followed by "Why do teachers stay on in teaching?" (Table 2, chapter 2.1,p.21)

### 2.3.2 Analysis of the second exploratory study 2002

The analysis of the data in 2002 revealed that the response of the Texan principals was very different from that of the Irish principals, although the questions were the same. As mentioned in chapter 1 and fully explained in chapter 3, the data were re-examined in 2006 in relation to the work of both sets of principals as school leaders. It will be seen that whereas the Irish principals talked about management, the Texan principals talked about instructional leadership. The Texan principals and educators claimed to be instructional leaders in their schools and referred frequently to their experience in the classroom. The Texan interviewees suggested that many teachers were exhilarated by the job of teaching. Where teachers did leave the profession or a particular school or school district, there were many reasons for their departure apart from financial considerations. The interviewees stressed the importance of support at every stage of a teacher's career. Teachers were seen as lifelong learners who would benefit from professional appraisal by their principals and deputy principals. Problems did exist for the interviewees in the workplace but solutions could be found

as in the case of ineffective teachers for whom non-renewal of contracts had to be a last resort.

| INTERVIEWEES | PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE | Interview by telephone | SCHOOL TYPE | LOCATION | STUDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H Principal | Pre-appointment training for principalship | ** | Middle (13-15) | Urban | 1150 |
| J Assistant superintendent | | | Junior high schools, middle schools and high schools | Town<br><br>(District office) | 6000 |
| K principal | Teacher in another district<br><br>Pre-appointment training for principalship | | High (14-18) | Town | 1850 |
| L principal | Teacher in high school, junior high Assistant principal<br><br>Pre-appointment training for principalship | | Junior high (12-14) | Urban | 1300 |
| M principal | Teacher high school, middle school assistant principal | | Middle (13-15) | Town | 980 |
| N associate principal | Teacher<br>At home (family)<br>Returned to teaching | | Middle (13-15) | Town | 1865 |
| O senior educator | Principal in another state | | University | | Responsibility for teacher training |
| P principal | Teacher<br>Assistant principal<br>Principal in 2 high schools | ** | High (14-18) | Suburban<br>Now urban | 3000 |

**TABLE 4. TEXAS: "Conversations" with Texan principals in the interviews, 2002**
(** denotes interviews by telephone)

Teacher shortage had raised the status of teachers in the eyes of the general public. Despite the size of the schools, principals used various means, including delegation, to achieve their goals. Good relationships with teachers were seen as crucial to the well being of the school community. The mandatory annual students' tests, which were one aspect of the recently introduced "No Child Left Behind" Act 2002, were a major topic of formal conversation. The interviewees who were implementing the Act's clauses for the first time in the school year 2002/2003 generally welcomed the tests. It seemed that the tests provided challenge and identified the need for training for both teachers and students. However the principals stated that education went beyond the

passing of tests. Social change was acknowledged to have been huge over the preceding thirty years. Schools had been affected by these developments to the point where teachers were required to adopt new strategies and some found difficulties in accepting any type of change. The participation of parents in the education of their children was seen to be essential although in reality this did not occur for all children due to the prevailing social climate.

2.3.3 Instructional Leadership – as described by Texan sample.

The question of instructional leadership took on greater significance as the interviews proceeded. The Texan principals, who referred continually to themselves as instructional leaders and claimed that they could therefore deal with teacher retention and other problems, were questioned closely on this topic by the author. She was familiar with instructional leadership from the use of the term in Ireland in the nineteen nineties as noted in chapter 1. 3 p. 14 and discussed further in chapter 3. Interviewee (H) spoke of instructional leaders applying theory to practice, (J) saw them as ensuring balance in the classroom, success for all and introducing new methodology when appropriate. (K) said instructional leaders were the key to success. She described working in a classroom dealing with curriculum issues. Interviewee (M) linked instructional leadership with working towards positive relationships between principal and teachers, teachers and students in a close family atmosphere. All the interviewees, having stated that as principals they were instructional leaders, acknowledged their previous work as teachers. They continued to see themselves as teachers and lifelong learners. Their comments were in line with (P)'s definition who saw instructional leaders as curriculum leaders with a full understanding of curriculum/instructional strategies in the classroom, acting as curriculum/instructional/campus leaders and observing teachers in the classroom. The queries on instructional leadership led on to a discussion of the distinction between instructional leadership and educational leadership. (P) said that educational leaders, who were required at district level, would have a background in instructional leadership in school as well as an ability to see the "big picture" at national level. She emphasised that the main task of the school was teaching and learning.

2.3.4 Principalship in Texas in relation to principalship in Ireland as re-analysed in 2002

The exploratory studies provided a picture of principalship in Texas, which was very different from principalship in Ireland. In the summary below the leadership practice of the Irish principals is noted in italics beside the comments of the Texan principals as to their practice of instructional leadership. (Interestingly the same topics came up in the "conversations" during the interviews in both jurisdictions):

- Teachers were exhilarated by the job of teaching *(Not always)*
- Support is essential at every stage of career *(Yes but how?)*
- Teachers are lifelong learners *(Not necessarily)*
- Teachers benefit from professional appraisal by principal or deputy principal *(Not applicable or not required therefore it does not happen.)*
- Good relations between principal and teachers are essential to well-being of whole school community *(Not always in practice)*
- Delegation in order to achieve goals is essential in large schools *(Not always)*
- Experience in classroom is frequently mentioned *(No)*
- Ineffective teacher could be helped (non-renewal of contracts is a last resort) *(Not applicable or not required therefore it does not happen.)*
- Walk-thrus are an important part of principal's job *(No)*
- Work in classroom with teacher is an important part of principal's job *(No)*
- Annual tests of students are welcomed as these provided challenge and need for training for both students and teachers *(Not applicable)*
- Social change, huge over past thirty years, required new strategies in teaching (not all teachers could adapt) *(How can one change in the light of posts of responsibility (POR) constraints?)*
- Parental participation is essential but not always available to children in changed social climate *(Traditionally parents have not been seen as a resource in Irish post-primary schools)*
- Teachers did leave on occasion for many different reasons *(Teachers stayed on in schools but were not necessarily happy)*

- Problems did exist but could be overcome through use of instructional leadership *(No mention of instructional leadership; problems were frequently difficult to solve)*
- Support for principal both within and outside school *(Not necessarily)*
- Professional courses, although vital, are regrettably not mandatory *(Not mandatory)*

2.3.5 Findings on practice of instructional leadership from the "general reading" (2002) and the exploratory interviews

It had become clear that instructional leadership would have to be taken into account in any further comparative work on teacher retention. The author was not only reading widely on the subject of teacher retention (appendix B) but also as advised for work involving grounded theory studies (chapter 1.2, p. 7), reading material on other emerging data, which arose from the "conversations" in the interviews. One such example relates to ineffective teachers. Both the Irish and Texan principals spoke with concern about the problem of ineffective teachers. Since the Irish principals stated that they were unable to address this difficulty, the author therefore read literature, published either in the UK or Ireland, pertaining to ineffective teachers. She found that the belief of the Irish principals "that nothing can be done" about the ineffective teacher may be incorrect[4]. Fidler and Atton refer to a similar belief in the UK as being "a myth" (1999: p. xi). In their experience, procedures, which they outline, are available in the UK for dealing with these matters[5]. They note the importance of staff selection, suggesting that it is "perhaps the most crucial stage in staff management" (p.13)[6]. Like Evans (1999), they refer to the importance of fit between the individual and the job (1999, p. 14).

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[4] It appears that action can be taken provided procedures stated in employment law are adhered to (Glendinning: 1999, p. 106) but the will may not be there on the part of the principal who would prefer to give the teacher a further chance or avoid hassle.

[5] The Revised Outline Capability Procedure for Teachers (DfEE 1997b) changes regulations on early retirement and shows lower tolerance of poor performance, cited by Fidler and Atton (1999: p.4).

[6] Fidler and Atton's work, which identified weak management as a cause of poor performance, is also discussed by Wragg, Haynes, Wragg and Chamberlin (2000).

Fidler and Atton also note that induction is frequently associated with the first appointment (p. 14) although the need for induction for teachers new to a school at any stage of their careers was noted by the author (Swan, 1996).

The marked difference between the response of the Irish interviewees in 2001 and the Texan interviewees appeared to have some huge significance for principals, teachers and students in post-primary schools in Ireland. Whereas the Irish sample could only identify the problems, common to schools in both jurisdictions, the Texan principals claimed, as instructional leaders, that they had the ability to solve them (appendix B).

In terms of this thesis the comments made on school leadership, instructional leadership, and teaching and learning by the Irish and Texan principals are briefly discussed below. The data from the Irish study provided some evidence that Herzberg's satisfiers could be developed in the teachers by principals who were sensitive to their needs as is explained by Swan, Heywood and Mayo (2005), reproduced in the appendices (appendix B). The question, as to how principals in the Irish sample in 2001 might show and practice such sensitivity, was left unanswered. The Irish principals who described themselves as managers and administrators voiced current concerns. The role of the principal and management appeared crucial in the retention of teachers. (E) mentioned the need to find out what teachers want to do in their work, (B) spoke of the need to involve teachers in school life. All were concerned about the plight of weak teachers not only from the point of view of the students but also for the well being of those teachers.

It appeared that hours were spent working out solutions to immediate problems such as supervision of classes for absent teachers, discipline and administrative (secretarial) matters. There was in all the interviews a desire for greater resources in order that teachers could be given opportunities to become better at their craft and extended professionals. The Irish principals identified a group of teachers who neither enjoyed teaching nor had the courage to move. Those teachers became therefore an obstacle to change and a problem for principals in regards to the students' rightful expectations of good teachers. But the principals did not know what to do about them.

When the Herzberg factors were applied to the comments of the Texan sample, some evidence was found that teachers stayed on in schools due to motivators and satisfiers. There was no suggestion that teacher attrition was greater in areas of economic disadvantage. Although neither recruitment nor retention was stated by the principals to be a problem in the schools within the study, they all spoke of the enthusiasm of teachers, who stayed on until retirement, both for their subject and for the well being of the "kids". Other reasons given were retirement prospects and family circumstances. Since the retirees were expected to return to teach part-time, there was no suggestion that they were marking time until retirement. Family circumstances were mentioned alongside the love of teaching as reasons for staying in a district and an impression of the importance of community roots was given. Principals also referred to the importance of ownership and involvement in decision-making by teachers. What was apparent from the interviews was the importance of choice for teachers in the sample schools. They did not have to remain in subject areas or schools which were incompatible; a change of subject area within the school, a change to another level school or to another district were all possibilities and measures which these principals as instructional leaders had undertaken for their teachers. In each school within the sample, provision was made for new teachers, in terms of induction and staff development. These measures appeared to be beneficial insofar as their principals could claim they did not have problems in terms of teacher retention. But none of these possibilities are open to teachers in Ireland according to the Irish principals in 2001.

The Texan principals were also able to describe how they dealt with struggling or ineffective teachers. Where a problem had been identified by classroom observations and "walkthrus", the principal offered help to those teachers who were experiencing difficulties, in terms of one-to-one consultation and the "Growth Plan". If these measures failed, the principals would go for non-renewal of contracts providing all procedures had been fair and documented. Thus both teachers and their principals, between whom a close bond often existed, had choice. This contrasts with the comments of the Irish principals who seemed to suggest little could be done for ineffective and weak teachers. The role of instructional leader as described by the Texan principals was linked to their ability to take remedial action in the case of struggling teachers.

Generally they worked with their teachers and students in the classrooms. Where the size of the school prevented daily contact, these duties were delegated to their assistant principals and/or directors of instruction.

2.3.6 Issues for investigation arising from the exploratory studies 2001/2002 (other than teacher retention)

The exploratory studies raised questions and issues deserving future research. These included: the aims of education in both areas, particularly in terms of the relationship between its philosophy and implementation; the role of the principal as instructional leader in Texas and manager in Ireland; the contrast between women teachers in Ireland who are reluctant to apply for principalship and the current situation in Texas where women teachers are keen to have such responsibility and as principals are very enthusiastic about their work; the effect (if any) of gender on the way principals do their work. Two issues that in the "conversations" were related to instructional leadership as practised by the Texan principals were also identified. These were ineffective teachers and teacher motivation.

In these exploratory studies a striking difference between the replies of the Irish principals and the Texan principals was seen in terms of school leadership. Since the Texan principals continually referred to instructional leadership, the author read more about it between 2002 and 2004 knowing that Fitzmaurice (1997) had found the literature to be confused. The Texan principals, who all had a background in curriculum studies, brought curriculum and instruction together in their work, whereas in much of the literature a dichotomy was seen between the two elements as will be discussed more fully in chapter 6. An exception to that dichotomy is seen in Heywood's work, which relates instructional leadership to curriculum leadership as subsets of educational leadership. Heywood, having presented the idea of instructional leadership in 2000, developed the idea in an unpublished background paper for a Forum on Educational Leadership in Engineering held at the 2001 American Society for Engineering Education Conference, which he communicated to the author. He further clarified the ideas in publications in 2005 and 2008.

What was clear in Heywood's definition that had been developed over a number of years, was the link with teaching and learning which was also notable in the comments of the Texan principals. In an interview in 2007 (chapter 7), the author asked Heywood about the theory of instructional leadership. He explained that his ideas on instructional leadership were an operational framework rather than a theory. Subsequently the author learned that there are very few definitions of instructional leadership, which have both a theoretical and practical focus. Since the term "operational" is used in relation to the understanding of instructional leadership in the literature too, Bradley's (2004, p. 25) point is relevant here:

> An operational definition makes no claim to universal truth or acceptance. It simply states that for this school system, the definition has a specific meaning

Bradley (2004) notes that principals, who as instructional leaders, are expected to be leaders of teaching and learning, require knowledge of curriculum and instruction. He offers a definition of instructional leadership:

> instructional leadership is the implementation of curriculum. It refers to the learning activities inside the classroom and out, which are specifically designed to meet the goals and outcomes of the planned curriculum.

He defines the null curriculum as being that part of the planned curriculum, which is abandoned due to the "explosion of knowledge".

Other themes identified in the analysis of the interviews were the effect of change on schools, teaching and learning issues, relationship of leadership and management, teacher careers, teacher professionalism, the place of trade unions in education and gender issues. The author was struck particularly by two elements, which were to be constant themes in the ensuing research, initially focussed on teacher retention and then on instructional leadership (Table 1, chapter 1.3, p10). These were culture and leadership.

In regard to teacher retention the author, subsequent to the exploratory studies of 2001 and 2002, continued to search for reasons why teacher retention patterns in Ireland and in those schools represented by the Texan principals were different from those in Texas generally, the US and the UK.

The evidence from the Texan interviews was that they had no problems with teacher retention because they were instructional leaders. As such they claimed that they were able to support teachers throughout the stages of their careers (Huberman, 1993).

Data from the exploratory studies, in terms of instructional leadership, gave rise at that time to many questions including:

- What was the nature of "instructional leadership" by which the principals in Texas claimed to solve problems that the Irish principals also experienced but could not solve?
- What was the relationship (if any) between the practice of instructional leadership by the Texan principals and the operational framework for instructional leadership as identified by Heywood (2000a)?
- What was the relationship (if any) between the practice of instructional leadership by the Texan principals and the practice of instructional leadership as identified by Fitzmaurice (1997)?
- Was it possible that culture was the reason for the striking difference between the replies of the Irish and Texan principals in the 2001/2002 interviews?
- What was the relationship between "instructional leadership" and culture?

Another element was emerging at this time, namely teacher motivation. The Texan principals claimed that, as instructional leaders, they could make a difference to the experience of both teachers and students in the classroom. Since there can be no leadership without followers (Palestini, 2006), the relationship between principal and the teacher was already seen to be crucial. These two pieces of information led to the following questions:

- What part does principal leadership play in teacher motivation?
- What part does teacher motivation play in teacher retention?

Thus, teacher motivation, principal leadership and culture had emerged from the data as important topics to investigate in relation to teacher retention and these remained the focus of study until 2006.

The author at this time was preparing for the next stage in the research, which would be the exploratory interviews with teachers in Ireland, prior to interviews with teachers in Texas. In the section that follows the findings on motivation, leadership and culture identified from the data search are reviewed as they impacted on the questions to be asked in the next exploratory study in Ireland in 2004. As will be shown the data would be no less valuable when the focus of the study became instructional leadership in 2006.

## 2.4 Teacher motivation

From the small exploratory research in Ireland 2001, it was apparent that a distinction might be made between teachers who remained in schools because they were "good" teachers and those who felt that they had no other choice even at times of economic prosperity. Although this is an important possibility, it would be very difficult to investigate. Obtaining a sample of both types of teacher would be likely to pose many problems.

Data from the Texan sample suggested that a change in attitudes in teachers could be wrought in certain circumstances by principals who were instructional leaders. In the light of the work done by Nias (1981; 1989) and Evans (1998) on teachers *per se*, questions about what motivated good teachers to remain in teaching during times of economic well-being when other career opportunities were available, had to be followed up. Evans (1998, p.12), in her reappraisal of Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, found two components of job satisfaction: job comfort and job fulfilment. She noted, as did Sergiovanni (1968), that "there appears to be a link between Maslow's (1954) theory of human motivation and Herzberg's (1959) theory" whereby hygiene factors are lower order needs and satisfiers are higher order needs (Evans, 1998, p.12). Job comfort, as described by Evans, concerns lower order needs with which a teacher may be satisfied, and job fulfilment concerns higher order needs by which a teacher may be satisfied. The results of Evans' four qualitative studies (1998, p.47) concerning the attitudes of primary teachers to their work led her to the conclusion that Herzberg's

hygiene factors, which he had said only led to dissatisfaction when absent, could provide job comfort when present. She accepted entirely that those job comfort factors could not provide job fulfilment.
However these dimensions of comfort and fulfilment seem to suit the teaching situation better than Herzberg's satisfiers and dissatisfiers. Thus in the proposed study which was planned with Irish teachers, (Table 1, Stage 6, chapter 1.3, p10) questions relating to Herzberg's theory would be characterised in those two dimensions, job comfort and job fulfilment.

Another issue that would have to be investigated in both countries would be the extent to which principals could change the attitudes of teachers. This question had emerged during the conversations with the Texan principals as noted above. It is well understood in the literature of management that leaders can influence an organisation's culture in ways that can either enhance or impede change (Schein 2004, p.417).

**2.5 Leadership and Culture**

Culture, which is defined in this thesis as the behaviours and sets of rules as followed by groups at the macrocosmic level as well as the microcosmic level, is a powerful influence on the way things are done. As indicated in the previous section, principals can influence the culture of their school but the evidence from a comparative study shows that the culture in which a school exists is also important. National culture (cultural identity) is determined to a great extent by the history and political development of its people; local culture will be influenced by national culture as well as institutional culture (i.e. the culture of teaching). All of these cultural groups exert influence upon each other in an interplay, which is constantly changing. That some sub-groups may be more resistant to change than other sub-groups creates tension not only between them, but within the larger cultural group also. Since schools are not isolated communities, external social change will have an effect. Data from both exploratory studies showed this clearly.

Another cultural factor that also needs to be included because of its impact on change is the teacher's professional attitude. Evans (1998, p.182) has argued that "a

professional culture that is intended to foster high levels of morale, motivation and job satisfaction as widely as possible will be one that accommodates teacher diversity. Such a culture is one that reflects a stratified profession". Evans (1998, p.76) refers to Hoyle's (1975) description of "restricted and extended professionalism" as does Murray (2000, p.45). Murray then puts forward the ideal of schools as "self-directing learning organizations"(ibid. p. 48). Cohn and Kottkamp (1993, p.262) suggested that teacher retention requires more than "the recruitment and retention of enthusiastic individuals". They would argue that system and teachers must "undergo substantial change" (p. 262).

Related to a teacher's professional culture is the existence of a common culture of teaching which Cohn and Kottkamp (1993) described as conservative. Teachers on exchange visits feel "at home" when walking into a school, as nurses and doctors feel "at home" in a hospital or lawyers and barristers feel "at home" in courts of law. The terrain is familiar although cultural contexts will be seen, on closer inspection, to create differences[7]. It seems that teachers, by being teachers, have shared learning experiences, which result in an identifiable "culture of teaching". A picture of a common culture emerged clearly from the exploratory studies in which principals from different jurisdictions shared common experience but dealt with common problems differently.

From the exploratory studies and the review of motivation and culture, there remained a number of unanswered questions including the impact of leadership and teacher motivation on teacher retention. When these are related to the literature it becomes apparent that in any investigation of this kind the voices of the teachers must be heard (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993). In the exploratory studies the views of principals (albeit former teachers) had been heard in two jurisdictions; it was now quite clear that the voices of the teachers in those two jurisdictions should be heard on teacher retention.

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[7]The aims in education differ: in the USA President Bush stated: 'We give our teachers a great responsibility: *to shape* (author's italics) the minds and hopes of our children' in the message from the Secretary of Education in his annual report on teacher quality (2002: p. iii); in the Republic, President McAleese has stated that 'the school as part of that partnership of care for the growing child or young person, plays a crucial and potentially life-altering role' (Speech at School Culture and Ethos Conference 2000); Pring has written of education as 'a process whereby people are enabled to learn' (in Furlong and Monahan; 2000, p.5)

Leadership in schools demands an understanding of the "culture of teaching" as well as an understanding of the immediate culture of the school, the culture of the local community and the national culture. Using a phrase in the title of their paper "teachers go the extra mile"[8], Christ, van Rick, van Dick, Wagner, and Stellmacher (2003, p. 339) advocate, from their "exploration of organisational citizenship behaviour among school teachers" that principals "who want to foster helpful behaviours among the staff should promote team teaching". The creation of such a culture in the interests of teaching and learning is a further challenge to the principal. Both school principals and teachers, in their daily duties, work with young people towards a future of which they themselves do not have first hand experience. As Schein (2004, p. 393) writes "We basically do not know what the world of tomorrow will really be like". That the would-be teacher has already experienced schooldays as a pupil tends to emphasise the backward glance. Thus the roots of teaching are planted rather in the past than in the present. Tension exists immediately as their work concerns an unknown future. Whatever definition is given of culture, and there are many definitions[9], the fact remains that the future is a mystery and this has implications for leadership.

**2.6 Summary**

- The findings in the exploratory studies 2001/2002 were that the pattern of teacher retention in Ireland and the Texan sample was different from the pattern, which was reported in the rest of Texas, the USA and the UK.

- The response of the Texan principals was very different from those of the Irish principals in relationship to teacher retention and school leadership.

- The Irish principals described themselves as managers; the Texan principals described themselves as instructional leaders.

[8] 'Going the extra mile' was a phrase used by Texan assistant superintendent (J) in the interviews reported in this chapter.
[9] Bogdan and Biklen (1998, pp.28-30)

- Instructional leadership, as described by the Texan principals, allowed problems, common to both the Irish and the Texan principals to be solved.

- The data emerging from the exploratory interviews inspired the author to find out more about culture, school leadership and teacher motivation.

- Data emerging from these exploratory studies apart from that on teacher retention, gave information on other school matters including attitudes to change, trade unions, satisfaction and dissatisfaction with schools, and gender.

The exploratory studies to be conducted with teachers in Ireland (2004) and subsequently with teachers in Texas were prepared with all these issues in mind. The first of these planned studies, and the only one implemented (as briefly explained in chapter 1. 3) is described in Chapter 3.

# CHAPTER 3

# COMPARATIVE EXPLORATORY STUDIES IN TEACHER RETENTION IN IRELAND (2004)


## Abstract

In this chapter the author describes the first part of the second phase of interviews in 2004 relating to the exploratory comparative research studies of teacher retention, which had commenced in 2001/2002. The interviews with teachers in Ireland took place in 2004. The second part of that phase did not take place for reasons given at the end of this chapter. The data on culture and teacher motivation, which had emerged from the previous stage of the research and influenced the questions that were put to teachers, are presented. The data relating to instructional leadership emerging from the 2004 interviews are presented as that would be very important when the focus of the study became instructional leadership in 2006. The contrast between the replies of the two samples, the interviewees (post-primary principals) in Ireland 2001 and the interviewees (post-primary teachers) in Ireland in 2004 is noted.


## 3.1 Introduction

The exploratory interviews in Ireland (2004), whose part in the teacher retention studies has been explained in chapter 1, are described in this chapter.

## 3.2 Exploratory study with teachers in Ireland 2004

### 3.2.1 Exploratory interviews, 2004

The exploratory interviews were held with six post-primary teachers and one former post-primary teacher in Dublin during July and August 2004, as part of the still on-going research into factors influencing the retention of teachers in Ireland and Texas. Since the interviews had to be held during the summer holidays, the availability of teachers was restricted.

However, despite the small and biased sample, there was a wide range of experience among the seven interviewees (Table 5, chapter 3.2.1, p.41) who had responded to a

simple request[1] for volunteers for interviews during the summer holidays in 2004. Examples of late entry into the profession, experience in other sectors (e.g. primary), overseas experience, career break and retirement were found within this group. The schools represented in the sample were VSS and vocational education committee (VEC) schools. Neither community schools nor comprehensive schools teachers were represented in the sample.

| INTERVIEWEES | | PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE | SCHOOL TYPE | LOCATION | NUMBER OF STUDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q teacher | f | Teacher (H.Dip) - one previous school- voluntary secondary | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| R teacher | f | Teacher (H.Dip) – two schools- voluntary secondary- amalgamation | Communit y college | Rural | 700 |
| S teacher | m | Teacher (H.Dip) – VEC- voluntary secondary school<br><br>Currently on career break<br><br>to return or not? | Voluntary Secondary School | Suburban | 800 |
| T deputy principal post leaving certificate (PLC) college | f | Teacher (H.Dip) –VEC | PLC | Suburban | 400 |
| U recently retired teacher | m | Teacher- experience abroad – primary teaching<br><br>Voluntary secondary school | Voluntary secondary school | Suburban | 800 |
| V teacher | f | Late entry – initially worked in financial institution before H.Dip. Left voluntary secondary school where first employed | Voluntary secondary school | Suburban | 800 |
| W teacher | f | Teacher (H.Dip) in VSS-left to study law<br>returned to teaching in another VSS | Voluntary secondary school | Suburban | 600 |

**TABLE 5. IRELAND: Interviewee details, Irish teacher "conversations", 2004**

The two teachers who participated in the pilot study, held one month before the exploratory study took place, were from schools in the area and were interviewed in June 2004.

[1] Teachers, known to the author, in several schools were asked to find volunteers either from their own schools or nearby schools.

The pilot interviews and four of the six interviews were conducted in the author's house. Two interviewees requested to be interviewed in their homes. Data from the literature (2002/2004), as well as the data from the exploratory interviews (2001/2002), as indicated in the previous schedules, influenced the interview schedule (Table 2, chapter 2.1, p.21)

The loosely structured interviews were held to find out the teachers' opinions on "Why teachers stay in teaching?" and to find out if there was evidence of Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory or Evans' (1998, p.11) modifications of that theory at work in the experiences of the teachers. Each interviewee was asked to complete a brief questionnaire requiring factual details (gender, age group, history of career in teaching, other work experience, etc.). The main interview then commenced with a question concerning choice of career, to ascertain in the subsequent analysis if evidence existed of a relationship between the choice of teaching as a career and the decision either to remain a teacher or leave the profession. The next questions related to the interviewee's career in terms of training and experience, both in Ireland and elsewhere (if any); whether s/he liked the job; whether s/he had had to make decisions about leaving or staying in the profession; and whether or not s/he had considered applying for career breaks or PORs.

| **Interview Schedules: Topics included in "conversations" with interviewees** |
|---|
| **Table 1 Stage 6:** 2004 Exploratory interviews |
| Why did you become a teacher? |
| What training did you receive? |
| What experience of teaching in schools in Ireland? In what types of school? |
| What experience of teaching have you had outside Ireland? In what types of school? |
| Do you like teaching? |
| Why do you stay in teaching? |
| The 'Texan scenario' was fully explained before the final questions: |
| How would you feel about this practice in your school? |
| How would you feel about instructional leadership? |

**TABLE 6. Interview Schedules`; Topics for "conversation" for exploratory interviews into teacher retention (2004)**

Subsequent questions were based on material that had emerged from the interviews with principals in Ireland and Texas. The interviewees were requested to comment on the "Texan scenario" (Chapter 1.3), which was briefly explained by the author at that point of the interview. Since instructional leadership had emerged as such an important element in the Texan study, two questions were included in the interview schedule (Table 6, chapter 3.2.1, p.42) following a description of the "Texan scenario" as given in the glossary. The Texan principals had explained that their classroom visits were a very important part of their work as instructional leaders. The interviewees' thoughts on teacher professionalism, school leadership, the role of teacher trade unions, leadership and culture, were also sought since these were topics mentioned by interviewees in both Ireland and Texas in the 2001/2002 study.

Data were analysed using the same procedure as used for the interviews in the earlier studies (chapter 2.3.1, p.24). The seven interviewees were identified by letters Q, R, S, T, U, V, W (Table 5, chapter 3.2.1, p.41). Although the interview schedule was semi-structured to ensure that the interviewees did address the questions which were asked, the responses also gave other information regarding a teacher's life today.

### 3.3 Analysis of conversations

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

A summary of the priorities (shown by an asterisk) of the teachers during the conversations on teacher retention is listed in Table 7 (chapter 3.3.1, p.44) beneath their identification codes and beside the topics, which had emerged in the analysis.

The analysis of the data showed that teachers differ one from another, just as post-primary schools differ (Swan, 1996). The aims may be the same in terms of teaching an examination class, but the ways of doing it may vary.

The teachers who chose teaching because they wanted to teach did not necessarily have the same reasons for staying in teaching. (Q) unlike (U), mentioned good leadership as the reason for staying whereas (U) mentioned salary.

In relation to the trade unions, the two teachers (Q) and (R) who spoke most positively about their policies were least enthusiastic about the "Texan scenario". However their comments revealed two different reactions to that scenario.

| Topics | Respondents | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W |
| WHY TEACHERS CHOOSE TEACHING | | | | | | | |
| Want to teach | * | | | * | * | | * |
| No other options | | * | | | | | |
| 'By chance' | | | * | | | | |
| Decision to go into teaching later | | | | | | * | |
| Did consider other options later but stayed | | * | | | | | |
| Did consider other options and left and returned | | | | | | | * |
| WHY DO TEACHERS STAY IN TEACHING | | | | | | | |
| Enjoyment | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Security | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Salary (importance of) | | * | * | | * | | |
| No other option | | | | | | | |
| Good Leadership | * | * | | * | | * | * |
| Challenge | | * | | | | | * |
| WHY DO TEACHERS LEAVE | | | | | | | |
| Discipline | * | | | | | | * |
| Leadership | * | | | | | * | * |
| Lack of contentment | * | | | | | | |
| Dissatisfaction with school | | | | | | * | * |
| Lack of challenge | | | | | | | * |
| Lack of permanent positions | * | * | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | * | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | | |
| Trade Unions positive | * | * | | | | | |
| Negative | | | * | * | * | * | * |
| 'Texas Scenario' perhaps | | | * | | * | * | * |
| 'Texas Scenario' no | | * | | | | | |
| 'Texas Scenario' yes | | | | * | | | |
| DES Inspection no | | * | | | | | |
| DES Inspection yes | * | | * | * | * | * | * |
| Interest of students Paramount | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

**TABLE 7. IRELAND: Topics in "conversation" prioritised by Irish teachers, 2004**

Whereas (Q) simply dismissed the "Texan scenario" as unnecessary in a "happy school" and considered it would suggest a lack of trust in the teacher by the principal, she was prepared to teach in the presence of a Department of Education (DES) inspector. (R) was adamant that such practice should not occur. The classroom was her domain and neither principal nor DES inspector had a role there. It appeared that past experience played a part here as (R) revealed that her experience had been in schools led by authoritarian principals. This was interesting as the author had found in her study of induction that a teacher's early experience in first year teaching has an influence on his/her later attitudes and actions (Swan, 1996).

### 3.3.2 Satisfaction and dissatisfaction

The seven interviewees stated that they enjoyed working in the classroom, imparting their knowledge to students (which appeared to be more than delivering the examination syllabus) and involving themselves in, as well as observing, the interaction of students. As (R) stated: "All human life is there". Enjoyment of teachers in the classroom was matched by their satisfaction with their schools ((Q) (U) (S)). (Q) stated that she had experienced excellent leadership in both of the schools in which she had taught, was "extremely happy" and was not yet ready to move into management. For her security was more important[1] than salary: "no-one goes into teaching for the money". On further questioning, the security to which she referred was found to relate to good leadership. In a surprising statement she claimed that only 50% of her trainee teacher colleagues remained in teaching, due to discipline problems or lack of permanent positions. She doubted that she would be in teaching now (in her thirties) if she had not found a job in a school in which she was happy. During the interviews, the author noted that the use of the phrase "a happy school" was used by respondents to express total satisfaction. (Q) referred to one friend who after a number of years as a temporary teacher got a permanent position but then left teaching, as she was not happy in the school. This appeared to relate to the necessary fit between school and teacher (Evans: 1999, p.109) and the comments of the Texan principals who moved their teachers around in an attempt to build up each teacher's confidence and satisfaction. (S) also enjoyed teaching, having entered the profession "by chance". By this he meant that he had enjoyed his classroom experience during

[1]A Herzberg hygiene factor See Swan, Heywood and Mayo, 2005.

his H. Dip. Ed. Year. He took the course for the qualification rather than as a preparation for a career in teaching. However he gained satisfaction from working with the students, liked the school in which he worked as a trainee teacher and remained there. Having taken a career break in recent years, he now had to decide from a practical point of view whether to return to the school or not. The question was whether the satisfaction gained from being a teacher would outweigh reduced earnings.

Interviewee (R) had considered leaving teaching in her late twenties due to the uninspiring course material in her subject at that time, which had meant there was no challenge for her. Like (Q), she had not worked outside Ireland. Enjoyment was a factor for her too but at an earlier stage in her career she had needed more challenge. Considering, at the age of twenty-eight, a move out of teaching into legal studies, she had decided she was too old for a career change. Subsequently she had found teaching suited her other commitments well. Currently she has many younger friends among teacher colleagues in the school.

Compatibility between family and teaching was also mentioned by (S), (U), (V) and (W). (R) differed from both (Q) and (U) in her answers on salary. "Holidays", "time for self" were in no way substitutes for a salary which is lower than she would have hoped for and one whose level would, she felt, disappoint young teachers. If she were a young teacher now she felt she probably would leave the profession unless she had a permanent job. When on career break, she had not found working in another area a positive experience, as its structure was irritating to her. (This differed from the career break experience of (S) who had found his skills and training sought after in the "market place", which made the decision to return to teaching a difficult one). (R) found fulfilment working in the classroom, teaching students and wanting them all to do well in all their activities including examinations). She stated that she was not competitive as some teachers are in achieving high results. She illustrated this statement by quoting a teacher colleague "I got so many As, etc.".

Interviewee (U), unlike (Q), had had experience in the UK as well as teaching primary children immediately after leaving school. He had recently retired from a post-primary school in which he had taught for many years.

He spoke of enjoyment in the classroom and of financial security in relation to the needs of his family although he stated that money was not a factor beyond "earning a living". He thought that if he were a young teacher now he would probably remain in a school as a temporary teacher in the hope of getting a permanent position but did think the temporary teacher situation was demoralising for newly trained teachers[12].

Interviewee (W) having found her initial teaching job "below expectations" two years after her H.Dip. Ed. year[13] trained as a lawyer and worked in the UK. Having returned to Ireland in the mid-nineties, she had been successful in her application for a permanent position in a school where students were interested in academic studies. Asked whether she would have gone into law, if she had started in that type of school, she "could not honestly say". She now loves teaching and wonders whether her initial plan to stay only six or seven years while her children were in school will have to be changed in the light of her contentment. She has considered going into the inspectorate. Her enjoyment in school, like (Q), includes friendships and social activities.

In contrast interviewee (V), a late entrant to teaching, identified one reason for leaving a job which she enjoys: the staff room. She had experienced bullying as an older new teacher (30+yrs) in a staff room where there were many cliques. Her previous experience of working in a financial institution had led her to expect courtesy and support from colleagues. This she did not find in a school where many of the women teachers had gone immediately into teaching after getting their H. Dips. Ed. She is happy now in a different school where the ethos is supportive among the staff[14]. (V) found like (W) that teaching suited her life style when she had youngish children in post-primary school. She intends to remain in the classroom until she retires. Having had some years at home without earning a salary she is delighted with the salary and security. She did note however that young teachers need good salary levels, as her son in another job area "is catching up fast" on her current pay.

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[12] (W) mentioned changes in legislation, which give more rights to temporary teachers.
[13] (W) had taken a job in an urban VEC school where students' lack of interest and a need for "policing" in class, despite the good management structure in school, made her leave to study law. (It was the final year for taking up law articles without a law degree).
[14] (V)'s present school is a large boys' voluntary secondary school.

Although (U) had been involved in the middle management structure he had found it a distraction from his first love; which was classroom teaching. He suggested that the involvement in middle management structure without teaching duties might be better.

The teachers in the sample generally conveyed a love of teaching, which they stated was wider than the examination syllabi, and gained fulfilment from working with children. Their concerns were apparently focused on perceived lack of leadership, poor interpersonal relations and negative environments (e.g. staffrooms). Although salary levels were mentioned, they were not the prime reason for teacher attrition. At a time of economic prosperity and a wide choice in careers it was thought that teaching might not be an attractive career.

### 3.3.3 Instructional leadership

The questions on instructional leadership produced a variety of comments. The interviewees (S, U, V, T, W) who had had experience either of working in another job or in another country were prepared to consider[15] both instructional leadership and inspection. (T), now a deputy principal in a vocational school, stated that elements of these already existed in her school in relation to accountability and new legislation. Moreover if she did not make the teachers aware of such changes at formal meetings she would have failed in her duty[16]. There were echoes here it seemed of the Texan principals. (T)'s school had post leaving courses (PLC) catering for young adults and appeared pro-active both in adult education and in compensatory courses to combat disadvantage. (T) was interviewed as a former teacher who saw her present work as an extension of her work in the classroom. She missed teaching but had chosen to take up the challenge of over-seeing education in the school. Having taught in Africa, she was conscious of other cultures and their needs.

Interviewee (U's) experience in another country and another sector resulted in a similar response to questions on instructional leadership to (T) but different from (Q), whose experience was in Ireland alone. Referring to "the Texan scenario", which was explained in chapter 1.3, his answer was that "If this will lead to improvement for

[15] (W) said that a culture of teamwork would be needed for "the Texan scenario'. It would require a change in the function of the principal.
[16] (U) also thought a briefing should be given on new legislation at staff meetings.

students then so-be-it" (U). These were sentiments with which (S) agreed. However (Q) considered that such leadership, which appeared to mean a principal working closely with a teacher, would interfere with the professionalism of that teacher. For (Q), the principal's trust in her ability to teach and to manage a classroom was essential. However she saw the DES inspection in a different light, accepting that such inspection had the potential to be helpful. Therefore the question of inspection by the DES was ruled out by only one interviewee (R).

Interviewee (R's) preferred leadership style was "laissez-faire" which she herself had experienced early in her teaching career[17]when she was left alone in the classroom and expected to "get on with it". (R) was happy to sort all things pertaining to the students out in the classroom[18] where her discipline came from her teaching style and subject material. Challenge, for her, came through work in education outside the school. In relation to instructional leadership and inspections she went further than (Q) in stating that she would not want anyone with her in the classroom. Such a thought, for her, was horrific[19]. Improvements in the communication of the inspection procedures were advocated by (U) in order to allay the fears of teachers. Fairness in the implementation of changes such as instructional leadership and inspection were demanded so that a teacher's professionalism would not be undermined.

The response to the question on instructional leadership suggested that four of those teachers would accept such innovation if it was clearly explained to them. The views of the two teachers (Q) and (R), who were unenthusiastic about instructional leadership, were very important for various reasons. Unlike the other interviewees neither had worked outside Ireland. Both revealed the legacy of traditional teaching practice whereby the teacher was in sole control of the classroom.

However, at a later stage of the research during the literature review (chapter 6), it became clear that (R) in her comments on the relationship between discipline and teaching strategy had been describing an "instructional leadership" practice

[17] (R) said that that "laissez-faire leadership" would not suit all teachers.
[18] (R) thought beginning teachers would be shocked to be left on their own as she had been under "laissez-faire" leadership. She thought support should be given later in year to beginning teachers but not within classroom.
[19] (R's) views appeared to suggest the "king in the castle" classroom tradition (see glossary). The phrase was heard frequently by the author during the study (chapter 6.7.2. d and chapter 7. 2.5, p.127).

(Heywood, 2008) and the dynamic relationship between teacher and curriculum (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; Bradley, 2004).

### 3.3.4 Ineffective teachers

The teachers did note that there were teachers in the profession who did the absolute minimum. They hoped and thought that such teachers were a small minority. They distinguished those teachers from other teachers, who, although maintaining "a nine to four" day in school, "did do a good job in that time" (Q).

### 3.3.5 Trade unions

One difference between Ireland and Texas was that the latter was not a unionised state. The extent to which the existence or non-existence of trade unions influenced teacher retention was one possible avenue of research. Thus the opinions about the role of the teacher trade unions were sought from the Irish teachers.

The question referring to the role of the teacher trade unions produced different responses. Both (Q) and (R) referred to the positive role of the trade unions in achieving better conditions although the latter did state that her trade union would have opposed inspection vehemently twenty years ago. (W) regretted the recent four-year unrest, hoping like (U) for greater negotiation between parties with more problem solving. (T) commented on the strength of the trade unions while (V) had had experience of weaker trade unions in another job sector.

From the response of the Irish teachers it seemed that the teacher trade unions were generally respected for their work in "ensuring terms and conditions" of employment although those interviewees, who mentioned the recent industrial action in 2001, stated a preference for negotiation. It also appeared that the trade unions were adapting to the educational needs of contemporary Ireland.

## 3.4 Issues

### 3.4.1 General comments

The seven teachers (one of whom was a recent retiree) were interviewed during the summer (2004). They were extremely generous with their time and comments. It seems that the teachers were very interested in the well being of their students and spoke of education as being more than success in examinations. However they did not question what they were doing in their classrooms in terms of teaching and learning strategies and with the exception of (R) did not make any connection between teaching strategies, learning and discipline.

The analysis of the conversations in the text suggests certain trends. Predominant is the interest shown in students and the enjoyment gained in teaching. There is also a need for security that seems to be different from that proposed by Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory (appendix B). In this case it concerns good leadership and seems to be what Evans (1998, p.12) denoted as job comfort as opposed to job fulfilment which she states is akin to self-achievement, as noted earlier in chapter 2.4.

It will be understood that these interviews, in 2004, were intended to gather further information on teacher retention to be developed later in the research programme. This information was duly noted and a summary appears in the next section (List A). For the purpose of this thesis, the information on instructional leadership, gathered in the interviews, is also given (List B).

Some duplication will be noted in the data given below concerning teacher retention and concerning instructional leadership. In the re-analysis in 2006 (Chapters 4 and 5) of the data from the exploratory interviews, the two issues were seen to be interwoven.

### 3.4.2 LIST A: The issues raised concerning teacher retention

The issues raised concerning teacher retention were:

a. the reasons for departure:

- lack of discipline
- lack of leadership

- lack of challenge
- disinterested students
- bullying in the staff room

b. the reasons for staying

- good leadership
- security
- good salary (the teachers made a plea for maintaining salary levels in order to attract quality teachers)

c. comments on gender issues

- male teachers, who were supporting families, prioritised salary
- male teachers valued money over quality of life due to family commitments, although the two are clearly linked
- female teachers valued compatibility with family (school holidays etc)
- there is a need to attract more men into the profession

d. definition of ineffective teachers

- thought to be a minority group
- ineffective was defined as not fulfilling their teaching duties correctly
- distinction between ineffective teachers and those who did a good job in classroom on "nine to five" basis without further extra-mural activities

e. response to "the Texan scenario"

- some hints that there is change from traditional attitudes in Ireland to more flexible approach to classroom visitation
- if such practice is good for students, then it may be acceptable
- those with experience of teaching outside Ireland accepted the idea more easily
- inspection is becoming more acceptable following introduction of Whole School Evaluation (WSE)
- tradition remains an obstacle for some teachers
- acceptance of innovation such as "the Texan scenario" depends on how it is done
- acceptance of innovation such as "the Texan scenario" depends on the reason for it

f. other matters

- common interest was well-being of the students
- Teaching went beyond examination syllabus
- In a changing world, support from teacher is essential for students

3.4.3 LIST B: The issues raised concerning instructional leadership

The issues raised concerning instructional leadership were:

a. Signs of poor leadership and/or management

- Lack of discipline
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of challenge
- Disinterested students
- Bullying (staff room)

b. cause for satisfaction

- good leadership

c. comments on gender issues

- good leadership could be found in both male and female principals

d. definition of ineffective teachers

- interviewees thought ineffective teachers were a minority group
- ineffective was defined as not fulfilling their teaching duties correctly

e. response to "the Texan scenario"

- some hints that there is change from traditional attitudes in Ireland to more flexible approach to innovation such as classroom visitation
- interviewees thought if such practice is good for students, then it may be acceptable
- those with experience of teaching outside Ireland accepted the idea more easily
- inspection is becoming more acceptable following introduction of Whole School Evaluation (WSE)
- tradition remains an obstacle for some teachers

- acceptance of innovation such as "the Texas scenario" depends on how it is done
- acceptance of innovation such as "the Texas scenario" depends on the reason for it

f. other matters

- common interest was well-being of the students
- teaching went beyond examination syllabus
- in a changing world, support from teacher is essential for students

3.4.4 Comparing and contrasting the exploratory studies (2001/2002 and 2004): a reflection.

The marked difference between the response of the Irish principals and Texan principals to questions in the exploratory studies 2001/2002 has been briefly discussed in chapter 2.

A difference is also noted between the responses of the teachers in the exploratory study 2004 to the question: "why do teachers stay in teaching?" and those of the Irish principals in 2001. The teachers referred to their pleasure in teaching students whereas the principals appeared to be taken up by crisis management. The enthusiasm with which the teachers spoke at first hand about their experience of teaching confirms that "asking the teachers" (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993) is essential when educational innovation is considered. The teachers were also prepared to undertake measures, which would benefit the students but did not appear to know what these might be. They did not in their comments refer to pedagogy, strategies of teaching or curriculum and instructional issues.

3.4.5 Moving Forward

To further the research into teacher retention, the author had planned to return to Texas to replicate the Irish survey of teachers in 2004 before undertaking a full-scale survey of principals and teachers concerning teacher retention in both jurisdictions. However this was not to be, since her work for Rotary International in early 2005

brought her work on the research programme to a halt for a period of one year. Her domestic responsibilities required that she request deferment for a further six months. On return to study in 2006, many changes had occurred in the educational landscape in relation to school leadership in Ireland, which brought the issue of instructional leadership to the foreground.

The Texan sample 2002 had suggested a link between teacher retention and instructional leadership and Irish policies were now focusing on instructional leadership. But the interviews with principals and teachers had shown that the Irish respondents had little knowledge of instructional leadership as the Texan principals described it. Given these policies, with the information from the exploratory studies in 2001/2002 and 2004 it seemed possible and desirable to embark on a major study of facts and opinions concerning instructional leadership in Ireland.

### 3.5 Emergence of questions on instructional leadership

As has been stated earlier, the Irish principals in 2001 did not mention instructional leadership although the term was in use during the nineteen nineties in educational reports and policy documents (Coolahan, 2005; Leader and Boldt, 1994; Fitzmaurice, 1997). The Texan principals, who were interviewed in 2002, believed that instructional leadership was a major factor in teacher retention. The Irish teachers who were interviewed in 2004 did not recognise the term but provided some data that there might be instances of practice.

Therefore the questions arising from the exploratory studies (2001/2002 and 2004), included questions on instructional leadership in relationship to the focus of study at that time, teacher retention. (Table 1, p.10, stages 1-7, 1.3). These questions would have a major role, when the focus of research became "instructional leadership" in 2006:

1. Why were the teacher retention patterns in Ireland and the Texan sample different from those reported in the rest of Texas, the US and the UK?

2. Why was the response of the Texan principals so different from those of the Irish principals in relationship to school leadership?

3. How could teachers in Ireland who had no alternative but to stay in their schools be motivated?

4. What was the nature of instructional leadership, which the Texan principals claimed to practise?

5. Was the instructional leadership practised by the Texan principals the same as the instructional leadership, described by Fitzmaurice (1997)?

6. How did the principals build environments conducive to good learning?

7. What elements of instructional leadership as described by the Texan principals are practised in Irish post-primary schools?

# CHAPTER 4

# EVENTS DURING THE INTERREGNUM


## Abstract

In this chapter the author details the events that led to the change of focus of the research from teacher retention to instructional leadership.


## 4.1 Introduction

Between April 2005 and October 2006 the work on the thesis had to be suspended for professional and domestic reasons. During this period the author was able to keep up the study of literature relating to culture and school leadership. These themes had both emerged in the preceding phase of research as crucial to an understanding of teacher retention patterns. However in 2005 there was a political development, which confirmed the need for a major study of various aspects of instructional leadership in Ireland. (The previous work on teacher retention would be used as the basis of this study).

## 4.2 The Events of 2004 and 2005

The event was the publication[20] by the NAPD in 2005 of a policy document that was discussed with the then Minister of Education and Science. The submission to the Department of Education and Science stated that "The core activity of a school is teaching and learning and yet the administrative workload is a serious impediment to the Principal and Deputy Principal being able to act as instructional leader" and identified the way forward as instructional leadership. In 2004, the then Minister for Education and Science had stated at the NAPD Conference that principals were to be "leaders of education", not administrators.

Coincidentally a report was published in the same year describing an attempt in the 1990s to train principals as instructional leaders which failed (Heywood and Murray, 2005). The Christian Brothers Professional Development Project had set out in 1992 to train principals in instructional leadership in order for them to oversee curriculum development in their schools in respect of the Transition Year Option (TYO).

[20] NAPD statement (2005)

The Brothers invited principals from twenty-one schools, which were known for their interest in curriculum development, to participate. Thirteen principals agreed that their schools would participate although the principals of four of those schools could not take part, which meant non-principals were delegated to attend. Only two principals remained throughout the programme.

### 4.3 Reflection and conclusion.

The events of 2005 as stated above seemed paradoxical. On the one hand NAPD aspired to instructional leadership as the way forward in teaching and learning for their members. On the other hand an action research project to involve post-primary principals in instructional leadership, which commenced in 1992, had been unsuccessful.

The data from the interviews with the Irish principals in 2001 (the first stage of the exploratory comparative study of teacher retention) suggested that principals did not see themselves as leaders of education in the sense of curriculum, teaching and learning. Even the principals who had qualifications in curriculum leadership did not use them. The data from interviews with Irish post-primary teachers in 2004 did not coincide entirely with the view of the Irish principals as expressed in 2001. The principal's leadership, according to the teachers could make a difference, either positive or negative, to the experience of both teachers and students.

The research programme which was resumed in 2006 would clearly have to focus on instructional leadership as there were many questions arising, both from the events of 2005 and the data, relevant to school leadership, arising from the previous study of teacher retention. The first question would be to try and find out what was meant by instructional leadership as used by NAPD in 2005.

# CHAPTER 5

# THE PROBLEM OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN IRELAND


## Abstract

In 2006, instructional leadership became the focus of the evaluative illumination following the statement by NAPD (2005) that the core aims of the school were teaching and learning and that principals should be instructional leaders as stated in chapter 4. In this chapter the author gives an overview of the current knowledge of instructional leadership. The history of instructional leadership in Ireland, as revealed both in government documents and research, is reviewed. A number of questions emerged from the overview of current knowledge on instructional leadership, which suggested the way forward in terms of future research. The methodology for future research in instructional leadership was examined to ensure that it was suitable to achieve the aims of the research as described briefly in this chapter. A review of literature and exploratory interviews with principals of "best practice" post-primary schools would be required.


## 5.1 Introduction

Following the statement by NAPD 2005, which was preceded by the ministerial statement 2004, the focus of the study became instructional leadership. Initially the aim of the study was to know more about the philosophy, theory and practice of instructional leadership.

The author reflected on her current knowledge of instructional leadership in the light of the NAPD statement (2005), the Ministerial Statement (2004), the government documents (chapter 1.3, p.15) and research studies (Leader and Boldt, 1994; Fitzmaurice, 1997; Heywood and Murray, 2005). She knew that a lot of relevant data (Chapter 2) had been collected from the Texan principals as to their version of instructional leadership and from the teachers in 2004 (chapter 3) that were specifically asked about the "Texan scenario". The literature had provided further information as the study proceeded.

Data from the literature relating to the management of ineffective teachers, which was identified specifically as an instructional leadership responsibility by the Texan principals, has been mentioned in chapters 1 and 2.

The data from Heywood's exploratory study of teacher retention (chapter 2.2) with Irish post-primary principals suggested that the principals did not see themselves as leaders of education in the sense of being involved in curriculum, teaching and learning. In the Irish sample, principal (A) who had qualifications in curriculum leadership did not practise it, as he did not think subject teachers would appreciate his knowledge. The data from the interviews with Irish teachers in 2004 did not coincide with the view of the Irish principals as expressed in 2001. It seemed that the teachers saw principal leadership as capable of making a difference to the school experience of both teachers and students (chapters 3.4.4 and 4.3).

Thus the research programme which re-commenced in 2006 should clearly focus on instructional leadership as there were many questions arising, both from the events of 2005 and the data, relevant to school leadership, which had emerged from the previous study of teacher retention.

**5.2 Methodology**

Once the aims of the study had been clarified, the author reviewed the illuminative evaluation methodology outlined in chapter 1.2.2 to ensure that it was suited to the task of finding out more about instructional leadership. By 2006, the author had had practice in the collection of emerging data, from interviews and other qualitative tools; the analytical procedures which were required to manage huge amounts of data; the place of literature in grounded theory (Dick, 2005) and the need to find some way to communicate any findings clearly.

That illuminative evaluation was a suitable method for finding out more about the implementation of instructional leadership as aspired to in the NAPD statement (2005) was confirmed by Burden (1998, p. 17) who, in describing the model, designed jointly with Williams (Burden and Williams, 1996), writes:

> The second aspect of our model refers to the *Plans* (or intentions) of those who (wish to) introduce change of an innovatory nature. What exactly is it that the key players want to do? Why do they want to do it? How do they intend to bring it about? In contrast to this, the evaluator needs to gauge in as much detail as possible exactly what is happening – the *Action*.

The introduction of the practice of instructional leadership, as proposed by NAPD, was an innovation. The author had learned from data emerging from the exploratory research studies in teacher retention that there was confusion in the definitions of instructional leadership and related terms (Fitzmaurice, 1997). In introducing any new programmes, it is always essential first to define the nature, purpose and method for implementing the innovation (Bassey, 1995).

The use of grounded theory in the analysis of the exploratory studies of 2001, 2002 and 2004 had given the author confidence in using that technique. As noted by Arksey and Knight (1999, p.162) citing Mostyn (1985, p.140): "there is no formula to aid the researcher in interpretation of qualitative research theory". Grounded theory as discussed in Chapter 1.2.3 is one approach, which does provide a common methodological framework, as Arksey and Knight (1999, p.162) suggest. They have some reservations as to how much of it is used in practice. The author had come to realise that the process of illuminative evaluation shares equal importance with the communication of its results which according to Burden (1998, p. 17) is an:

> ongoing collaborative process of collecting information and gathering participants' perceptions (which) should incorporate also feedback and discussion of a regular nature such that the final illuminations are made up of a number of small candles (or even fireworks...) which have been lit along the way.

According to Burden (p.17) "Successful evaluation of an illuminative nature should not spring many surprises at its conclusion."

Following the decision to continue to use the methodology of illuminative evaluation, the author considered what methodological tools would be most appropriate. She knew that much data had accrued from the "conversation" interviews in the exploratory studies. She had learned that teachers like to speak about their work particularly in relation to the well being of their students. Similarly former teachers now principals and deputy principals were keen to speak about their experience in education and particularly, the current educational environment.

Data had also come from many informal conversations, face-to-face interviews as in UK (Chapter 1.3, p. 16) and the general reading. Thus one tool would be interviews with principals of post-primary schools and other educators including an executive member of NAPD and Professor Heywood to learn their opinions of instructional leadership and related topics. It was envisaged that the data from the interviews would assist in the construction of a questionnaire, to be administered to as wide a group of principals as possible. Focus groups were also considered. These would come after the interviews and before the administration of the questionnaire. As it happened, focus groups were not used due to the sequence of events, which began with the need to find a suitable sample of post-primary principals for the interviews.

To this end, a former member of their National Executive made an approach to the officers of NAPD. He was himself to be an interviewee since he had participated in the statement design (NAPD, 2005). NAPD kindly agreed to nominate six post-primary principals who were in charge of "best-practice" schools in terms of teaching and learning. More details will be given of the sample in chapter 7.1. pp. 125, 126. The use of focus groups had also been envisaged in order to hear opinions of interested parties on the construction of the questionnaire. However a number of conversations with post-primary principals and members of NAPD clarified the topics required. Conversations with other educators including teachers, as well as information from other studies (Leader and Boldt, 1994; Leithwood and Aitken, 1995) proved helpful.

## 5.3 Implementation of the methodology

### 5.3.1 Introduction

Once the methodology had been selected, the author had to decide on its implementation (Table 1, chapter 1.3, p.10). Data were gathered from the re-examination of the exploratory studies in teacher retention as described in chapters 1, 2 and 3 and the EFEA paper (Swan, Heywood and Mayo, 2005). Data were sought in the literature to augment the data bank of information on instructional leadership. Data were sought in interviews with the principals of "best practice" schools and other people who had special knowledge of the topic.

A visit to a high school, known for innovatory practice in teaching and learning in the Netherlands, provided an opportunity in 2007 for the author to see what is being done in other countries. A visit to Japan in 2009 allowed the author to witness at first hand teachers demonstrating new instructional strategies in High School classrooms for the benefit of their colleagues who stood around the walls of the classrooms or in the corridor, watching through the glass windows. Whenever possible both in Ireland and abroad, the author spoke both informally and formally with principals, students and teachers to get their opinions too. Thus she understood from the Japanese principals and teachers that very important aspects of instructional leadership as identified by McEwan (2003) and witnessed in the "Texan scenario" in 2002, were being practised. The term "instructional leadership" however was unfamiliar to the Japanese educators.

In Ireland, the best-practice schools were selected by NAPD, as being schools where principals put student learning first, irrespective of variables such as socio-economic background, school culture, type of school, age of school, and experience of principal. The request was also made that, if possible, the different sub-sectors, as identified in appendix A, within the post-primary sector would be represented. The data arising from the interview programme will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7. Suffice it to state here, six questions emerged from the 2006/2007 interviews:

- What is instructional leadership in theory
- What is instructional leadership in practice?
- How can instructional leadership be implemented?
- What elements of instructional leadership are already being practised?
- To what extent do principals want instructional leadership?
- What do principals require in order to implement instructional leadership?

As these interviews were undertaken during the continuing analysis of data from the literature (chapter 6), it was hoped that each strand of the research would illuminate the other.

The author also had information on instructional leadership which had emerged from the exploratory studies in 2001/2002 and 2004 as well as the other data which had been gathered less formally and was recorded as memos (written by the author, to the author to assist memory) and draft comments to be used if relevant in the writing of the thesis.

## 5.4 Knowledge about instructional leadership already available

### 5.4.1 Research Studies

A number of research studies had examined the practice of principalship in Ireland during the nineteen-nineties. The Christian Brothers' Curriculum-Led Staff Development Project, which commenced in 1992 and pre-dated the publication of work by Leader and Boldt (1994) and Fitzmaurice (1997), was not published until 2005.

Leader and Boldt's study concerned the workload of post-primary principals. The results from their survey of post-primary principals (1994, p. 96) showed that:

> only two per cent of the respondents said that they spend most time on curriculum development and planning. Yet, the principals saw instructional leadership and planning as functions to which they ought to devote the most time.

The reason for the principal's inability to involve themselves in tasks which Leader and Boldt (p.96) identify as parts of instructional leadership "forward planning, staff and curriculum development" is "mainly an issue of time".

Fitzmaurice's study was focused on instructional leadership in the primary school. An excerpt from his operational definition of an instructional leader is given in chapter 1.3, p.15. Fitzmaurice comments on earlier references to instructional leadership, in the introduction (1997, p.1) to his study of the instructional leadership role of the teaching principal in Ireland (primary sector). He states that the first mention of the "idea of instructional leadership in Ireland" was in the Report on the National Education Convention (chapter 7, paragraph 2) in which the role of the principal is described as:

> creating a supportive climate, with particular emphasis on the curriculum and teaching and directed towards maximising academic learning, having clear goals and high expectations for staff and students, establishing good systems for monitoring

> student performance and achievement, promoting on-going staff development and in-service, and encouraging strong parental involvement and identification with, and support for the goals of the school.

Fitzmaurice (1997, p.2) gives a brief summary of the debate which ensued, stating that some teachers thought that principals "who are removed from the classroom lack credibility as instructional leaders". He cites the INTO (Irish National Teachers' Organisation) report "A Career in Teaching" (1994, p.55) which stated that administrative duties and full time teaching duties made the role of instructional leader "virtually impossible". Fitzmaurice's conclusions (1997, p. 134) however were that:

> although these constraints are vexatious they are not a major barrier to getting things done. The only barrier that cannot be overcome is thinking that it is impossible.

The attributes required for the implementation of instructional leadership in a primary school are identified by Fitzmaurice (1997, p. 115) as:

> On the part of the principal it demands leadership skills, vision, reflection, openness, knowledge, and personal and interpersonal management skills. The staff must be willing to change, be self critical, be open about their teaching, be good team members, be willing to accept the principal as Instructional Leader, and most of all, be willing to give of their free time.

Regarding further research, Leader and Boldt (1994, p. 102) identified "a need for continuing research to inform the ethos and practice of principalship". Two of the seven areas (p.102) for further research, which were identified by Leader and Boldt from their study are "the nature and practice of instructional leadership" and "principalship within the context of school cultures." Fitzmaurice (1997, p. 137) advocates that an evaluation of "the role of instructional leader of a person other than the principal" should be done.

Fitzmaurice (1997, p. 16) having "traced the origins of the two strands of instructional leadership, instruction and leadership, to the drive for school effectiveness and the drive to replicate the successes of business in schools" states (p.48) that "the role of instructional leader is worthwhile because it puts the emphasis back on teaching and learning, which is what school is all about."

### 5.4.2 Fitzmaurice's operational definition of an instructional leader

When the focus of the illuminative evaluation study became instructional leadership in 2006, the author re-visited Fitzmaurice's work in which he gave an operational definition of the primary principal in Ireland as an instructional leader. Fitzmaurice (1997) states in his profile of instructional leadership that:

"1) The instructional leader leads others in the process of change through school planning which involves:

- Identification of instructional or curriculum areas that need change/improvement/innovation
- Preparation of and planning processes that prepare the ground by pooling resources, selection through consensus, and designing a plan
- The implementation of change in the classroom
- Review and assessment

2) The instructional leader energises and encourages others to focus on the two main concerns of schools---teaching and learning. This is used as the bottom line reference whenever there is controversy or indecision.

3) The instructional leader uses reports, test results, feedback from parents, management, inspectors and pupils in order to identify areas for instructional improvement.

4) The instructional leader provides resources from a variety of sources to support, maintain or initiate change, improvement and reflection. This may include reports, studies, articles, advice, teacher-centres, fellow professionals, support groups, in-service courses and new technology.

5) The instructional leader speaks to and questions teachers about children, teaching, subject areas, problems, projects, concerns and difficulties in their teaching and classrooms. This can be done both formally and informally.

6) The instructional leader supports teachers in their efforts in classrooms by being available to offer advice, opinion, praise, judgement and encouragement to their work and the efforts of the children. He/she might encourage the display of projects and provide a public area for this. He/she might check copies or essays on classroom visits.

7) The instructional leader is a reflective practitioner who continually seeks to improve the teaching/learning process in his/her class and throughout the school by constantly asking- what and how can we improve? He/she must also lead and train others in this process of reflection so that it becomes school-wide and automatic" (Fitzmaurice, 1997, pp. 75,77)

An examination of the above profile shows a very important difference in practice between the different sectors in Irish education. This difference is also seen in a recent study of instructional leadership in the primary sector by Rushe (2010). The reference to classroom visits in Fitzmaurice's operational definition (1997) contrasts with the comments of the Irish post-primary principals in 2001. They usually do not enter classrooms. Such practice however was part of instructional leadership for their counterparts in Texan High schools. The data from the 2004 teacher interviews in Ireland show that the post-primary teachers were unaccustomed to such practice, one (R) finding the idea totally unacceptable. However, as noted in chapter 3.3.3, p.49, (R) did refer to the relationship between teaching, curriculum and discipline in her classroom work.

### 5.4.3 The Christian Brothers' Curriculum-Led Staff Development Project 1992

The aim of the Christian Brothers' curriculum-led staff development project which commenced in 1992 had been to give principals of those post-primary schools in Ireland, which had shown an interest in curriculum development the opportunity for in-service training in the management of curriculum and instruction (Heywood and Murray: 2005, p.20). The rationale for this was in the statement that "if principals are to become instructional leaders they will verify for themselves the merits of different approaches to instruction" (p.22). The definitions of instructional leadership from which these beliefs came were that "an instructional leader should not only be able to advise on and appraise instruction but should also be able to lead curriculum design, implementation and evaluation" (p.22). As stated by Heywood and Murray (2005) this definition was not dissimilar from that of Fitzmaurice (1997). Despite the success of TYO in the participating schools, the principals apparently did not see it as a priority to attend the in-service training although their support for the teachers whom they sent to the course was totally satisfactory.

The Department of Education and Science (DES) itself had instituted a model of middle management for curriculum innovation in its TYO Co-ordinator's courses (Heywood and Murray, p.22). Neither Heywood nor Murray envisaged the principal as the sole leader of instruction in the school but argued (p.23) that principals "require proven capabilities as instructional leaders", being *primus inter pares* among the teachers who also should be instructional leaders.

## 5.5 Analysis of the NAPD statement (2005) and the Ministerial statement (2004).

### 5.5.1 Introduction

Having re-examined the information on instructional leadership from the exploratory studies the author reviewed her current knowledge of instructional leadership before undertaking a search for further data. To move the research into instructional leadership forward, the NAPD statement was carefully examined in relation to the previous statement by the Minister of Education and Science and the data on instructional leadership from previous stages of the research programme.

The NAPD statement read as follows:

- The core activity of a school is teaching and learning and yet the administrative workload is a serious impediment to the Principal and Deputy Principal being able to act as instructional leader. The professional leadership of a school is central to its success. The vision and goals of the school should be shared by teachers, students, parents and Board of Management. There is a continuing need for curriculum development and this will require a cultural change in many of our schools. The provision of instructional leadership crucially involves freeing up the Principal and Deputy Principal to exercise this responsibility. School leaders require time, resources and alleviation from the excessive burdens of administration to provide this.

- It is the considered opinion of NAPD that suggested solutions must arise from dialogue and discussion. There is a need for analysis of problems that have arisen and agreement and clarity about role-definition and responsibilities. The Association considers that this will require careful, considered, collaborative work to reach long-term solutions to enable Principals and Deputy Principals to fulfil their core function, to move from reactive crisis management and become, as the minister intends, leaders of education.
  (NAPD, 2005)

The Minister for Education and Science had stated at the NAPD conference, in 2004 that:

- It is not our intention that you should be administrators. It is the intention that you will be leaders of education in your school. I am going to work with you over the next year to ensure that we can reduce the burden, to review ways in which we can reduce the bureaucracy, while meeting our obligations, just to make sure that you can get on with the job that you are employed to do

quoted in the introduction to: NAPD Submission to the Department of Education and Science on the Administrative Workload of Principals and Deputy Principals – April 2005, p.53

### 5.5.2 Analysis of vocabulary

The choice of words, not least the use of the term "instructional leadership", in these documents had attracted the author's attention in 2006. The Minister, having contrasted "administrator" with "leader of education", suggests a connection between "bureaucracy", "burden" and "administration". Yet there are "obligations" to be met which led the author to check the relevant lines in the Education Act (1998):

> (1) The Principal of a recognised school and the teachers in a recognised school, under the direction of the Principal, shall have responsibility, in accordance with this Act, for the instruction provided to students in the school and shall contribute generally to the education and personal development of students in that school.
>
> (2) Without prejudice to *subsection (1),* the Principal and teachers shall –
> (a) encourage and foster learning in students
> (b) regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and parents,
> (c) collectively promote co-operation between the school and the community which it serves, and
> (d) subject to the terms of any applicable collective agreement and their contract of employment, carry out those duties that-
> (i) in the case of the teachers, are assigned to them by or at the direction of the Principal, and
> (ii) in the case of the Principal, are assigned to him or her by the board.

Education Act, 1998. Clause 22. (1) and (2).

The assumption in the Education Act, 1998 (Clauses 22. 1 and 2) is that the principal and teachers will be working together to ensure instruction for the students, to assess the students and to communicate the assessment to both students and parents. Whereas the teachers work under the direction of the principal, the principal works under the direction of the board. Moreover the principal and teachers must contribute generally to the education and personal development of their students.

The duties set out in the Education Act 1998 provide a challenge for both principals and teachers, particularly when read against the data which had emerged from the exploratory interviews in Ireland in 2001 and 2004. The NAPD submission refers to:

> educational leadership, professional leadership and instructional leadership; curriculum development, culture, vision and goals, sharing with all constituents of the school community, freeing up the Principal and the Deputy Principal for responsibility of instructional leadership, alleviation from burdens of administration and a move from reactive crisis management.

In Table 8 below, the left hand column shows the terms used by NAPD in relation to its aspirations for instructional leadership and in relation to the current reality of principalship in Ireland. Both the Ministerial Statement and the NAPD statement used the word "burden" to describe Irish principalship. The right hand column shows the response of the Texan principals who as instructional leaders claimed that they could cope with the problems inherent in school leadership. The significance of culture, as an inhibitor, is seen in the NAPD statement whereas the Texan Principals appeared to be working in a very positive culture, which they attributed to the success of instructional leadership.

| NAPD 2005 | Minister 2004 | Exploratory Studies |
|---|---|---|
| Instructional Leadership | | Instructional Leadership |
| Educational Leadership | Leaders of Education | Instructional Leadership |
| Professional leadership | | Instructional leadership |
| Vision and Goals | | |
| Curriculum | | Curriculum |
| Culture | | Culture |
| Cultural Change (obstacles) | | |
| Administration | | Administrators / Leaders |
| Burden | Burden | Answer in Instructional Leadership |
| Reactive crisis management | | Answer in Instructional Leadership |

**TABLE 8. Comparison of Vocabulary: between Minister's statement 2004, NAPD submission 2005 and comments of Texan Principals re: problems and solutions 2002)**

Within the statements there were many words, which were familiar from the exploratory interviews and related literature review (2001/2005). The confusion that Heywood had identified in regard to leadership, was seen in the use of several terms in the NAPD submission including instructional leadership, educational leadership and professional leadership. The need for cultural change is also identified in the NAPD statement.

5.5.3 Need for further research arising from analysis of statements.

The analysis of the statements from NAPD (2005) and the Minister for Education (2004) provided the rationale for the focused study of instructional leadership, since it showed that further research would be needed as mentioned in the second clause of the submission and the Minister's statement. Questions also arose as to the extent to which the Minister fulfilled the aspirations "to work with you over the next year to ensure that we can reduce the burden, to review ways in which we can reduce the bureaucracy" (2004/2005) and to what extent had "dialogue and discussion", "analysis of problems", "clarity about role-definition and responsibilities" occurred since the NAPD submission (2005). The interview with the member of NAPD, outlined in chapter 7.2 p.127 did in fact provide positive answers to some of those questions.

**5.6 Conclusion**

Questions emerged from the overview of current knowledge on instructional leadership and the analysis of the policy statements whose answers could only be found in further research. The questions were:

- What does NAPD understand by instructional leadership?
- What does the term "instructional leadership" mean both in theory and in practice?
- What elements if any of "instructional leadership" can already be found in post-primary schools in Ireland?
- What model would be suitable for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in post–primary schools in Ireland?

The author hoped that some answers would be found in the data from the review of literature (Chapter 6) and the interviews with post–primary principals and educators (Chapter 7).

# CHAPTER 6

# INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

# A REVIEW OF LITERATURE (2006-2008)


## Abstract

In this chapter the author reviews the literature relating to instructional leadership in preparation for possible surveys of the opinions of those who would implement instructional leadership in Irish post-primary schools. The questions that arose from the re-examination of data (from earlier stages of the research) in 2006 are listed as being relevant to instructional leadership. Primary and secondary sources are identified. The influence of three recent reports, two of which were published in 2007 and one in 2008, is acknowledged. Findings from the literature review are summarised under sub-headings, which arose from the above-mentioned questions in order to arrive at definitions of educational leadership, curriculum leadership and instructional leadership. The future direction of the research is confirmed. For convenience the chapter is divided into six parts. Part 1 is the introduction; part 2 identifies the questions which have arisen from the re-examination of data from the exploratory studies (Table 1 stages 1, 4 chapter 1.3, p.10); part 3 identifies the primary and the secondary sources; part 4 gives details of the three recent reports, part 5 identifies the need for definitions and suggests definitions of leadership terms based on the data findings; part 6 examines the literature relating to the questions listed in chapter 6.2; part 7 outlines the progress of the illuminative evaluation study.


## 6.1 Introduction

### 6.1.1 Importance of research

The literature review undertaken over a two-year period (2006-2008) confirmed the view that stringent research is required before educational change can take place. That innovation in teaching and learning necessitates rigorous research, is emphasised by such writers as Marzano (2003, p. 4):

> Schools can have a tremendous impact on student achievement if they follow the direction provided by the research.

and Bassey (1995, p.39):

> Educational research aims critically to inform educational judgements and decisions in order to improve educational action.

In this chapter, the author reviews the literature relating to instructional leadership in preparation for the survey stage of the research programme, which it was envisaged would be essential in order to find out the views of those who would implement instructional leadership in Irish post-primary schools. The interviews, which were undertaken concurrently, are described in chapter 7. The data from the interviews identified areas for clarification in the literature and vice versa.

Initially the topics and sub-topics of the literary review that follows arose from the questions which had been identified as relevant to instructional leadership through emerging data from 2002 onwards, following the author's visit to Texas. There she had seen principals practising a type of leadership, which they called instructional leadership.

## 6.2 The re-examination of data from the exploratory studies (2001/2002 and 2004)

The questions that had arisen in the re-examination of the data from the exploratory studies (chapters 2 and 3) for information on instructional leadership were:

- What is instructional leadership?
- What definitions of instructional leadership and other related forms of leadership exist? How can the terms used be clarified for the lay reader?
- What is the relationship between instructional leadership and other forms of school leadership?
- What is the theory and practice of instructional leadership?
- What is the theory and practice of curriculum leadership?
- What is the theory and practice of teacher leadership?

- What definitions of teaching and learning are to be found in current literature?

- What is the relationship between instructional leadership and the school effectiveness and the school improvement movements?

- What are the constraints to the implementation of instructional leadership?

- What implications does instructional leadership have for training and professional development?

- What effect does gender have on instructional leadership?

- Who should implement instructional leadership?

It was hoped that the data emerging from the literature reviewed in this chapter and from the interviews in 2006/2007 described in chapter 7 would cast further light on the issues expressed in the above questions.

## 6.3 Identification of the primary and secondary sources

### 6.3.1 Preliminary Search

The preliminary search, which used online catalogues including Education Resources Information Center (ERIC[21]), identified a huge amount of material on instructional leadership. An initial reading confirmed the confusion in the literature, which had been identified by Fitzmaurice (1997). Subsequently the author found that this confusion was partly attributable to the way in which the meaning of "instructional leadership" had undergone change since its first use in the nineteen eighties and partly to the different points of view on education of those writers using the term. Instructional leadership which was initially applied in a general sense to school leadership, has come to have more specific meaning in later years as will be detailed in this chapter. Due to the way in which the conceptual meaning has changed, there may be confusion in the minds of would-be practitioners about both its meaning and

[21] Education Resources Information Center (World's largest library of education literature) www.eric.ed.gov: 6000 entries for "instructional leadership" in 2006.

its implementation. A further search using the Internet revealed the small extent to which the term "instructional leadership" is used in formal literature (i.e. academic treatises, research reports and official documents) in Ireland, in relation to teaching and learning in schools. The use of the term "instructional leadership" in policy and research documents in Ireland was noted in chapter 1.3 and chapter 5.1.

### 6.3.2 Primary Material

Primary research data on instructional leadership from the exploratory studies (2001/2002) in Ireland and Texas[22] was re-examined in 2006 (chapter 2.3.4, p.28). Two other primary sources, were the interviews with Irish teachers, which were held in 2004, described in chapter 3 and the interviews with post-primary principals and educators, which were held in 2006/2007. These are described in chapter 7. The preliminary search led to the identification of other primary sources (both international and Irish), which will be discussed subsequently. The international literature can be sub-divided into US and non-American writing. The latter includes work relating to school leadership[23] from Ireland, other countries in Europe, the Far East and Australia. The US literature includes:

- Sergiovanni (1968, 1984, 1991, 1992a and 1992b, 1994, 2001). He produced one of the earliest models of instructional leadership, and has written extensively on the developing concept of instructional leadership.
- McEwan (2003). She has practised a form of instructional leadership as a principal and has identified seven steps to achieving instructional leadership.
- Zepeda (2003, 2004). She has written handbooks for principals as instructional leaders about her version of instructional leadership.
- The Jossey-Bass *Reader on Educational Leadership* (2000) contains articles, reports and book excerpts by writers such as Senge, Barth, Fullan, and Sergiovanni who have been responsible for seminal work in the area of educational leadership since the mid-nineteen eighties.
- Fulmer, C.L and Dembowski, F.L. eds. (2005) *National Summit on School Leadership Crediting the Past, Challenging the Preset and Changing the*

[22] Swan, Heywood and Mayo: 2005 The Motivation and Retention of Teachers. In: P. Taylor and John Heywood (eds) *Bulletins of EFEA, No. 8*. Division of Education Sheffield Hallam University for the European Forum on Educational Administration

[23] School leadership is used as a general term prior to specific definitions arising from the literature review and interview programme (2006/2007)

*Future.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Education. In this book Quinn, referring to the kinds of leadership training required by school principals for student success, mentions the importance of training in a curriculum, which includes instructional leadership.

The non-US material, which comes mainly from the OECD, includes:

- Coolahan, J. *Country Background Report*, prepared for *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* (OECD, Paris, 2003).
- *Teachers Matter*: *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* (OECD, Paris, 2005).
- Heywood, J. and M. Murray, (2005) *Curriculum-Led Staff Development, Towards Curriculum and Instructional Leadership in Ireland*, Bulletins of the EFEA No 4. Sheffield Hallam University School of Education for the European Forum on Educational Administration.
- McKinsey Report *How the Best-Performing School Systems come out on Top* (OECD, Paris, 2007).
- Pont, B., Nusche, D. and Moorman, H. *Improving School Leadership Volume 1: Policy and Practice* (OECD, Paris, 2008).
- Pont, B., Nusche, D. and Moorman, H. *Improving School Leadership Volume 2: Case studies on system leadership* (OECD, Paris, 2008).
- Hyland, A. 2007 *Country Background Report,* prepared for *Improving School Leadership* (OECD, Paris, 2008,).
- *Leadership Development for Schools* (LDS, Ennis, Clare Education Centre, 2002).

Irish material, which resulted from an online search of instructional leadership includes:

- Unpublished academic theses (Hackett, 1996; Fitzmaurice, 1997; Kelleher, 1997).
- Research studies and reports:
  (Leader and Boldt, 1994; Coolahan, 2003; Teaching and Learning in 21st century report: TL21-NUI Maynooth, 2005).

- Material sponsored by the Teacher Unions: Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland (ASTI) *Report of the Discipline Sub-Committee to Annual Convention* (April 2004); Irish National Teachers Association (INTO) A Career in Teaching (1994).
- Material sponsored by NAPD: Heywood (2008, 2009).
- Training Information (LDS (2002), Ennis, Clare Education Centre; Division of In-Service Education of Trinity College, Dublin).
- Government of Ireland: Education Act, 1998; Educational (Welfare) Act, 1999), Teachers' Council Act, 2002.

### 6.3.3 Secondary Sources

The initial search in the review of literature (2006/2008) had revealed that internationally there was a large literature on matters relating to instructional leadership, both primary and secondary material. An on-line search in 2006 found more than seven thousand[24] entries were listed for instructional leadership, of which many were American (US) in origin, in the indexes maintained by ERIC. Although other on-line catalogues were viewed including those of Trinity College, Dublin and the University of Cincinnati, it was deemed sensible to select the secondary source material from publications listed in ERIC in the last decade. Of that material, preference was given to the most recent publications as they conveyed the development in understanding of instructional leadership in the context of school leadership, teaching and learning. As the research study proceeded, published bibliographies offered suggestions as to reading and other avenues that needed to be explored. Ideas for further research will be included in the last chapter.

## 6.4 Recent official reports (2007, 2008) relating to instructional leadership

### 6.4.1 Introduction

As indicated, during the past two years (2007/2009) several official reports relevant both to instructional leadership internationally and in Ireland have been published.

### 6.4.2 The Country Background Report, 2007

[24] In 2008, there are 8000 entries for "instructional leadership" on ERIC showing an increasing interest.

The CBR 2007, which was prepared for the OECD, School Leadership Report 2008, gives an overview of the educational system in Ireland. The information concerning post-primary education has proved a useful source of information for the purpose of this study. The CBR (2007, p.62) regrets both the lack of interrogation of different leadership types imported into Ireland:

> Models of school leadership such as instructional leadership, distributed leadership, organisational leadership, etc have been imported into our system and need to be interrogated in the context of the needs and realities of schools and the system

and the lack of related research:

> Very little research has been carried out in Ireland on the competencies required by school leaders. The focus in both distant and recent past has been to articulate school leadership role in terms of responsibilities and duties (DES Circular P16/73; Government of Ireland, 1998) without further elaboration on competencies (knowledge and skills) required to fulfil responsibilities and duties' (CBR 2007, p. 23: 3.2.9)

### 6.4.3 The OECD Report, 2008

The OECD Report "Improving School Leadership"[25] is concerned with the ways in which school leaders may face the rapidity of change:

> a combination of shifts in society, including greater migration, changes in social and family structures and the use (and misuse) of information and communications technologies (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, Vol. 2, p. 9).

In such circumstances the traditional, industrial model of a school principal is considered to be no longer appropriate to provide the effective school leadership which is so essential to improve teaching and learning within each school and to connect the individual school to the outside world (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, Vol.1, p.15). The report describes a model of school leadership, which aims to oversee teaching and learning:

> An important finding emerging from the research is that the relationship between school leadership and student learning is mostly indirect. As school leaders work mainly outside the classroom, their impact on student learning is largely mediated through other people, events and organisational factors such as teachers, classroom practices and school climate (Hallinger and Heck, 1998). The finding that the relationship between leadership and student learning is mediated through such factors underscores the powerful role of the school leader in helping to create the conditions for effective teaching and learning. School leaders influence the motivations,

[25] The OECD, 2008 report in two volumes reviewed practice in 22 countries and presented five case studies.

> capacities and working conditions of teachers who in turn shape classroom practice and student learning.
> (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, Vol.2, p. 21)

This model necessitates a school leadership that actively involves itself in teaching and learning:

> School leaders must master the new forms of pedagogy themselves and they must learn how to monitor and improve their teachers' new practice. Moreover, instead of serving as head teacher *primus inter pares*, they have to become leaders of learning responsible for building communities of professional practice. Methods of evaluation and professional development take more sophisticated application and principals must embed them into the fabric of the work day.
> (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, Vol.2, p. 28)

It is a model that necessitates active involvement in instructional leadership:

> While practices vary across countries, it is clear that school leadership is generally expected to play a more active role in instructional leadership: monitoring and evaluating teacher performance, conducting and arranging for mentoring and coaching, planning teacher professional development and orchestrating teamwork and cooperative instruction. Countries also note a shift in emphasis from more administration- and management-type functions to leadership functions of providing academic vision, strategic planning, developing deeper layers of leadership and building a culture and community of learning.
> (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, Vol.2, p. 28)

The solution to the problems identified by the authors of the report is system leadership. Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008), suggest from their research that system leadership must come from the principals. They are encouraged to become system leaders i.e.:

> taking increasing responsibility for helping others to develop other schools, their local communities and other public services

in order that they may travel in the necessary direction to ensure that students can "participate successfully in the new global economy and society" (Vol.2, p.3). Effective school leadership (Vol. 1, p.17) may not reside exclusively in formal positions but will instead be distributed across a number of individuals in the school: principals, deputy principals and assistant principals, leadership teams, school governing boards and other school-level professional personnel. These people will all contribute as leaders to the goal of learning-centred schooling.

### 6.4.4 The McKinsey Report 2007

In September 2007 McKinsey and Co. published *"How the World's Best Performing School Systems Come Out On Top"*, emphasising the importance of instructional leadership. As stated in the foreword (2007, p.6):

> with its first-of-its kind approach that links quantitative results with qualitative insights on what high performing and rapidly improving school systems have in common

policy-makers may choose, from a range of best possible practices, the most suitable practice for their particular systems. The report states that without an effective principal a school is unlikely to have a culture of high expectations or strive for continuous improvement (p.29). Thus the selection and development of effective instructional leaders is highly important, as is the necessity of getting the right teachers to become principals, developing instructional leadership skills and focusing each principal's time on instructional leadership (p.32). The principal's duties include:

> Getting the right people to become teachers developing them into effective instructors ensuring that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child.

The need for principals to focus on instructional leadership rather than school administration is acknowledged since instruction is the key to improvement rather than huge education budgets and small classes. The school leader has to define what good instruction looks like, ensure that good instruction is given consistently and ensure that quality teachers are employed.

The three reports, each one of which confirmed the need for research into instructional leadership, supply information on the current context in which the question of the implementation of instructional leadership in post-primary schools in Ireland can be discussed. Research and interrogation is called for in CBR (2007), definitions of school leadership are deemed a necessity in OECD (2008), and quality teachers are seen as a requisite in McKinsey (2007).

## 6.5 Need for definitions

### 6.5.1 Introduction

Before commencing the review of "general literature" it is necessary to seek definitions for the term "instructional leadership" and related terms.

### 6.5.2 What is instructional leadership?

Subsequent to the events described in chapter 4, the following rhetorical questions were asked by the author who already had some knowledge of the practice of instructional leadership from the Texan principals. The tentative answers, which were then given, are presented here, in italics, so that the reader has the same information as the author had when embarking on the literature review and interview programme (Table 1, stages 9,10, chapter 1.3, p.10):

What is instructional leadership? *As practised by the Texan principals, this is leadership, which ensures optimum teaching and learning opportunities for the students.*

Who is the instructional leader? *The principal is the instructional leader in the Texan model.*

Why is instructional leadership important in Ireland? *Both the ministerial statement in 2004 and the NAPD statement in 2005 aspire to the exercise of leadership of teaching and learning by post-primary principals.*

How is instructional leadership implemented? *The Texan principals undertook instructional leadership with the active co-operation of their teachers.*

Where is instructional leadership enacted? *Enacted both throughout the school and within each classroom.*

When is instructional leadership enacted? *Throughout the school day in classrooms and discussed fully and regularly at staff meetings*

As noted in chapter 6.4 recent reports give further information on instructional leadership.

6.5.3 The need for definitions and clarification of terminology. (What definitions of school leadership exist? How can the terms used be clarified for the lay reader?)

a. Introduction

When discussing educational research, the importance of definitions is paramount (Bassey, 1995, pp. 33). In this case the need for definitions was identified as essential in order to move away from the confusion that previously existed in terms of the relationship between different forms of school leadership (Fitzmaurice, 1997).

The author thinks that one reason for confusion in definitions is that common usage is at odds with its meaning in terms of teaching and learning as it is now envisaged in the learning community. In a private conversation (2006), a teacher expressed horror at the term "instructional leadership" since to him it suggested "no more than training or the 3 R's," taught in what he termed an "old-fashioned way".

The search for definitions of instructional leadership resulted in the identification of other forms of leadership related to instructional leadership, including educational, curriculum, and teacher leadership (appendix C).

An understanding of terminology is also essential for those seeking to introduce instructional leadership. The terms "administration, leadership and management" appear to have different meanings not only in different jurisdictions including the US and Ireland but also for different educationalists.

In the US, the terms administrator and educational leader are interchangeable. (Cunningham and Cordeiro, 2006, pp. 3 – 7) in their discussion of educational leadership, quote the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards[1] for school leader standards. Standard 1 reads:

> A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

In Ireland the exploratory interviews with post-primary principals (2001) revealed a distinction between leadership and management. The author also heard the term

[1] Standards designed by the Council of Chief State Officers, Washington, DC.

"managerialism" used in conversations between educators to denote an obstacle to school reform.

6.5.4 Definitions: leadership, management, administration and managerialism.

a. Leadership

It became clear during the reading that leadership and its related terms describe more about what people do in practice than identifying any underlying philosophy and theory. Thus, before examining the literature on different kinds of school leadership and the relationship between leadership, management and administration, in order to find answers to the questions which are listed in chapter 6.2, pp. 74,75), it is necessary to determine what leadership is. The notion of personal influence (Sclechty: 1990, p. xix) cited in McEwan (2003, p.4) exercised on others in order to achieve targets, can be found in definitions ranging across fifty years. In recent years there has been a development in the theory of leadership from individual leadership to shared leadership, as seen in the following quotations:

> The "knight on white charger" image of the nineteen fifties has given place to leadership which "involves working with and through others."
> (Sawatski, 2005, p. 93)

> An "Interpersonal influence directed through the communication process towards the attainment of some goal or goals."
> (Tannenbaum, Weschler, and Massarik, 1961, p.24 quoted in McEwan, 2003, p. 3)

In terms of what leaders do, Law and Glover (2000, pp.20, 21) cite Adair's (1983) five leadership characteristics. The leader "gives direction [...] offers inspiration [...] builds teamwork, [...] sets an example [...] gains acceptance". Law and Glover (p.21) state, "a key aspect for Adair is that *real* leadership is that which is 'granted' by others". Palestini (2006, p.1) poses the question "After all, what good is a leader without followers". A useful definition of leadership is found in Daft, (2001, p.5) citing Rost (1993):

> Leadership "is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared experiences.

b. Educational leadership

Despite the immense number of books with "educational leadership" in their titles, definitions of educational leadership are difficult to find presumably because definitions are not considered necessary for two such common words. One simple definition is:

> The process of bringing up children (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1973)

However as both Coleman and Briggs (2002, p.7) and Bassey (1995, p. 37) argue, definitions of terms such as education are essential in order that no misunderstandings, arising from misinterpretation, can arise. Bassey's definition is:

> the experience and nurture of personal and social developments towards worthwhile living (Bassey 1999, cited in Coleman and Briggs 2002, p.7)

Both education and leadership can be interpreted in different ways and would be fruitful topics for "assumptional dialogues" (Heywood, 2008, p.3)[27]. Heywood's definition is:

> Educational leadership is "an over-arching concept that embraces a concern to ensure that the aims of the school are met" (Heywood, 2008, p.11)

If the reader accepts the definition of leadership as an influence exerted on others to bring all forward, educational leadership appears to be that influence pertaining to schools and young people.

c. Management

Definitions of management are often presented in terms of what managers do in contrast to what leaders do. Fullan (1991, pp.157, 158) cited in Law and Glover (2000, p.13), states that:

> *management* 'involves designing and carrying out plans, getting things done, working effectively with people' whereas *leadership* 'relates to mission, direction, inspiration.

Bennis (1989, p.45) cited by McEwan (2003,p.3), states that "the manager asks how; the leader asks what and why". Heywood (2009) makes little distinction between leadership and management.

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[27] An item concerning "assumptional dialogues" was not understood in the sample study questionnaire (December 2008) and therefore the item was omitted from the questionnaire distributed in January 2009. Survey details are given in chapters 8, 9, and 10.

d. Administration

Administration may be defined as supporting management on a day-to-day basis. Historically it was synonymous with management (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary 1973). Operationally it deals with "the minutiae of the organisation" (Law and Glover, 2000, p.14).

e. Managerialism

Hoyle and Wallace (2005, p. 68) define "managerialism" as being "leadership and management to excess" which is seen when governments (2005, p. vii), while expecting school leaders to make reforms, then put constraints on innovation. Reforms are brought in to "reform" the unforeseen problems arising from the previous reform phase. Hoyle and Wallace (2005, pp. 1, 20) discuss the ambiguities, which school leaders face in their daily lives as a result of the clash between leadership, management and managerialism.

f. Use of terms

The US literature does not distinguish between the role of the school leader and the administrator. The terms "principal" and "administrator" are used interchangeably by Sergiovanni (1991) in Jossey-Bass (2000, pp.269-270). Current literature suggests that leadership and management overlap which brings the three terms together (Law and Glover, 2000; Heywood, 2009). The relevance of this for the researcher is that the terms: leadership, management and administration can have different meanings depending on the source.

g. Conclusion

The author initially found confusion in the literature relating not only to instructional leadership as Fitzmaurice did (1997) but generally to school leadership. In more recent literature, there appears to be some enlightenment as will be seen in the review of "unofficial literature", (chapter 6.7). In the following section (chapter 6. 6) the definitions of leadership terms that emerged from the concurrent literature review and interviews in 2006/2007 are stated as a guide to reading the remaining sections of this chapter and chapter 7.

## 6.6 Definition of leadership terms arising from the data in the literature review and concurrent interviews in 2006/2007

### 6.6.1 Introduction

Since this was an illuminative evaluation study, the author was searching for data that would emerge from the literature in the same way as data would emerge from other appropriate tools including interviews and conversations. Such data would serve to add further enlightenment to the question of instructional leadership as the way forward for post-primary principals. For the purposes of this thesis, the literature review and the interviews have been presented, as traditionally as possible, in chapters 6 and 7 respectively. The data from each of these two research instruments inform the other (chapters 1.2.2 and 1.2.3). Thus during the literature review, and the interviews with principals of "best-practice schools" and other educators the author put together tentative definitions of leadership terms which might be used in the proposed survey of post-primary principals.

### 6.6.2 The tentative definitions

In the interests of clarity for the reader, the author decided to present, at this point, the definitions of educational leadership, curriculum leadership and instructional leadership:

- Educational Leadership

  Educational leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who through their shared professional experience in schools intend real changes and outcomes in the process of bringing up (i.e. ensuring optimum development of intellectual, spiritual and physical abilities) of children.

- Curriculum Leadership

  Curriculum leadership is the task of developing the plan for the guidance and improvement of student learning in schools necessitating reference to content, assessment and evaluation.

- Instructional Leadership

  Instructional leadership is the dynamic delivery of the curriculum in the classroom through strategies based on reflection, assessment and evaluation to ensure optimum learning.

- Teacher Leadership

  Teacher leadership is the exercise of the above leaderships, based on a thorough understanding of the pedagogic knowledge base for teaching and current developments in those areas, in the classroom giving support and encouragement to colleagues, *including the principals*, to ensure the best teaching and learning opportunities for the students *and all members of the school community and beyond*[28].

The italics show the amendments made in the light of the data from the concurrent interviews, which are described in chapter 7.

## 6.7 A general review of the "unofficial" literature.

### 6.7.1 Introduction.

Having presented definitions of leadership, educational leadership, management, managerialism and administration, it is necessary to review the literature, which describes their use in schools. Definitions for all leadership types, which are referred to in this thesis, are included in the appendices (appendix C).

In this section the author reviews the "unofficial" literature in order to learn more about instructional leadership. The sub-headings are derived from the questions, which emerged from the earlier stages of research (Table 1, stages 1,8, chapter 1.3, p.10).

### 6.7.2 Educational leadership, educational management, administration and instructional leadership (What is the relationship between instructional leadership and other forms of school leadership?)

a. Forms of school leadership- the context

It had become clear that instructional leadership did not operate in a vacuum and an understanding of the context in which it would be implemented, would necessitate looking at other forms of school leadership.

[28] Italics denote amendments made in light of data from interviews with principals and other educators (chapter 7.6.3.)

By this stage of the reading, it seemed that the author could use the term "educational leadership" (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995) in place of "school leadership", to cover all such terms which may come and go as fashion dictates[29], arguing that an overall school leadership is necessary, in order to monitor all areas of leadership and /or management to ensure an effective school devoted to teaching and learning. It was becoming apparent that instructional leadership was sometimes used to denote one element in overall school leadership (Heywood, 2008) or to denote overall school leadership (McEwan, 2003).

b. Development in understanding of school leadership

The Jossey-Bass *Reader on Education Leadership* (2000) is a useful, initial source of information for the major developments in, and concerns relating to, educational leadership in the decade prior to the millennium. The legacy of business theories and practices, not always successfully applied to schools in the seventies and eighties, as "top-down reform" (p.1) is noted. Caldwell (2005, p.204) refers to recent research which shows the wide range of skills held by head teachers who "on some dimensions out-perform leaders in business." This suggests a development in the understanding of what school leaders do. A similar development was seen in the answers of the principals and deputy principals in the survey as discussed in chapter 10. The Total Quality Management movement of the eighties, although no longer as fashionable as then, did bequeath "accountability, shared decision making and focus on leadership as an invaluable part of school change." (Jossey-Bass: 2000, p.1).

Glasser (1990) in Jossey-Bass (2000, p. 29) stated that research in industry had shown "that boss-management is much less effective than lead-management, but this research has had little effect on much of industry and almost no effect on the schools." The difference between educational organizations and commercial organisations is noted by Law and Glover (2000, p.167, citing Buckley and Styan 1988: 7) as being due to the "multiple roles" performed by teachers.

[29] Total Quality Management was a term used frequently in 1980s. Other leadership terms including transformational, invitational and authentic are listed in appendix C.

Fullan (2000, p. xx) in his introduction to the Jossey-Bass book identifies "broad-based" leadership, which emphasises "sharedness" and "leader of leaders" as the only way forward in such complex and uncertain times. It appears, as Sawatski (2005) stated, that leadership is something to be shared in the 21st century.

c. The principal - leader or manager?

McEwan (2003, p. xii), referring to her own experience of principalship, states that the challenge for the principal is "how to create a worthy vision and how to motivate and inspire a disparate group of students, teachers and parents toward that vision". Having commented on the difference between leadership and management, she suggests that there is a move towards the former: "The faculty came to look on their principal as a leader rather than a manager" (2003, p. xii).[30] This comment appears to make the traditional distinction between leadership and management. A closer reading suggests that in relation to the work of the school principal, McEwan is using management in a different sense from Heywood's (2008, p.10) argument that every teacher is a manager. It is used by McEwan to denote the responsibilities of the principal concerning the provision of buildings and budgets as distinct from instructional leadership which she claims focuses directly on learning and teaching (2003, p.7). McEwan's list of responsibilities other than teaching and learning would be familiar to Irish post-primary principals according to their response in 2001 and as found by Leader and Boldt (1994). However McEwan included those responsibilities alongside teaching and learning duties.

A report by Arthur Andersen LLB (1997, p.27) is cited by McEwan (2003, p. 2) which stated that the:

> school principal has the greatest single impact on student performance. As a result we believe that increased attention and funding needs to be directed towards programs that attract, evaluate, train and retain the best principals.

[30] The use of the term "instructional leadership" is discussed fully in chapter 6.7.3. Here it is interpreted simply as school leadership.

Other recent reports in the US are referred to by McEwan (2003, p.2) who cites Olson (2000) and Richard (2000). These reports also suggest "The focus of principals must be shifted from management to instructional leadership"; that "Instructional leadership is essential to developing and sustaining excellent schools" that "There is a shortage of trained administrators who are capable of handling the demands of instructional leadership."

It appears that McEwan's (2003) ideal principal will have an overview of both aspects of the school's organisational activities, management and leadership. This is akin to the range of duties described by the Texan principals under the term "instructional leadership" (chapter 2.3.5.) and also similar to the experience of the author as acting principal/deputy principal of a large Irish post-primary school.

The distinction therefore between leadership and management appears to be less powerful than in former times. Law and Glover (2000, p.13, 15) acknowledge the debate over "the distinctions between *leadership* and *management*" but state that in reality, the distinctions [...] are not so clearly defined". They suggest, referring also to administration, that each of the three functions requires "different but *overlapping* skills, knowledge and abilities". Sawatski (2005, p. 93) writes:

> In this high performance era it is pointless talking about managing staff, without at the same time talking of leading staff
> Sawatski (2005, p. 93)

There is some evidence in recent literature in Ireland (CBR, 2007; Heywood, 2009) that the traditional view of leadership and management as two separate entities is changing.

d. The teacher - leader or manager?

In the classroom context, Heywood writes that "every teacher is a manager" (2008) ensuring, in an act of self-management on their behalf, the consent of the students to be directed or controlled (Heywood, 2008, p.3). This act enables leadership of learning to occur. Discussion of leadership and management in the classroom, which suggests that they are inter-related and not two distinct and separate entities, also

introduces the notion of discipline[31](Marzano, 2003; Heywood, 2008). Glatthorn, Boschee, and Whitehead (2006, p.258) in a book designed for curriculum leadership courses introduces yet another element, change agency.

This is also mentioned by Heywood (2009, p. xxi) who, acknowledging the confusion that has existed in the relationship between leadership and management, writes that the two elements are "always about change" (Heywood, 2009, p. xxi). The relationship between these elements will be discussed in the section on curriculum leadership, chapter 6.7.4, p99.

An interesting development in the understanding of leadership in Ireland is that teachers have come to recognise the principal as leader of the school while they themselves are leaders in the classrooms (CBR, 2007). This could be a consequence of the history of Irish education whereby the teacher occupied and still does occupy, in some cases, according to data from the 2004 and 2006/2007 interviews, the position of "king in the castle" in the classroom (chapter 3.3.3, p. 49 and chapter 7. 2.5, p.129). On the other hand it may denote progress towards leadership of learning in a collegial, co-operative setting as identified by Heywood (2008, p. xii). The idea that a staff member other than the principal could be the instructional leader was suggested by Fitzmaurice (1997, p.137) as deserving further research. To go further and suggest that each teacher might take on the role introduces the idea of teacher leadership.

What was becoming clear to the author from the data at this point was the notion of teacher leadership as a possible means of bringing instructional leadership into post-primary schools in Ireland. The question as to how this might be done remained. It was hoped that further clarification would come from the interviews in 2006/2007 and later stages of the research (Table 1, stages 10 - 12 chapter 1.3, p.10).

[31] Another fruitful topic for staff room debate and / or "assumptional dialogue" is the relationship between learning, discipline and control.

e. Emerging data, practice and development

Marzano (2003, p. 176) quotes research by Blase and Kirby (2000) who "identified three leader characteristics as critical to building personal relationships that are conducive to effective reform efforts: 1) optimism 2) honesty and 3) consideration."

In those words, a picture of the expected practice of a school leader, whether as classroom teacher or school principal, emerges since the leader's influence in a school devoted to the bringing up of children must be a positive force. (The fact that leadership is not always exercised for good is recognised but is beyond the scope of this thesis).

6.7.3 Instructional leadership: importance and development. (What is the philosophy and practice of instructional leadership?)

a. Instructional leadership – developing ideas

The literature demonstrates that as in the case of leadership, the meaning of instructional leadership has undergone change since the term was first used. Instructional leadership is identified as one of two essential forms of leadership in the attainment of optimum teaching and learning:

- "There is "an increasing emphasis on instructional leadership which has been rebranded as learning-centred leadership" (Davies and Davies, 2005, p.15)

the other being curriculum leadership (Bradley, 2004; Heywood, 2008; Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead, 2006) which will be discussed in the next section, chapter 6.7.4, p.99.

The relationships between instructional leadership and the school effectiveness movement and the school improvement movement, to be discussed in this chapter, 6.7.7, p109 is also seen in the literature:

- "If you want to have an effective school characterised by teachers and students who are dedicated to learning, become an instructional leader" (McEwan, 2003, p.10)

b. Developing philosophy and theory of instructional leadership.

The meaning of the term "instructional leadership" has gone through different stages since its first use in the nineteen seventies when the focus was on the principal as "instructional leader" (McEwan, 2003, p.5-6). In proposing "one of the earliest models of instructional leadership", Sergiovanni (1984, 1991) cited by McEwan (2003, p.5) envisaged the principal as taking the main responsibility for its implementation. His view (1992, p.42), quoted in McEwan (2003, p.104), that self-management would become more important as principal leadership "decreased in importance", is opposed by McEwan (p.104) who amends the statement to:

> While self-management will increase there will never be a substitute for a strong instructional leader. This individual will need a cadre of strong teacher leaders to share the leadership load.

By 2001, Sergiovanni suggests that moving from "power over" to "power to" is the path towards a "morally based" leadership, which the member of NAPD (j) mentioned in the interview in 2006, described in chapter 7. 2, p. 126.

By 2001 Sergiovanni, again cited by McEwan (2003, p.6) had moved towards a new theory of school leadership, which "focuses on the school as a community and the principal as servant" a concept of leadership identified by Bradley (2004, p. vii) as "servitor leadership". In these writings on the theory of instructional leadership, there appears to be a move in the direction of the learning community, which is advocated by Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead (2006, p.262).

Sergiovanni, in his foreword to Rallis and Goldring's book (2000: p. vii), welcomes a model of instructional leadership, which is more inclusive than earlier models. He warns that "educators have a history of taking new ideas and understanding them in the terms of existing categories" thus ensuring that "old theories are dressed up a little but remain unchanged"[32]. As an example of this he shows how "The principal as the instructional leader of the school progressively empowers teachers by letting them share in the decision-making process" yet remains at the centre getting teachers to do what it is that the principal wants and "have them enjoy it at the same time"(ibid. p.

[32] This is a danger with any innovation if it is not soundly prepared on the basis of research. Reforms come and go because preparations have not been thorough in terms of research, communication, and evaluation.

viii). Sergiovanni welcomes the work of Rallis and Goldring (2000) who redefine "what it means to be a principal in charge" (ibid. viii), since such leaders "are leaders in the truest sense of the word. They took the stewardship responsibility seriously". As noted above, McEwan's theoretical vision of an instructional leader differs from Sergiovanni's current thinking. However she also states that instructional leadership must make "sure that everyone shares in the leadership and responsibility for reaching the destination" (2003, p.135). It appears that the principal as instructional leader is sharing that responsibility.

In a handbook for principals as instructional leaders, Zepeda (2003, p.3) states that "the construct of instructional leadership is a complex one" and deriving the meaning of the term is "elusive". She agrees with Hoy and Hoy's (2003) assertion (2003, p.1) that "Schools are about teaching and learning; all other activities are secondary to these basic goals". Zepeda (2003) offers a construct for instructional leadership (as a means of understanding its practice), which has been developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2002). This construct includes purposes, key ideas and the leadership needed by the principals.

In the reality of practice McEwan's (2003, p.103) vision of teachers as part of a team seems to approach the vision of Sergiovanni (1992a in Jossey-Bass, 2000, pp.269-286), Heywood (2008), Marzano (2003, pp. 174-175). It appears that the development in practice is closely linked to the development in the philosophy of instructional leadership.

c. Practice of instructional leadership

Regarding implementation of instructional leadership, is a "top-down approach" to be adopted or a collegial one? The literature showing the historical development of instructional leadership suggests the latter approach generally. Marzano (2003) suggests that a member of staff, other than the principal, may best undertake the responsibilities of the "instructional leader". This may also serve to remove the "time" constraint identified in Irish principalship by Leader and Boldt (1994) and confirmed by Irish principals in both sets of interviews in this study in 2001/2002 and 2006/2007. The model does not however fit easily into the current climate in post-

primary schools where education cuts are putting constraints on the posts of responsibility system as well as teaching and learning provision. However it does fit into the philosophy of every teacher being an instructional leader.

McEwan's (2003) view of instructional leadership puts student learning at the centre. A recent report in US prepared for the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals by the Educational Research Service (2000) concluded, "the impact of principal leadership on student achievement is a compelling one" (McEwan, 2003, pp. 9-10).

Referring to the experience of different principals and educators, she summarises their thoughts stating that to become such a principal would require that "the desire to be so was present, coupled with the support and feedback of staff, ability to learn on the job and through course work, and ability to constantly think about how to do it." The comment of Jones, a principal in West Chicago is cited:

> To be an instructional leader, you must be a person who eats and sleeps teaching and learning. Instructional leaders must constantly think about how to organize a school and instruction so that all can learn (p. 10-11).

Differences of opinion are seen in relation to classroom participation. That leadership of learning can be exercised at a remove from the classroom is stated in the OECD Report (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008). Marzano (2003, p. 175) seeing the principal as the catalyst for innovation in teaching and learning, does not advise that principals visit the classrooms whereas McEwan regrets that some principals are reluctant to do so (2003, pp.87, 89).

What information was there in the literature on the practice of instructional leadership in terms of training, job descriptions and implementation? Sergiovanni (1992a) in Jossey-Bass (2000, pp. 269-286) refers to the description by Louv (1990) of the work of a female principal who is an exemplary instructional leader. She pays attention to teaching and learning, to charting, facilitating and monitoring the school's educational program, is "in and out of classrooms regularly, often taking over the teaching of classes", is a "no-nonsense disciplinarian, as well as a devoted and loving one". But Sergiovanni (1992a) draws the conclusion that "all this instructional leadership" just is not enough to make this schoolwork. It is the principal's "servant leadership"

creating a clean and safe environment, which makes the difference for her students and then enables them to learn.

This coincides with the comments of a principal [33]before the 2006 interviews who included a safe school in her definition of "instructional leadership."

Zepeda (2004, p.2), who sees the principal as a leader of school improvement, "a multi-faceted process that never really ends", notes that principals, who are instructional leaders, "have been and will continue to motivate teachers, students, and others towards improvement"

Zepeda (2004, p. 14) states that it is the teacher who will "mobilize a plan of improvement", suggesting that "perhaps a sixth item should be the building of learning communities" inclusive of teachers.

d. Relevance of instructional leadership in different types of school. (Is instructional leadership appropriate in all schools?

In a report on an international "pairing" study (2006/2007), published in a special edition of International Studies in Educational Administration (Ylimaki and Jacobsen, 2007), the first paper outlines approaches to instructional leadership as it is being implemented in four "high-poverty, culturally diverse" US schools; (Ylimaki, 2007). A second paper (Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford, 2007) describes the experience of instructional leadership in three Australian schools. In both jurisdictions the variety of teaching strategies is noted and instructional leadership is seen to be appropriate.

Having shown that the instructional leadership of the eighties was directive, associated with the effective schools movement, Ylimaki (2007) refers to Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead's (2006) shared model of instructional leadership as a more suitable leadership. She cites Marks and Printy's (2003) conclusions from their research studies:

> When teachers perceive principals' instructional leadership behaviours to be appropriate, they grow in commitment, professional involvement, and willingness to innovate. Thus, instructional leadership can be transformational.

[33] Private conversation with principal of community school

Ylimaki (2007) suggests that schools in the twenty-first century require the shared model of instructional leadership. She also notes the effect of past experience on principals, advocating "strong internship experiences and ongoing mentoring in order to develop a mental model of how to make a difference in challenging schools". Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2007) who acknowledge the complexity of school leadership explain that, in Australia, the term "educational leadership" is preferred to the term "instructional leadership". They explain that school principals, in their efforts to ensure good learning outcomes for their students use both direct and indirect (i.e.: working with and through others) instructional leadership in "the core business of the school".

From such studies, it is clear that instructional leadership is seen internationally to have a vital role to play in the leadership of teaching and learning.

e. Instructional Leadership in Ireland

At this point the author was turning her attention to Ireland to see if there were any hints about the philosophy and practice of instructional leadership, however that was interpreted in the literature. A five-year multi-pronged research and development project "Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century" (TL 21, 2005), based in National University of Ireland, (NUI) Maynooth, seeks to "experiment with, develop and implement innovative and active teaching methods that promote higher quality, and more engaged learning among school pupils" (TL 21 Interim Report, October 2005 p. i). Principals and deputy principals with teachers from the schools are involved in a project, which will "inform policy and practice at national level to help position Irish schooling for the challenges of "the knowledge society" (2005, p. i). Learning communities are advocated in TL21 similar to those described in the OECD, 2005 study.[34] Coolahan (TL21, 2005), in the preface to the TL21 report, refers to the current transitional period in Irish education, as the movement from the traditional industrial model which has been described by Abbott and Ryan (2000, p. 215) towards the learning community where teachers are encouraged, in the words of the OECD, 2005 report "to become more inquiring, reflective practitioners, and to do so in collaboration with their colleagues". The latter seems somewhat akin to the

[34] OECD Report 2005: Teachers Matter.

"inquiry-centred school" (Heywood, 2008, p. 3) in which instructional leadership plays a significant part. Coolahan (TL21, 2005, p. i) refers to a "wide repertoire of pedagogic styles" and "creativity re: curriculum and assessment". Feedback on the progress of action research is given by teachers of various subject areas. In those reports there are several references to the benefit of research for teaching and learning although few use the term "instructional leadership". Such initiatives may be creating the change in attitudes in Irish education noted in the CBR (2007).

It appears that there is a paucity of current writing on instructional leadership in Ireland despite the aspirations of the Minister for Education (2004) and NAPD (2005). The three unpublished Master's theses researched during the nineteen nineties are:

- Instructional leadership: A Study of Understanding and Practice in the among a Sample of Post-Primary School Principals (Hackett, 1996);
- An Exploration of the Opportunities and the Constraints to the Enactment of Instructional Leadership (Kelleher, 1997)
- The Instructional Leadership Role of the Teaching Principal in Ireland. (Fitzmaurice, 1997).

6.7.4 Curriculum leadership (What is curriculum leadership in theory and practice?)

a. Definition

The review of literature on curriculum leadership suggested a similar confusion to that which has been found in relation to instructional leadership (Fitzmaurice, 1997). Relating to school practice based on research evidence, Marzano (2003, p.106) states that the term "curriculum" is used "so broadly in some cases that it is difficult to converge on a meaning".

Heywood (2008, p.23) provides a footnote as to the "common" everyday usage of the term: "At one level it is used to describe all subjects (contents) that comprise the course of studies that an individual pursues" i.e.: school curriculum, subjects taught by a teacher, "a list of topics" at higher level. He makes a distinction between that usage and his own usage, stating:

> curriculum is "the formal mechanism through which educational aims (are intended) to be achieved. As such, it embraces all the factors that contribute to content, assessment and evaluation, instruction and learning" (Heywood, 2008, p.382)

Bradley (2004) citing Glatthorn (1987) offers a similar definition:

> The curriculum is the plan made for guiding learning in the schools, usually represented in retrievable documents (or technology) of several levels of generality, and the actualisation of those plans in the classroom, as experienced by the learner and as recorded by an observer (usually the teacher). Those experiences take place in a learning environment that also influences what is learned (Bradley, 2004, p.25)

b. Curriculum - its development in the literature

In order to understand curriculum leadership, the author found it was necessary to look at curriculum both in theory and in practice and to unravel the relationship between curriculum and instruction recognising its historical development as outlined in Clandinin and Connelly (1992, pp. 365-378). They note that in the early literature:

> the implicit linking of the idea of curriculum to subject matter instead of classroom practice embedded the means-end distinction that has characterised, and often plagued, the field since.

Bradley (2004) states that there are three types of curriculum: the curriculum itself (formal, planned curriculum), the hidden curriculum (unplanned curriculum) and the null curriculum (whereby parts of the curriculum are abandoned due to the explosion of knowledge)[35]. He considers that the null curriculum can lead to convergent thinking and the loss of the opportunity for lateral thinking, which arises from the hidden curriculum. Such lateral thinking encourages teaching, which helps to overcome the received curriculum. Given the confusion in definitions, Bradley (2004), as noted in chapter 2.3.6, p.33, suggests that these leaderships can be implemented by creating operational definitions and putting them into practice "rather than wasting valuable time on rhetorical discussions about what the definitions mean".

Bradley (2004, p.17), whose pragmatic approach to the study of curriculum is based on Tyler's (1950) rationale: design, development, implementation and evaluation,

[35] Abandonment of curriculum may also occur during educational cutbacks. in the author's experience.

aims to identify "practical strategies and solutions for the "how to" of curriculum work".

c. Curriculum leadership in practice

Bradley (2004, p. 57) stresses that curriculum must be designed to ensure its implementation in the classroom (p.57). For this reason, it is essential that the teachers are involved in the creation of the curriculum and consequently share ownership:

> The integration and congruence between curriculum and instruction should be the ultimate aim of every school's curriculum design and the process used to accomplish its fulfilment (Bradley, 2004, p. 57).

However such integration, although worthwhile, is not easy according to Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead (2006, p.259) who state that:

> Involving teachers in deliberations may well take a good deal of courage on the part of the administrator, but can produce real benefits for the curriculum and movement in the direction of the learning community.

d. The relationship between instructional leadership and curriculum leadership

The literature tends with some exceptions (Heywood, 2008; Bradley, 2004) to treat curriculum leadership and instructional leadership separately although recognition of the underlying philosophy of curriculum is required to achieve the satisfactory implementation of curriculum leadership through instructional leadership. The relationship between instruction and curriculum is examined by Bradley (2004, p. ix), who states that:

> The philosophical position of this text is that since the purpose of curriculum is the improvement of student learning, this purpose cannot be fulfilled unless there is attention to the instructional program as it relates to curriculum, and a correlation between the two.

Glatthorn, Boschee, and Whitehead (2006, p.258)[36] in a textbook for curriculum planners, note, "instructional leadership is the raison d'être for the curriculum leader". They state (p. 274) that:

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[36] Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead's text book (2006) carries a commendation from Ferrera (Notre Dame de Namur University) for its recognition of the needs of students and its focus on course objectives in any Curriculum Leadership program

> The role of the change agent is to make sure that the educational program is changed in a manner that meets the needs of students to a greater degree.

This statement emphasises the relationship between educational leadership, curriculum leadership, instructional leadership and change in the learning community.

e. Roles of curriculum leader and instructional leader

Bradley (2004.pp.5 -10) differentiates between the roles of educational leader and instructional leader, and curriculum leader. He explains (p.10) that, whereas the educational leader and the instructional leader must undertake their work on a daily basis, the "unique nature" of the curriculum leader's work requires a different approach:

> The curriculum leader is on the fringe of the day-to-day operation of the school. He has time to think, to ponder, to dream, to view the school from the perspective of what ought to be.

6.7.5 Teacher Leadership
a. Introduction

Meanwhile the author had become aware of another type of school leadership in statements, which although they did not go as far as teacher leadership, did emphasise the centrality of teachers to instructional leadership:

> Instructional leadership relates to the performance of individual teachers in delivering the programmes for which they are responsible in the classroom (Heywood 2008, p.16)

and to curriculum leadership:

> the "teacher is an integral part of the curriculum constructed and enacted in classrooms" (Clandinin and Connelly 1992, p. 363)

From such data, it seemed that teacher leadership, a type of leadership, which in the literature is closely related to instructional leadership, should be examined.

b. Teacher leadership-its development.

Lieberman and Miller (2004, pp. 14-31) chart the development of teacher leadership from its original concept "as a form of teacher empowerment" (p.31) to its position now where teacher leaders:

> are determined to become the architects of vibrant professional communities in which teachers take the lead in inventing new possibilities for their students and for themselves
> (Lieberman and Miller, 2004, p. 92)

They demonstrate (p. 6) how schools are challenged by

> the disequilibrium that once-stable communities and nations experience when they are confronted with rapid and far-reaching economic and social change (p.2).

Citing Giddens (2003) who expounded the global clash "of primary importance" between fundamentalism and cosmopolitanism (i.e.: the conflict between those who abhor change and those who welcome it), Lieberman and Miller (2004) state that teacher leadership concerns facing the challenge of societal change. Thus the teacher leaders are now:

> creating learning communities that include rather than exclude, that create knowledge rather than merely apply it and that offer challenge and support to both new and experienced teachers as colleagues.
> (Lieberman and Miller, 2004, pp. 13,14).

c. The philosophy and theory of teacher leadership

Having briefly described the "realities of the profession from the teacher's perspective" which include teacher isolation, a weak knowledge base, conflicting policy directives and the lack of professional growth opportunities, Lieberman and Miller (2004, pp. 9-11) identify collegiality, risk-taking, curriculum design, instructional strategic planning, as essential for teachers in schools of the twenty-first century. They conclude that:

> Central to this expanded vision of teaching is that teachers are also leaders, educators who can make a difference to schools and schooling now and in the future.
> (Liebermann and Miller, 2004, p.11).

.

McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) as cited by Lieberman and Miller (2004, p.26) support their notion that teacher leadership builds effective professional communities, far removed from "the norm of loose collections of teachers who each worked alone".

A similar view of teacher leadership is found in work by Pellicer and Anderson (1995). Citing Wasley (1991), they state that teacher leaders have:

> the ability to engage colleagues in experimentation and then examination of more powerful instructional practices in the service of more engaged student learning.
> (p.17).

In what is at first sight a surprising statement, given the conservative nature of the teaching profession (Lortie, 1975; Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993), Pellicer and Anderson (1995) claim that teachers can become agents for change since "change involves risk: risk-taking is more likely to occur in a stable environment" (p.217). Their comments (p. 217) that "teachers, not administrators, not programs, provide the stability in schools, the stability to promote and sustain change" and "without question teachers are the best and most abundant source of leadership in schools" certainly suggest a major influence for teachers in any innovatory practice.

d. The practice of teacher leadership

An interesting aspect of the review of teacher leadership literature was the similarity of the work practice of current teacher leaders, presented through brief case studies (Lieberman and Miller 2004, pp. 53 - 92), to those work practices necessitated by instructional leadership. Teacher leaders use classroom research, harness information technology in a collegial spirit (i.e.; getting the message to a wider audience) in their journey towards inquiry-oriented schools.

The practices of teacher leaders (Lieberman and Miller, 2004, pp.60, 62) bear similarities to the levels which have been identified by Heywood[37] (2008, p.26) who illustrated his level I and level 2 by citing Angelo and Cross (1993).

These levels were explained to participants on the in-service course in instructional leadership (Division of In-Service Education of Trinity College Dublin, October/December 2008) who were surprised by their significance for students in the classroom.

e. Conclusion

The reading on teacher leadership introduced yet another question into this study of instructional leadership. Do teachers in Ireland have the pedagogic knowledge base in terms of classroom teaching and learning for teacher leadership and/or

[37] The levels (Heywood, 2008, p.26) were identified by him in discussion with Dick Culver. The fourth was formulated by Heywood in discussion with John Cowan (Heywood, interview 2008)

instructional leadership? As has been seen, these two leaderships, in practice, are very similar in terms of classroom practice.

A further question for research is "To what extent are such professional communities found in Ireland?" Such communities may be synonymous with the inquiry-oriented schools.[38]

6.7.6 Teaching, learning and instructional leadership

a. Introduction

The *raison d'être* for the implementation of instructional leadership, according to the NAPD submission 2005 as described in chapter 5.5 is teaching and learning. This was in accord with the comments relating to the "instructional leadership" practice of the Texan principals as described in chapter 2.

Teaching and learning which are identified in the literature as the focii of a school's activities (Heywood 2008, McEwan 2003, Sergiovanni 2001) therefore require specific leadership. They must be tended carefully and cannot be left to chance. The distinctions made between different types of learning (Bowring Carr, 2005; Bradley 2004) and teaching (Law and Glover, 2000) emphasise the need for finding out what those who undertake school leadership understand by "learning" and "teaching". The literature on teaching and learning demonstrates a wide spectrum:

i) from rote learning to deep learning (Bowring-Carr, 2005)

ii) from teaching a received curriculum (Hoyle, 1975) to "teaching" a hidden curriculum [39] (Bradley 2004)

iii) from teaching for recall of information to facilitating problem solving experience (Law and Glover, 2000)

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[38] Heywood's book *"Instructional and Curriculum Leadership"* has as a subtitle *"Towards Inquiry oriented school"* (2008)

[39] It appears that there are implications for Hoyle's (1975) "restricted/extended model of teacher professionalism" since Bradley suggests that valuable learning can occur even where teachers are transmitting a received curriculum. The dynamic relationship between teacher and students, which forms part of Bradley's hidden curriculum and is noted also in Clandinin and Connelly (1992, p. 363) is a means of breaking away from the cycle of restricted professionalism.

b. Teaching

The dynamic relationship of curriculum and instruction (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; Bradley, 2004) in the act of teaching adds another, ever-changing dimension to classroom activity. Bradley (2004, p.26), who makes a distinction between instruction and teaching, states that:

> Instruction is the implementation phase of curriculum. It refers to the learning activities, inside the classroom and out, that are specifically designed to meet the goals or outcomes of the planned curriculum

whereas:

> Teaching refers to those activities that occur in learning settings that are not a part of the planned curriculum. Events, human relationships and other unplanned learning experiences are bound to occur during the school day. When these unplanned learning experiences take place, teaching is occurring, but not instruction. However these "teachable moments" are a valuable part of schooling and, despite the needed emphasis on student accountability, should not be discouraged.

Marzano (2003, p.78) gives an outline, based on research findings (pp.88, 89) of what effective teachers achieve by using a wide variety of instructional strategies, in terms of classroom management:

> establishing and enforcing rules and procedures, carrying out disciplinary actions, maintaining effective teacher and student relationships, maintaining an appropriate mental set for management.

Reeves (2006, p.100, 101) who accepts, as Marzano does (2003, p. 106) that professional teaching practices have "an enormous impact on student achievement" points out that the reality of implementation may fall behind the aspirations, citing the "knowing-doing gap" (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). Acknowledging that his comments arise from reading reports of research, which produced non-generalisable data in 1,500 classroom observations (Learning 24/7, 2005), he[59] argues that each school should conduct similar observations of classroom procedures.

[59] Data from Learning 24/7, 2005 cited by Reeves (2006,pps. 100,101): "Clear learning objectives: 4%. Worksheets: 52%. Lecture: 31%: Monitoring with no feedback: 22%. Students required speaking in complete sentences: 0%. Evidence of assessment for learning: 0%. Evidence of bell-to-bell instruction: 0%. Fewer than one half of students engaged: 82%."

c. Learning

The aim of learning will determine what type of learning is in place (Bowring-Carr, 2005, p.112) whether it is rote learning or "deep learning"(TL21: NUI, Maynooth 2005; Entwistle and Entwistle, 1991 cited by Law and Glover, 2000, p.173).

This brings us back to the school's vision, whose creation is the responsibility of the school principal, being, as mentioned earlier (McEwan, 2003, pp.9-11) one of the tasks of an instructional leader.

Learning is a topic that must be discussed at staff level regularly, not only on special occasions such as the staff seminar (Bowring-Carr, 2005, p. 112). The assessment of the learning process is also crucial to the student:

> More than a decade's worth of evidence shows that simply setting test score goals and attaching sanctions to them does not result in greater learning
> (Darling-Hammond 1997, p. 240, cited in Bowring-Carr (2005, p. 127).

Can real learning, which includes assessment procedures, take place unless teachers are aware of the latest thinking about the learning process? Research is continually supplying new information, which may, having been evaluated, be significant in classroom practice. Bradley (2004, p.123) shows how learning can be enhanced by an understanding of brain research including the primary-recency effect (optimal times for learning).

d. Learning community

McEwan quotes (2003, p. 6) Sergiovanni's (2001: pp. 357-358) idea of school as a learning community with the principal as servant:

> The principal as minister is one who is devoted to a cause, mission or set of ideas and accepts the duties and obligations to serve this cause.

McEwan comments that principals who are instructional leaders are focused on "vision, communication, risk-taking and commitment". She cites the National Association of Elementary Schools Principals' (2001) standards for what principals should do in terms of instructional leadership in leading learning communities as being a very practical description.

These standards focus on the centrality of student and adult learning; high expectations and standards; agreed academic standard for content and instructions; continuous learning for adults and students; multiple sources of data to be used as diagnostic tools; shared responsibility for student/school success.

Bowring-Carr (2005, p.116) distinguishing between the two concepts of a leader and dispersed leadership explains why the learning community requires a leader who will have an overview of its learning, working with members of the community, all of whom continuously "demonstrate school leadership".

Reeves (2006, p.173), using a similar term "learning laboratory" to that used by Cross, 1986, cited by Heywood, (2008 p.17), depicts a learning community in which:

> Great classroom educators in schools committed to public practice are not pulled away from their students to give lectures to demoralised teachers in a dark auditorium, but rather are the leaders of learning laboratories – their own classrooms- in which a small table with a few adult-sized chairs are placed in a corner. Visitors learn more from watching students and teachers work, learn, struggle, and celebrate together.

It appears that sharing behaviours which have been identified earlier (chapter 6.7.2.b, p.89) as important in current leadership theory and practice is also found in the current theories on teaching and learning and in best-practice institutions. The literature review suggests that principals can ensure optimum levels of teaching and learning through their leadership, which will accommodate the developing ideas of delegation, shared leadership and teacher leadership (Caldwell, 2005).

6.7.7 Leadership, school effectiveness, school improvement and instructional leadership (What is the relationship between instructional leadership and the school effectiveness and the school improvement movements?)

a. Introduction

The NAPD statement (2005) linked instructional leadership with effective teaching and learning. The interview with the member of NAPD confirmed the desire of members of NAPD to improve their work as post-primary principals through

instructional leadership (Chapter 7, 2.1, p.126). A number of post-primary principals in those interviews stated that they hoped to bring about change in their schools. That change included improvement in teaching and learning although terms other than "instructional leadership" were used. Interviewee (g) mentioned "invitational leadership" and interviewee (f) mentioned "transformational leadership" (Table 11, p.137). The link between transformational leadership and instructional leadership is noted by Bowring-Carr (2005) who states that:

> Much of the debate about leadership has been focused on transformational leadership with an increasing emphasis on instructional leadership, which has been re-branded as "learning -centred leadership".
> (Bowring-Carr, 2005,p.15)

b. Development of the school effectiveness movement.

A definition of an effective school as Law and Glover (2000, p.146) state, citing Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987:22) was lacking in the 1980s. Subsequent attempts to define the effective school are discussed by Law and Glover (2000, pp. 146, 159) who cite the work of Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston (1979), McPherson (1992), Scheerens (1992), Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995). That leaders must not only have vision but the ability to manage the implementation of that vision is also noted (Law and Glover, 2000, p.126).

c. The link between instructional leadership and the school effectiveness movement and the school improvement movement.

The literature review established that there is a link between instructional leadership and the school effectiveness and the school improvement movements. Whereas:

> school effectiveness is trying to find out what is to be changed in schools in order to become more effective [...] school improvement is trying to find out how schools can change in order to improve.
> (New Perspectives for Learning – Briefing Paper 27)

In other words school leaders must be aware of what makes an effective school and how that may be achieved. Instructional leadership is shown to be the method.

Marzano, (2003; pp.172, 175), citing relevant leadership studies including the work of Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995), states (p.172) that "leadership could be considered the single most important aspect of effective school reform" relating to

student achievement. He asserts (p. 172) that research studies, mainly US in origin, conducted over the previous thirty five years show that "leadership has a strong relationship" with school mission and goals, school climate, teacher attitudes, classroom practices of teachers, the organisation of curriculum and instruction, students' opportunity to learn. He argues that schools can achieve in teaching and learning if they base their policies on the findings from such research.

McEwan (2003, pp.7-10) also notes that research taken as a whole into school effectiveness, principal effectiveness, instructional leadership, organizational change, teacher effectiveness research, curriculum alignment, programme coupling i.e. "how interaction of practice with district, school and classroom impacts student learning" can clarify the relationship between instructional leadership and school effectiveness. She cites syntheses of that research by Persell and Cookson (1982), Rutherford (1985), and Hallinger and Heck (1996), as being most suitable for the needs and time constraints of a "beleaguered" principal (p.8) "beset by discipline problems, budget deficits and broken down boilers" interested in becoming an instructional leader. McEwan (2003, p.10) concludes that "if you want to have an effective school characterised by teachers and students who are dedicated to learning, become a strong instructional leader".

d. The requisites for the practice of instructional leadership: a comparison between models of instructional leadership, school effectiveness and school improvement.

McEwan's "7 Essentials of Instructional Leadership" and "7 Steps Towards Instructional Leadership" (2003) bear similarities to Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore's (1995), "Eleven Factors for Effective schools" and to Tobergate and Curtis' (2002) school improvement tasks, as listed below:

- Professional leadership
- Shared vision and goals
- A learning environment
- Concentration on teaching and learning
- Purposeful teaching
- High expectations

- Positive reinforcement
- Monitoring progress
- Pupils' rights and responsibilities
- Home school partnership
- A learning organisation

(Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995, p.8)

7 Essentials of Instructional Leadership

- Have vision
- Have the knowledge base
- Are willing to take risks
- Are willing to put in long hours
- Are willing to change and grow constantly
- Thrive on change/ambiguity

(McEwan, 2003, p. 14)

7 Steps Towards Instructional Leadership

- Establish, implement and achieve academic standards.
- Be an instructional resource for your staff.
- Create a school culture and climate conducive to learning.
- Communicate the vision and mission of your school.
- Set high expectations for your staff and yourself.
- Develop teacher leaders.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships with students, staff and parents.

(McEwan, 2003, p. 15)

Linking instructional leadership with school improvement, Zepeda (2004, p.14) cites research by Tobergate and Curtis (2002), which states that effective principals:

- build relationships
- recognise the need
- understand change
- build support structures
- create the new focus

### 6.7.8 The constraints to the implementation of instructional leadership (What are the obstacles to the implementation of instructional leadership?)

a. Introduction

The author became aware during this stage of the research that the introduction of instructional leadership might meet with opposition. This is not unexpected where innovation is concerned (Swan, 1996).

The evidence from the interviews (2006/2007) was that some post-primary principals were experiencing difficulties or had experienced difficulties when introducing new programmes within their schools. To avoid such obstacles, careful preparation would be required many months in advance of its implementation. A first step would be to identify possible obstacles from the literature and from the experience of interested parties as has been undertaken throughout this research.

The constraints included school culture, resistance to change, and external forces (including governmental policies and trade unions) as well as the learning style (Kolb, 1984), character and temperament (Keirsey and Bates, 1984) of the instructional leaders. The author suggests the use of the term "self-management" to denote the control of traits and behaviours that can influence action.

b. Self-management.

Fitzmaurice (1997, p.134), having identified the constraints to the practice of instructional leadership by a teaching principal in a primary school, states that: "The only barrier that cannot be overcome is thinking it is impossible". McEwan (2003, pp. 11,12) identified from her experience and research, a related constraint: "lack of vision, will or courage".

c. Gap between philosophy, theory and practice.

Research by Ames (1989) is quoted by McEwan (2003, p.11) as showing that, although instructional leadership had been seen as "most effective in achieving results in America's (US) schools", "instructional leadership behaviours" were not

implemented by all principals. Ames (1989) also identified discrepancies between the perceptions of the principals of themselves and their teachers' perceptions. As mentioned in chapter 6.7.6 b, p. 106, Reeves (2006, pp.100/101), citing Pfeffer & Sutton, (2000), refers to the knowing-doing gap which allows "colleagues return to classrooms minutes after an apparently effective professional development presentation and...nothing *happens*"[1] He also cites research reported in Learning 24/7 (2005) which identified the "enormous gap between professional development about effective teaching practices and the actual implementation of those practices." The practice of instructional leadership may not necessarily match the philosophy and theory as seen in Fitzmaurice's (1997) work on a science programme for a primary school (Heywood, 2008).

d. Trade Unions

The problem of collective bargaining is identified by McEwan (2003, p.12). Referring to Fink and Resnick's (2001) work, she states "Contracts are written specifically to protect teachers from their principals' intrusion on instructional and curricular decisions, making it difficult for instructional leaders to engage in the kind of collaborative discussion, planning and problem solving regarding instruction that are essential if schools are to improve".

The perceived[2] role of the trade unions is also an obstacle in Ireland as reported by interviewees in the exploratory studies in Ireland (2001 and 2004) as well as the data from the 2006/2007 principal interviews, running concurrently with this review of literature.

e. Culture

In Ireland, the TL21 (2005) project has identified culture in schools as a constraint to teaching and learning. Although acknowledging the *effectiveness* of teaching and learning in Ireland which is, citing the OECD 2005 report, "seen to produce the goods

[1] Reeves' (2006) italics

[2] The author refers to the perceived role of the trade unions as the literature suggests that procedures are available to address the issue of weak teachers (Wragg, Haynes, Wragg, and Chamberlin, (2000) Walshe, 1997).

in terms of measurable grades", Hogan (TL21, 2007, p.2) writes that the TL21 research project is concerned with the *quality* of teaching and learning whereas "post-primary schools are still very much in the grip of exam-centred attitudes and practices". While recognising the value of curricular initiatives such as TYO in moving teaching and learning practice forward, the researchers found, in introducing the project, that some teachers expressed concern about working with others in the classroom (p.3). Changes in legislation may occur but attitudes change more slowly. That professional development courses for teachers are not mandatory remains an obstacle to change as noted in chapter 2.2.2. p. 22.

Although the Texan principals visited classrooms as instructional leaders, McEwan (2003, p.12) reports a wariness in some American (US) principals to visit classrooms:

> Reticence to visit classrooms informally soon becomes a habit until principals know little or nothing about what is happening instructionally in their schools.

Classroom visits either by the principal or fellow teachers are not a tradition in Irish post-primary schools. In a private conversation, a practising post-primary teacher in Ireland recently described to the author her experience of working for a number of years in a similar school in the UK. Having trained and taught for some years in Ireland she was very surprised that her teaching colleagues in the UK walked into the classroom to collect material while she was teaching.

However there is some evidence in Ireland of a change of attitude to classroom visits, which the Texan principals saw as an integral part of their practice as instructional leaders. This change, with other types of change, is described in the next section.

f. Change

For the purpose of this thesis, a distinction is made between "external change" i.e. societal change (Lieberman and Miller, 2003) and "internal change" i.e. educational reforms. Instructional leadership has been shown to be linked to the effective schools' and improving schools' movements (chapter 6.7.7, p. 109). In both movements there is an element of change, which is known not only to cause unease but also on occasion active opposition.

A review of newspaper reports in September 2008 showed that obstacles to innovation in education still exist despite changes, which include education legislation, reported findings of education research and societal culture. In the UK, Christine Gilbert, the head of OFSTED (*Sunday Telegraph*, 31st August 2008) stated that the problem of weak teachers remained. In Ireland seniority in the VSS section (one part of the post-primary sector in Ireland) has proved to be an obstacle to recent negotiations for salary increases (*Irish Times*, 4 October 2007), as has the possibility of principal evaluation of underperforming teachers. These matters were referred to tri-partite arbitration (management organisations, trade unions and government department)[62].

In a private conversation with educators, the author heard of a changed attitude to classroom inspection in teachers trained in Ireland since the 1998 Education Act[63] as "it is the only way they know". This was confirmed by Tobin's research (2007). Many teachers appointed before that date were said to experience reservations about classroom inspection, particularly in the VSS section. Since many such teachers can expect to remain in classrooms for more than twenty-five years, the wariness about classroom visits will remain in some teachers.

g. Time

In Ireland time remains a constraint according to the TL21 Report (2005). Principals, deputy principals and teacher participants in classroom action research noted time constraints. It appears that little has changed for principals in regard to the lack of time for teaching and learning since Leader and Bolt's survey (1994, p.88).

McEwan (2003, p.13) also discussing time constraints cites recent research from the Public Agenda poll (2001), which found that instructional leadership is challenged by an "overcrowded agenda". Referring to Portin and Williams (1996) findings she states that extra responsibilities were constantly being added without a removal of other duties (2003, p. 13). Noting a difference between strong instructional leaders

[62] By 2009, negotiations between educational partners were underway towards such evaluation by principals

[63] Following 1998 Education Act, other legislation followed over the next ten years (see Appendix A)

and average principals in their use of time, McEwan (p. 13) found the former spend time on "mentoring and coaching", not "evaluating and termination".

h. Paradigms

Paradigms (models of thinking and behaving), which can prevent people from accepting new ideas, are discussed by Bradley (2004, p.93). He suggests that the filtering effect of mindsets may mean that people using their current paradigms are blind to new opportunities and prevented from trying "to discover the future" in a new way. To illustrate this, the McKinsey report (2007), having examined the question of high levels of student attainment internationally, identified small classes and high governmental expenditure as factors not necessary to high achievement levels. In the general literature and presumably teachers' mindsets these factors would be seen as essentials.

A reading of the McKinsey report (2007), which prioritises instructional leadership can at the least engender debate among educators concerning long held beliefs such as the importance of small classes and large budgets may be very necessary at a time of economic downturn when the first cuts are frequently found in educational budgets.

i. Solutions

The literature has shown that constraints, actual or perceived, do exist but that these can be ameliorated in the light of current research (Marzano, 2003) and an understanding of their origin (Bradley 2004).

McEwan (2003), having identified problems related to the implementation of instructional leadership, offers possible solutions.[64] Citing Labovitz and Rosansky's (1997, p.3), she reiterates that the focus for instructional leaders must be on teaching and learning. That focus will be supported by professional development.

[64] Educational Research Service Report 2000: pp.46-75

6.7.9 Training, professional development and instructional leadership (What implications does instructional leadership have for training and professional development?)

a. Introduction

That there has been no tradition of professional development and mandatory lifelong learning for teachers in some states in US (America), the UK or Ireland is regrettable. Recognition now exists among educators that such development is essential due to the focus on teaching and learning through instructional leadership.

b. Professional development-past and present.

McEwan (2003, p.5) contrasts the courses in educational administration in the 1980s which focused on "traditional administration task areas" as they relate to the four classic management functions "planning, organising, leading and controlling" with courses in 2000 in instructional leadership where leaders learn "how to fulfil essential management function through skilful delegation and collaboration while excelling in creating a learning community". Sergiovanni (1992, p. 48) advises that "principals ought to be the leaders of leaders: people who develop the instructional leadership in their teachers". In a handbook accompanied by a CD for supervisors, Zepeda (2003, p. 178) concludes that "it falls to the Principal to get things right", in terms of providing staff development opportunities for administrative team members.

That professional development is not mandatory either in Ireland or Texas was regretted according to evidence in the exploratory studies (Swan, Heywood and Mayo, 2005). The assumption among "senior" Irish post-primary teachers that teachers once trained do not require further training (Swan, 1996) was also noted in the UK:

> It has often been assumed that while teachers may occasionally benefit from "development" opportunities they do not really need further "training" after their initial teacher training.
> (Law and Glover, 2000, p. 247)

However the literature does suggest a development in the recognition of the necessity of such training. Johnson and Edmonson (2005) make a plea for more well designed principal internship courses, which they claim are not the norm in the US. The ASTI

report of the Sub-Committee on Discipline (2004) expressed the need for "professional development for teacher and principal" (95% teachers supported this in the survey). Tomlinson (2004) links training with culture:

> The school needs to articulate a training strategy and plan with clear targets and to develop an appropriate training culture for the school in which staff at all levels embrace the role of training in achieving school objectives.
> (Tomlinson, 2004, p.47)

and Caldwell (2005) identifies a new attitude to professional development due to the focus on learning, already identified in this literature review:

> The unrelenting focus on learning outcomes in the emerging consensus on expectations for schools suggests "innovation in professionalism", in that teachers' work will be research-based, outcomes-oriented, data-driven and team-focused, with lifelong professional learning the norm as it is for medical specialists. (Caldwell, 2005, p.200)

Recent reports in the US, referred to by McEwan (2003, p. 2), citing Olson (2000) and Richard (2000), have highlighted the necessity of training in instructional leadership, which they claim is essential for schools to be effective.

A huge responsibility is seen to rest on the school to provide training for teachers in terms of movement towards a learning community (Reeves: 2006, p.172). Uzole (2003, p.85) writing on teacher induction in Latvia states "schools must be encouraged to promote collegiality and the sharing of expertise.

Induction programmes will only succeed where school communities provide stimulating, creative and supportive learning environments. Schools must therefore become learning organisations, where good practice can be observed and emulated". But how can this be achieved?

c. Training and professional development courses

A brief review of the literature relating to leadership training in the US (America) serves to clarify the requirements, opportunities and problems. Curriculum courses for interns are outlined by Johnson and Edmonson (2005 p. 171) who give an overview of a recently updated principals' training course. They state that principal development courses are less well designed than teacher internship courses although there is a huge need for them.

In Ireland, the introduction (2002) to the Department of Education and Science's Leadership Development for Schools Programme (LDS) identified four kinds of leadership necessary for leaders: Personal Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Organisational Leadership. These elements are built into their leadership courses including Misneach. In terms of course design, the TL21 Report (2005) comments on the importance of "rootedness", which is defined as action research in the immediate culture.

Other courses in the area of instructional leadership recently offered in Ireland include those designed for the VEC in 2008 by Bennett. In relation to models of teaching in the classroom, he has written that:

> Even though the research support for most of the models is extensive, continued application and refinement of the models framework and research tools are not well represented in the current literature on teacher thinking and practice.
> (Bennett and Rottlieb, 2001)

Bennett's own work on instructional intelligence has been developed in the context of the Canadian "standards based model of education" (Peel District School Board: 2004, p.2).

d. Conclusion

Professional development is essential for the maintenance and development of good teaching and learning in a school. New ways are found in the literature to ensure that teachers become professionals even where, as in Ireland, professional development courses are not mandatory. These include the implementation of instructional leadership itself and the use of assumptional dialogues (Heywood, 2008); a sustained focus on teaching and learning at staff meetings (Bowring-Carr, 2005); the recognition of development in cognitive research (Bradley 2004); reflection on the research data arising from TL21 (2005) in Ireland; the inclusion of instructional leadership in leadership course information (LDS, 2002). The data suggests that school-based training is probably the most appropriate in order that all members of staff can appreciate the need for innovation and "own" it through participation in discussion.

6.7.10 Gender :What effect does gender have on instructional leadership?

a. Introduction

The data (from the exploratory studies), which hinted at differences between the leadership practice of male and female principals, indicated that there should be an examination of gender in the review of literature. What then became apparent was the development of a new understanding of gender differences from recent research.

b. Educational context for review of gender literature.

Despite the fact that the teaching profession in US (America), UK and Ireland is predominantly female at teacher level, Law and Glover (2000, p.7), citing Coleman, 1997) state that female principals are still a minority[65]. The evidence from exploratory studies and the concurrent interviews in Ireland suggested that the effect of gender on leadership should not be ignored. Is it possible that female principals in Ireland would approach the implementation of "instructional leadership" differently from their male colleagues? It is interesting to note that in the exploratory study in Texas the principals were female. They had all graduated from curriculum courses, which was a departure from tradition. Male principals had in the past come from coaching backgrounds. It was stated that male teachers were now taking curriculum courses in order to achieve principalship. Innovation demands certain skills from leaders. The author wanted to know whether gender had any significance in the introduction of instructional leadership.

c. Development in gender understanding.

Recent writing on gender suggests that stereotypical images of women as having "greater emotional intelligence" may not necessarily be correct. Tomlinson, (2004, p.27), quoting Barnes' research (1995), refers to the importance of such research since the majority of teachers are women. Law and Glover (2000, p.30), while accepting that women managers have traditionally been considered to be more people-oriented, quote research that suggests that "gender similarities are greater than their differences" (Coleman, 1994 and 1996). Law and Glover (2000) also suggest

[65] Law and Glover (p. 7) quoting Howson 1998 note that in the UK, 52% of secondary school teachers are female; 24% of secondary heads were women.

that a perceived "deficit" in female leadership may be more a matter of lack of training than a lack of experience.

The evidence from current gender research is not necessarily in line with previous "stereotypical findings" (Bradley 2004). Research into brain functions (Bradley 2004, p.114) suggest that more girls than boys are left-sphere dominant (the logical hemisphere processing time, sequence of events, speech, analysis) whereas more boys are right hemisphere dominant (intuitive areas). If correct it could explain some of the issues in society regarding the status of young males and have implications for the curriculum and instructional leadership in the school and in the classroom. Recent developments in neuro-psychology are likely to throw more light on this problem (communication from John Heywood).

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A further factor identified by Law and Glover (p.68) is motivation. They quote Thompson's (1992, p. 260) distinction between men and women in terms of career. Thompson stated that men worked for money and career advancement whereas women valued their work in the classroom. There was some evidence of this in the interviews with teachers in 2004 as described in chapter 3. In the initial exploratory interviews, some difference was noted in the response between the Irish principals (only one female) and the Texan principals (all-female). It seems that recent research identified by Tomlinson (2004) and Bradley (2004) opens up new areas of discussion in regard to the effect of gender.

14. Concluding comments on instructional leadership

The literature review showed that leadership, change and culture are closely related. Schein (2004, p.10) states that "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" which introduces the concept of change. Changes in society over the last thirty years are well documented (Giddens, 2003) but other types of change are relevant too. The principal working within the school culture becomes the agent of change (Schein, 2004, p.11).

The literature review provided evidence of principals bringing about change in the culture of teaching and learning through instructional leadership (McEwan, 2003,

Heywood, 2008, Sergiovanni, 2001). Although the task was accepted as challenging, (Fitzmaurice, 1997) it could be done (Zepeda 2003, 2004) by principals who, either delegated the responsibility of instructional leadership (Marzano, 2003) or took the central role (McEwan, 2003).

The classroom is identified as a vital element in instructional leadership. It is in that location that the teacher is engaged in the dynamic relationship between student, curriculum and instruction in the process of teaching and learning (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; Tomlinson, 2004).

Of the principals' other duties, Schein (2004) states that "management and administration act within the culture" (p.11) which returns the reader to the discussion on the relationship between leadership, management and administration. As the literature revealed, the sharp divisions between those responsibilities are weakening (Law and Glover, 2000). Schools vary "in the way things are done"; thus each school has a different culture (Spillane, 2006; Swan, 1996).

Differences between schools were one of the findings of the author's study of induction (1996), which leads to three questions relevant to this study:

- Is it possible to consider the implementation of instructional leadership in Irish post-primary schools without taking account of the differences between schools?

- Is it possible that some practices that would be termed instructional leadership in the literature may already exist in Irish post-primary schools?

- Could a school's culture inhibit the implementation of such practices?

## 6.8 Moving Forward

### 6.8.1 Introduction

The author was forced to consider, from the evidence of the concurrent interviews and the literature review, (2006/2007) a number of means by which instructional

leadership could be introduced into Irish post-primary schools. It appeared that there were several models of instructional leadership already available in the literature. It was also clear that a model of instructional leadership designed for post-primary schools taking account of culture (school, local and national) was essential in order to ensure successful innovation.

6.8.2 The first steps.

What had become apparent from the literature review 2006/2009 and the interviews (2006/2007) was that a survey of the post-primary principals was necessary to find out their views on instructional leadership. It was they who were to be leaders of education (Ministerial statement, 2004) and instructional leaders (NAPD submission, 2005).

The survey design would take account of:

a. the three main questions that had emerged from earlier data. These were:

- What is instructional leadership in theory?
- What is instructional leadership in practice?
- How can instructional leadership be implemented?

b. the leadership definitions, which had been constructed from the evidence of the literature review and the interviews (chapter 6 and chapter 7).

c. questions emerging from the evidence of the literature review and the interviews:

- Is it possible to consider the implementation of instructional leadership in Irish post-primary schools without taking account of the differences from one school to another?
- Is it possible that some practices that would be termed "instructional leadership" in the literature may already exist in Irish post-primary schools?
- Would a school's culture inhibit the implementation of such practices?

- Would teacher leadership of instruction be suitable in Ireland?

# CHAPTER 7
# THE INTERVIEWS WITH NAPD MEMBER, POST-PRIMARY PRINCIPALS, AND EDUCATORS, 2006/2007


## Abstract

Data are presented that relates to instructional leadership. This data emerged from the exploratory interviews with principals of "best practice" post-primary schools in 2006/2007 and other educators. The post-primary principals and educators were interviewed using an interview schedule, which was based on the data that had already been collected on instructional leadership and the questions, which have been listed at the end of previous chapters 3.5, p55 and 5.6, p 71. The data findings from the interviews are summarised under sub-headings, relevant to instructional leadership. Definitions of educational leadership, curriculum and instructional leadership are given. These were based on findings in the literature review (chapter 6), and amended where necessary from the data described in this chapter (chapter 7). The data lead to the view that there has to be a survey of the opinions of post-primary principals on instructional leadership and related matters, which appear to be important from the current data. The future direction of the research, as identified in chapter 6, is confirmed from the data emerging from the interviews.


## 7.1 Introduction

It had become evident from the events and publications of 2005 that a greater understanding of instructional leadership was required. To this end, an interview programme was drawn up which would be undertaken and follow the same procedures as used in the exploratory studies into teacher retention in 2001/2002 and 2004 as explained in chapter 1.2, p.2. The interviewees were people who had in different ways been connected with NAPD's development of thought on instructional leadership, which resulted in the 2005 statement (chapters 4 and 5).

The interview stage of the research programme which now focused on instructional leadership commenced in March 2006 when a member of NAPD who had been involved in drafting and presenting the 2005 submission was interviewed by the author.

The intention was to find out the circumstances in which NAPD had adopted the idea of instructional leadership as the way forward in Irish post-primary education, and NAPD's current thinking on school leadership and related areas. An informal interview (not tape recorded) was held with Professor Heywood in which he reiterated his view that curriculum and instructional leadership are essential parts of educational leadership, which is an "overarching concept". In late 2006, interviews were arranged with six post-primary principals to find out their thinking on instructional leadership and school leadership in theory and practice. An interview with an educator, who might be expected to give an overview of leadership issues in Irish post-primary education due to the nature of his work, was arranged for early February 2007. To conclude the interview stage of the research, Professor Heywood was again requested to give his views on leadership issues in a formal interview in late February 2007. The interview schedules can be found in appendix D.

The data from the interviews (March 2006 to February 2007) is set out in this chapter commencing with the views of the member of NAPD (March 2007) on the origin of NAPD's claim; the views of the principals on NAPD's aspirations; an educator's overview of Irish post-primary education; a formal interview with Professor Heywood. At this time the author was trying to establish leadership definitions in general, and a definition of instructional leadership in particular. She also wanted to know more about its relation to teaching and learning. The post-primary principals, in the interviews, were first asked to define those terms before the author explored more deeply the relationship between leadership and best practice in teaching and learning. The views of the interviewees are given in their own words where appropriate.

## 7.2 Interview with the member of NAPD (j: March 2006)

### 7.2.1 Reasons why NAPD made submission to the DES, 2005

The member of the NAPD executive explained that the submission to the DES in 2005 had been made by NAPD because some members had become aware of instructional leadership through the Diploma in Educational Management (Trinity College), SMEI (the Society for Management Education in Ireland) and discussion with Professor Heywood. This had led to reflection on their work.

The NAPD as a professional body for post-primary principals and deputy principals is concerned with the development and exercise of professionalism. The submission was made in the context of the principals' current workload, which comprised finance, organisation, administration and discipline. These responsibilities brought school principals away from where they want to be as "real leaders of the school". At a meeting with the then Minister, the delegation from NAPD had stated that their members were not work shy, but engaged in work that in many cases could be done by others. They wished to be, as the Minister had promised, "leaders of teaching and learning in the schools" as inferred by the Ministerial statement of 2004. (j) noted that there had been progress in other areas such as the standardisation of the payroll, and the acceptance of the idea of policy templates, which can be adjusted to suit each individual school. These were significant steps forward, which suggested that there had been action subsequent to the Ministerial statement (chapter 4.2 p. 57; chapter 5. 5.1 p. 68).

### 7.2.2 Definitions

On being requested to give a definition of "instructional leadership" (j) stated, by way of introduction to his answer, that he knew instinctively that he was not doing instructional leadership in his current school but "giving a definition was difficult". Having stated that instructional leadership is leadership that requires principals to share, delegate, move together and have a collective view, interviewee (j) stated that visionary, inspirational, curriculum leadership "whatever it is called", does not exist "to make things worse rather than better". Stating, "Inspirational leadership is the key to it": (j) explained that this required a vision of education to inspire others as well as oneself. (j) approached (to some extent) the definition of terms by giving examples of what he understood principals would do as "instructional leaders". He explained that the management of schools involves finance, organisation, administration and discipline, which are all very important functions. But amidst the organisation of the school, the core aims of the school, which are teaching and learning, have been lost. How principals exercise functions of leadership in the schools would be important. They must have vision, share vision with teachers and students "which is easier said than done", communicate vision, facilitate progress by providing resources and rooms, and enable progress by "enabling things to happen". The core aim in (j's)

view is teaching and learning. The instructional leader would ensure the safety and health of everyone and focus on improving standards of teaching and learning and ensure extension in the curriculum. The instructional leader would require the following qualities: integrity, values, "stickability", a vision, a recognition of reality, empathy with people, respect for different points of view. Leaders are expected to lead, make decisions and stick to them, possess a "business head", run the school efficiently, be grounded in reality, plan intelligently, ensure that distribution of resources is sensible, fair and based on equity. (j) thought that teachers would expect that the leader lead.

7.2.3 Priorities as school leader (currently and in the future as an "instructional leader")

Currently (j) encourages students and teachers, both as collective staff and individual teachers. As a principal for thirty years he communicates a positive message to staff, which is "We are going to get there". In schools where the principal is an "instructional leader" (j) envisages that:

- the central role of running the school remains with the principal and deputy principal.
- the principal and deputy principal form the key team as the top "instructional leaders" in the school.
- the manner in which leadership is exercised is the way forward to instructional leadership.
- the instructional leader must be a communicator.
- the instructional leader should do more to affirm teachers/students and fellow principals.
- in a constantly changing world, the instructional leader will maintain values.

- the principal will be manager/administrator/instructional leader.

- bursars will be employed as assistants but will not take over management duties from the principals and deputy principals.

7.2.4 Teaching and Learning.

In relation to teaching and learning (j) agreed that these are the core aims of the school and that discipline is closely linked to those aims, stating that:

> Teaching and learning require discipline. If, through lack of discipline students are not able to learn, teachers are not able to teach. That is a situation in which "fine words don't come to much".

7.2.5 Constraints on instructional leadership

(j) identified as a problem the question of introducing instructional leadership into a school. He stated that the interview had forced him to seriously reflect on instructional leadership in regard to two questions: "Where am I?" and "Where would I like to be?" In relation to other constraints, (j) stated that principals in Ireland do try to be instructional leaders but instructional leadership has not been central to the development of principalship. Two problems are lack of clarity about the role of the principal and lack of knowledge about instructional leadership. Two further constraints are the administrative workload and the ambivalence in practice in Ireland. The latter means that although the principal is very much in charge of all aspects of school life to the extent that "the buck stops here" there are restrictions on working with teachers. In Ireland, the concept that the principal is in charge of the school and the teacher is in charge of the classroom as "king or queen" is a very thorny issue, which needs to be explored further. Principals need training themselves into how to empower their teachers and improve their teaching skills. Teachers currently lack the opportunity of assistance and support in the classroom, since the principal is not allowed to be there as helper, facilitator, and effector of better practice. The question of professionalism is also an obstacle to both principal and teachers as there may be restricted professionals as well as extended professionals on the staff.

7.2.6 Trade Unions

(j) thought that the trade unions would welcome instructional leadership providing that "it didn't impinge on the current work practices of their members". There would be a backlash if teachers thought that the principal was "poking a nose into their affairs". The trade unions, both the ASTI, (Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland) and TUI (Teachers Union of Ireland) have developed closer relations with principals over the last number of years. Whereas NAPD encourages professional aspects of development, the trade unions have sub-committees, which look at training. Teachers, who have a long established tradition of independent thinking and practice, would be happy with the theory of instructional leadership, but alarmed by its practice. Principals are familiar with the conservative nature of the teaching profession having been teachers too.

7.2.7 Training

(j) stated that initially there was no training for principals:

"If I knew more about the 'how?' of instructional leadership I could raise my game''

He stated that the Leadership Development for Schools (2002) for new principals and more recently for existing principals and deputy principals (at the instigation of NPAD) is a welcome development. The necessity of considering longer-term training is important now. A Leadership Training College for principals may be appropriate.

7.2.8 Research / resources

(j) said that research is necessary into instructional leadership along the lines of the exploratory studies in teacher retention (2001/2002 and 2004) and the Transition Year research (2005). (j) stated that a book on "instructional and curriculum leadership", to be sponsored by NAPD, is being written by Heywood.

7.2.9 Miscellaneous

Towards the end of the interview, (j) re-iterated the main points, which he had raised or had intended to raise during the meeting. He framed the main question as "How do we undertake instructional leadership?" Interviewee (j) stated that he had seen

attempts at instructional leadership in practice by colleagues in other schools. Developing his comment (chapter 7.2.2, p. 127) on inspirational leadership further, he acknowledged that there were many principals who were "very inspirational" men and women at work undertaking some aspects of instructional leadership but their attempts were constrained by administrative workloads. (j) commented "There is no point in being an instructional leader leading to nowhere." He continued that leadership has to be addressed as a separate entity to determine the roles of both principal and deputy principal. The leadership must be based on a set of values. The expectations of the other partners in education must be considered. The pragmatic leadership of principals and deputy principals is forced upon them by the current situation in post-primary schools due to the administrative overload. Interpersonal relations are considered to be important by interviewee (j) although he prefers the term inter-professional.

(j) welcomed the legislation since 1998, which has led to fresh initiatives in education including SDP (School Development Planning), WSE (Whole School Evaluation) and the innovations in the inspectorate. These offer a great opportunity for leadership to effect change in school culture, including the attitudes of teachers. The SDP gives an opportunity to "reflect, but instructional leadership issues must be addressed properly and obstacles to implementation must be dealt with".

### 7.2.10 The "Texan Scenario"

Interviewee (j)'s response to the Texan Scenario (i.e.: "walkthrus", working alongside teachers, helping ineffective teachers by instructional leadership) was that he could see himself doing "walkthrus" and collaborating with teachers. (He does go into classrooms on a regular basis; his thirty years of principalship helps in that practice). Speaking about the relationship between principals and teachers he would welcome a situation where "we" are closer to "them". But there is a need to shift parameters in Ireland, as its culture is different from Texas. In being asked whether teachers see him as a curriculum leader, (j) replied: "I don't know how they see me".

### 7.2.11 Summary of Interview: main items relevant to this study as stated by (j)

The instructional leader will:

- formulate vision with others
- share
- delegate
- introduce teams (curriculum, school image, school values)
- empower staff
- empower students (school council, assemblies)
- facilitate growth of colleagues
- ensure that teachers are learners
- ensure that as the principal s/he learns and reflects

and in conclusion (j) made two final points:

- to ensure the successful adoption of instructional leadership which is to be taken on by all principals, there is a need for training, recognition of obstacles and move towards dismantling obstacles
- the culture of teaching generally is conservative; the culture of teaching in Ireland and the culture of the individual school must all be recognised in any change

### 7.3 Interviews with post-primary principals (December 2006/January 2007)

#### 7.3.1 Introduction

The principals ((c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h)) had been selected by NAPD as leaders of "best practice" schools in teaching and learning in autumn 2006; two other principals were invited to participate in the piloting of the interview schedule (a)[66] and (b). Questions put to the interviewees were designed to collect further data on instructional leadership as understood and /or practised by post-primary principals (in relation to school leadership). (j) had stated that he had witnessed examples of instructional leadership (according to his understanding of it) in Irish post-primary schools).

In a conversation between Swan and Heywood in 2005, in relation to the statement by NAPD that instructional leadership was the way forward for post-primary principals, Heywood had noted, quoting Fitzmaurice's research (1997), that definitions of

[66] (a) had also participated in 2000/2001 study in Ireland as Principal (A).

educational, curriculum and instructional leadership were "all over the place", a point which was confirmed initially in this research both in the literature and the interviews. Principals as school leaders, were invited to:

- define instructional leadership,
- define curriculum leadership
- describe their form of school leadership
- identify priorities in the principal's role
- comment on NAPD's statement that teaching and learning are the core aims of the school
- describe how teaching and learning was managed in their school
- identify constraints to the practice of their leadership (whatever that type of leadership might be)
- reflect on the practice of the Texan principals who had claimed that as instructional leaders, they were able to deal with the many responsibilities of a school leader in a positive way
- respond to questions based on Heywood's work on curriculum and instructional leadership
- comment on the "Texan scenario"

7.3.2 Presentation of data

The data from the interviews is presented in tabular form, as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Table 9 | Demographic information |
| Table 10 | Reason why school was selected by NAPD as best practice school according to author's observation |
| Table 11 | Definitions of leadership terms |
| Table 12 | The principal's work as a leader: priorities |
| Table 13 | Teaching and learning |
| Table 14 | Teaching, learning and discipline |
| Table 15 | Constraints |
| Table 16 a & 16b | Response to the "Texan scenario" |
| Table 17 | Instructional and curriculum practices |
| Table 18 | Training undertaken by each principal |

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type** | **Vol Sec** | **Fee Paying** | **Community College** | **Fee Paying** | **Fee Paying** | **Community School** |
| **Gender** | Boys | Boys | Mixed | Girls | Girls | Mixed |
| **Numbers** | 500 | 400 | 800 | 400 | 800 | 800 |
| **Locality** | Suburban | suburban | rural | suburban | suburban | suburban |
| | | | | | | |
| **Principal** | | | | | | |
| **New appointment Within last five years** | | | * | * | * | |
| **From staff** | * | | | | | * |
| **From outside** | | * | * | * | * | |
| **Gender** | M | m | m | f | F | m |

**TABLE 9. Demographic Information**

Demographic information (Table 9)

The principals were selected by NAPD on the basis that they were leading "best practice schools" in teaching and learning. The sample reflected the schools within the post-primary sector, as it included a VSS, a college run by the VEC, a community school and three fee-paying schools. With the exception of the VEC community college, which served a rural area, the schools were situated in suburban areas. The size ranged from 400 to 800 students. (The two fee-paying girls' schools differed in size). Three of the principals were recent appointments (within the last five years) who had all been appointed from outside their current schools. One of the three principals who had served more than five years was an outside appointee who had had experience in different types of post-primary school. There were two female principals in the sample, one of whom had worked previously in a community school. The longer serving principals stated that they had learned "on the job" from their former principals.

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reasons why your school is a best practice school in teaching and learning** | encourage very mixed intake<br><br>inclusive philosophy in school | moving from solely academic school to school with broader curriculum<br><br>pro-active to change<br><br>maintaining excellent school relevant to the time | newish principal has turned failing school around<br><br>some teachers left<br><br>others got involved<br><br>new appointees<br><br>opportunities in teaching and learning for all students | newish principal is challenged by traditional culture<br><br>doing her best to ensure good learning for students | newish principal inviting teachers to come on board<br><br>some opposition in 'old' ways<br><br>doing what she thinks best to ensure school can move confidently with change | confident principal working with everyone to ensure success<br><br>large school<br><br>plenty of problems in local area but school is a centre of learning |

**TABLE 10. Evidence from "conversations" for NAPD's selection of schools as best-practice in teaching and learning.**

Evidence from "conversations" for NAPD's selection of schools as best-practice (Table 10).

The author was not advised as to why the schools had been selected as best-practice schools in teaching and learning beyond the fact that their students achieved well. However "achieving well" in Ireland can simply mean good examination results in the public examinations at Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. Schools may well have programmes such as TYO and Special Needs but currently these are more difficult to measure. In 2007, WSE had not been held in every school. During the interviews it was possible to learn what was meant by the phrase "achieving well" and what particular aspects, if any, made these schools "best-practice" in teaching and learning. Despite the very different situations in each of the schools as seen in Table 10 above, the principals were working to ensure optimum levels of teaching and learning "in the widest sense"[67] for their students. Although all the principals experienced challenge in their work, the type of challenge varied from school to school.

[67] Teaching and learning is discussed in Chapter 6.7.6, p.102

| Leadership | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Instructional Leadership | too narrow definition – subset of multitude of tasks – involves curriculum – has to be throughout school – too much focus on principal – includes management by students of teaching/learning. | creation of environment by example to promote teaching & learning – quality control instruments – aim to give students more choice 'much more than academic success' | more time leading academic progress than everything else. Difference between being head teacher (instructional leader) and principal | | biggest word in education now – vision 'going to top of the mountain', bringing people with you – it is collective leadership with future orientation | best courses available, most effective methods, in-service, new methods, technology |
| Curricular Leadership | | ensure that what is taught meets needs of students and their talents – innovation etc | Designing programme what is taught – why – how often | | Looking at current programme – broadening it | Ensuring courses are appropriate – change – etc – forward looking |
| Your own leadership | | management by walking about – decision maker – collaborative – able to debate issues with staff – at staff meeting, the openness, surprise to young teachers. | being principal 2006 is doing 'a bit of this and a bit of that' – two aspects to job, administration and human relations – prefers human relations | transformational | 'invitational' – to ask people to come on board – 'I certainly can't do it on my own.' | Principal teacher working collaboratively with people |
| Miscellaneous | | | Happy staff brings in instructional 'curriculum thing' | | | goes out of school to bring back new ideas – 2 weeks in year |

**TABLE 11. Definitions of leadership terms**

Definitions of School Leadership - according to principals (Table 11)

The confusion in definitions of instructional leadership, curriculum leadership and educational leadership, identified by Fitzmaurice (1997) still exists today from evidence in the interviews in 2006/2007. As seen in the tabular presentation, the interviewees hardly defined the terms. There was neither a common understanding of the theory of instructional leadership nor a common implementation of its practice. The initial questions on the interview schedule related to the theory of instructional leadership while the questions on Heywood's work, including homework policy, discovery learning and learning styles focused on practice. Some items from that list, although not acknowledged as instructional leadership, were undertaken or attempted in some of the schools (Table 11). Since the principals had been chosen for their "best practice schools" in teaching and learning, this was not a surprise. Interestingly, interviewee (e) saw his role as principal as two-fold: his role as head teacher (concerned with teaching and learning) and his role as principal (concerned with all the other aspects of school leadership).

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Culture** | | | | | | |
| **Future of school** | * | * | | * | * | |
| **Future of students (later lives)** | | | * | | | |
| **Maintaining integrity of school community despite external pressures e.g.: industrial action** | * | | | | | |
| **Maintaining happy school for all** | | | * | | | * |
| **Maintaining Christian ethos** | | | | | * | |
| **Special Needs Programme** | | | | | * | |
| **Maintaining numbers (students)** | * | | | | | |
| **Motivation of students** | * | | | | | |

**TABLE 12. The Principal's work as a leader, priorities.**

Priorities of principals (Table 12)

The interviews confirmed that Irish principals have a "myriad of duties" (principal (c). However no one wanted to concentrate on teaching and learning to the exclusion of other areas of leadership. The interview with principal (h) was the most similar to the Texan interviews as the principal, who in exercising an overall leadership, seemed to be fully involved with teachers and students in a dynamic community. His use of the term "happy school" was used to describe an inclusive, all-round approach to school leadership in which students were achieving well and teachers were working together.

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **How do you organise teaching and learning?** | team work | focus on teaching and learning<br><br>although involved in other areas too | both instructional leadership/ curriculum leadership essential<br><br>"I want to keep my hand in other areas of school leadership" | "talking the talk" | moving from solely academic to broader curriculum | essential to involve everyone in the organisation of teaching and learning<br><br>"I work with them" |
| **With whom do you work?** | collaborative approach with all teachers | everyone through delegation | collaborative approach | "work with those who are willing" | "teachers-I have to – job is so onerous"' | everyone |
| **Classroom visits related to your work on learning** | very rarely<br><br>"you know by osmosis if things aren't right" | no | no | no | yes<br><br>let teacher know beforehand | Yes |
| **Expectations of your teachers that you involve yourself with teaching and learning** | yes<br><br>sometimes I teach a class "teachers know that I am busy" | "that I know about both" | "that I know about both" | "that I know about both" | "that I know about both" | Yes<br><br>"it is taken for granted that I do" |
| **Staff meetings-focus on teaching and learning** | 80% of time at staff meetings on teaching and learning | regular<br><br>discussion | "some time at each staff meeting on teaching and learning" | introducing teaching and learning on regular basis | annual subject meetings | Regular meetings |
| **Other comments relating to teaching and learning in school** | special education a catalyst | fine tradition of teaching and learning | " I have been able to choose teachers" | some teachers reluctant to change | some teachers reluctant to change | "we have wide range of abilities and backgrounds |
| **Core aim** | a core aim but not the main one | yes | yes | yes | yes | Yes |

**TABLE 13. Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning (Table 13)

The principals agreed that teaching and learning were "core aims" of their schools although principal (c) suggested that there were other core aims too. He spoke about the future of his school. There was no uniform way of managing or delivering the core aims although they were regarded as vitally important. There were many constraints (Table 15, p.143), which the principals stated would militate against the practice of instructional leadership. It seemed as if teaching and learning "just went on".[68] On the other hand, the principals spoke, in a very enthusiastic way, about innovatory programmes particularly in relation to learning for life. Once again it appeared that schools differ in their approach to the provision of teaching and learning.

[68] Descriptive phrase used by post-primary principal in private conversation. As noted in chapter 2.2.2, p.22, footnote i

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Discipline** | intertwined with teaching and learning | few problems in school<br><br>fees a deterrent as parents expect sons to learn in school | intertwined with teaching and learning | intertwined with teaching and learning<br><br>principal had to stop teachers putting students outside the door<br><br>link with school culture | few problems in school<br><br>code of discipline introduced<br><br>not welcomed by all<br><br>link also with school culture | "teachers talking about discipline mean indiscipline" |
| **Teaching** | "same" children as thirty years ago but difficulties they get into are more serious | if indiscipline prevents teaching then there is a problem | | | | problem if teacher says " 'x' was out today - I could teach the class" |
| **Learning** | | | learning community should be happy | | | |
| **Miscellaneous** | 10% students fully take up Dean of Discipline's time | | | | contrast between fee paying school and former community school | |

**Table 14. Teaching, learning and discipline**

Teaching, learning and discipline (Table 14)

The principals agreed that teaching, learning and discipline were intertwined but stated that although discipline problems are of a different nature today (more serious) than thirty years ago, the incidence is no greater. A small number of students, refusing to maintain school rules, will take up a large amount of time. Principal (h) stated, "when teachers talk about discipline, they mean indiscipline". The principals did not refer to the way in which teaching strategies may be used to increase motivation. They saw the link between discipline, teaching and learning as being the negative effect of a disruptive student on class teaching and learning.

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Time** | * | | * | | * | * |
| **Culture** | | | | * | * | |
| **Expectations of teachers** | | | | * | * | |
| **Attitudes of teachers** | | | | * | * | |
| **Finances** | * | | * | | | |
| **Resources** | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| **Lack of support for Vol. Sec Schools- Ancillary staff etc** | * | | | | | |
| **Mail and phone calls** | | | * | | | |
| **Trade Unions** | * | | | * | * | |
| **No role in classroom** | * | "is that best use of time?" | * | * | * | "I have role" |
| **Miscellaneous comments** | importance of team work with deputy principal | could not take all applicants | | | | great school community including parents |

**TABLE 15. Constraints**

Constraints (Table 15)

The principals were asked to identify constraints to their leadership of teaching and learning. Culture, teacher expectations and teacher attitudes, finances, lack of resources, lack of support for voluntary secondary schools, mail and phone calls, trade unions and inability to visit and work in classrooms were identified as constraints to leadership of teaching and learning. Any desires to be instructional leaders would be "dashed by such constraints" according to one principal (e).

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Response to Texas Scenario** | is it necessary? | interesting but is it necessary? | would like it | it is a problem not being able to go into classrooms | would welcome it | "sounds familiar- we do that" |
| **Do you do this?** | No | no | no | no | yes<br><br>despite cultural opposition to it | yes<br><br>"a matter of course" |
| **If not why not?** | have other ways - osmosis | could do so but is it best use of time? | cultural opposition to it | cultural opposition to it | | |
| **Would you wish to?** | not really | "US is very different from Ireland" | yes | yes | yes | yes |

**TABLE 16(a). Response to Texan scenario**

| **Texas Scenario –'going into classrooms'** |
|---|
| Principal (c) commented that it could be done possibly but he had other ways (osmosis) |
| Principal (d) commented that history of US education was very different from that of Ireland. He did think he could go into classrooms and sit there but would it be best use of time? |
| Principal (e) commented that he would welcome the "Texan scenario" and that not being able to go in to classrooms is a problem |
| Principal (f) commented that that not being able to go in to classrooms is a problem |
| Principal (g) commented that she did visit classrooms despite opposition from some teachers |
| Principal (h) commented that he already went into classrooms and was relaxed about that. |

**TABLE 16 (b). Comments of principals**

Response to the "Texan scenario" (Table 16a and 16b)

The interview schedule included the "Texan scenario". The author briefly described the way in which the Texan principals visited classrooms and participated in classroom activities alongside the teacher. It was also stated that the Texan principals claimed that many problems could be overcome by this practice. Whereas only two of the six principals undertook such visits, two others expressed a wish to do so. Another member of the group stated that although he could do so, he thought it might not be "the best use of time" and "US is different from Ireland". The response of the community school principal (h) suggested that there might be a different culture in community schools. However other variables including attitudes to learning might have been the cause for the different response.

| | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Homework policy** | Struggling to get one | Guidelines In place | In place | has caused constern--ation | putting one in place | in place |
| **lesson plans** | annual plan | best practice would require them to be monitored – 'I don't' | to extent | no | | plans are prepared-for use when teachers absent |
| **discovery learning** | TYO-science etc | TYO-science etc | TYO-science etc | TYO-science etc | TYO-science etc | TYO-science etc |
| **mission statement** | yes | yes | yes | re-doing it | redoing it | yes<br><br>teaching and learning enjoyable |
| **extended profession--alism** | tries by encourage--ment | tries by encourage--ment | tries by encou--rage--ment | tries by encourag--ement | tries by encourag--ement | tries by encourag--ement |
| **learning styles of incoming students** | has been discussed at recent in-service | no | no | no | no | to extent |
| **Learning as preparat--ion for life. Are there examples on curriculum ?** | yes | yes | yes | trying | trying | yes |
| **way in which teaching and learning is developed** | collaboration | constant renewal | work-ing with teachers | trying | trying | 'key thing' |

**TABLE 17. Replies of principals to questions on practices, 2006 -** necessitated by the exercise of "curriculum and instructional leadership"

Replies of principals (2006) to questions on practices (Heywood, 2009) - necessitated by the exercise of "curriculum and instructional leadership" (Table 17)

During the interviews with the principals, the practices associated with instructional leadership were described to them. The question was then asked whether any of these practices were undertaken in their schools (each practice was repeated separately). What emerged was that some practices, but not all, were undertaken in some of the schools sometimes. Homework policy was in place in three of the schools but its introduction in another school was causing "consternation". In two other schools homework policy was being put in place although in one of those it was a struggle. Agreement between all the principals was found in the questions relating to extended professionalism (a term which was defined for the principals) which they encouraged, discovery learning which was used in TYO in their schools, mission statements which were in place in four schools and being revised in two others, and the importance of learning as a preparation for life.

It was apparent that principals could be challenged when putting vision into practice as in the development of teaching and learning where two principals (f) and (g) stated that they were trying hard to enthuse their teachers. Lesson plans were not monitored, where they existed, although they were recognised to be a good idea. In only one school were lesson plans prepared for use when teachers were absent. The idea of receiving information on the learning styles of incoming students appeared to be an "innovatory idea", tried to an extent in one school.

The conclusion drawn from the responses was that principals, although appreciating how these practices were part of instructional and curriculum leadership could not for various reasons implement them.

| | (c) | (d) | | (f) | (g) | (h) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **What training did you have?** | "on the job" as deputy | | LDS | LDS | as postholder in VSS. deputy principal in another school | as deputy principal, observation of previous principal |
| **How much time was given to teaching and learning in training?** | not applicable | not applicable | some time but less than finance etc | some time but not the priority | learned on the job and attended LDS<br><br>(g) doesn't recollect much time on this in LDS | best possible training |
| **Time given to discipline in training** | not applicable | not applicable | not much time according to recollection | not much time according to recollection | learned on the job<br><br>LDS – (g) doesn't recollect much time on this | learned on the job |
| **Other relevant learning** | elective masters | elective masters | | | elective masters | no formal training |
| **Comments on current situation re training** | thinks teachers should have further training after 5 years<br>principals can be assisted by mentoring now<br>LDS beneficial now<br>many elective courses<br>professional organisations useful | improving | training currently in place | training currently in place | training currently in place<br><br>LDS useful for networking | attended and attends courses for principals and deputies<br><br>expects to be out of school for two weeks during year<br><br>professional organisations important |
| **Experience of teaching in other schools** | experience of another school | experience of number of schools | experience of another school | experience of a number of school | experience of another school | experience of another school |
| **Type of post-primary school** | | different type | | | different type | |

**TABLE 18. Training**

Training (Table 18)

The principals acknowledged the work of the teachers whose professional development they encouraged. A team approach was favoured although some teachers chose not to take up the invitation immediately. Again the atmosphere differed from school to school. The principals spoke frankly about their relationship with teachers.

The amount of training for principals had increased with the introduction of LDS in 2002 although principal (G) could not remember that much time was given to teaching and learning. A number spoke enthusiastically about learning from their predecessors or principals with whom they worked.

7.3.3 Effect of change and culture on leadership of teaching and learning

The brief summary of the classroom activities of the Texan principals led the principals to talk about the culture of teaching and the school culture. They agreed that a key job was to move the culture from one of "closed doors" to openness, which would benefit teaching and learning. This involved management of change. The principals spoke about change in their own experience of teaching, in their schools and nationally. Legislation such as the Education Act 1998 was included in their comments on national culture. It seemed that in some schools there was a resistance to change among some teachers, which may be linked to the need for cultural change mentioned in the NAPD submission. As Cohn and Kottkamp (1993) state, such resistance to change among teachers is not uncommon.

The principals spoke of their encouragement for teachers to do elective courses to increase their professionalism. The interviewees generally thought that increased dynamism occurred where there was openness among teachers who shared good practice. The mode of internal communication appeared to differ from school to school.

A number of principals congratulated the Department of Education on the manner in which the introduction of WSE had been managed.

Other factors, which not only contributed to positive teaching and learning but also to bringing about a positive change in culture were the TYO programme, involvement in European programmes and changes in legislation.

However there were instances reported where a conservative culture hindered progress. Principal (d) stated that the introduction of a homework policy was contentious.

Principal (c) did not refer to such problems in his school, which may have been partly due to the fact that he had taught on the staff as a teacher before becoming principal; his subsequent leadership style had not alienated former colleagues who regarded him as "head teacher". He stated that although a small number of teachers did not go along with his plans for innovation, which he regretted, he had to move forward for the good of the school. Principals (f) and (g), both female and recent appointees, had a different view of managing staff from principal (h) who was relaxed and confident. This might have been a gender issue. On the other hand a further contrasting fact was that principals (f) and (g) were principals of former religious run fee-paying schools and principal (h) worked in what appeared to be a thriving community school. Principal (f) was challenged by the lack of support in different groups giving the impression, in this section of the interview, that she remained an outsider who was working hard to bring about change; principal (g), who commented on the warm welcome by most teachers, was working hard to bring people with her (some small number had remained aloof initially) but she was now delighted by the progress. She stated that a principal must not take things personally and found her earlier experience in a community school to be helpful. The principals of the community schools and community college had not inherited the "religious" culture, which in some cases had left a legacy of dependency in former religious-run schools. However they too were happy to make new appointments. Principal (e) explained that the opportunity to make new appointments had set his mark upon the school. The whole staff supported his efforts to turn the school around.

The relationship between the principal and the teaching staff is obviously crucial in the provision of good teaching and learning for the students, an avowed aim of all the principals in the sample.

That the six schools had been selected for best practice in teaching and learning suggested that any problems to which their principals referred during the interviews were under control. Such problems are part of the undoubtedly onerous responsibility of a post-primary principal in Ireland.

The traditional reluctance of post-primary teachers to be inspected in their classrooms was changing due to the introduction of WSE, according to principal (d). However all acknowledged the antagonism of many teachers to the presence of the principal in the classroom. Only two principals, (g) who described her leadership style as invitational and (h), undertook visits regularly as a matter of course. One principal (e) referred to approaching the issue of classroom participation in a "roundabout way". Principal (h) stated that principals became diffident in that atmosphere. There was general agreement that classroom visitation should be undertaken. One dissenting voice (d) questioned whether such visitation was the best use of time.

It was clear from the comments of the principals that the culture of their schools had a great influence on current school practice. Traditional ways of doing things and fear of change could be constraints to principals who wished to innovate. It appeared too that the type of school (appendix A) might also have an effect on innovation.

In the interviews the principals of the former religious-run schools were very conscious of maintaining and developing the ethos in order to hand it to their successors, albeit in changed times. Principals of the voluntary secondary schools were particularly concerned about the way in which the "Celtic Tiger" (see glossary) had led parents, in large numbers, to choose to send their children to fee-paying schools. As principal (c) stated, students from disadvantaged backgrounds could learn much when working with students whose family circumstances were such that they focused naturally on third level. His aim was to see all his students aspire to the highest level with the support of good teaching and learning in a progressive voluntary secondary school. This appeared to be one reason for his selection as a best practice leader. Principal (c) also lamented the fact that neighbouring fee-paying schools had much greater resources than his school, which relied on the capitation grant.

Knowing that the schools had been selected for best practice in teaching and learning, the author looked for the clues to that "best practice" in the responses of the principals (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) (Table 10, p.135), recognising from previous research that schools differ in "the way things are done" (Swan, 1996).

The VSS principal (c) also referred to the problems of finance and lack of support in terms of maintenance and secretarial work to a much greater extent than the other principals in the sample. Whereas the principals in the fee-paying schools (also formerly religious-run) could afford such support if deemed necessary, the voluntary secondary capitation monies could not provide that support.

Principals (f) and (g) suggested that teachers in their schools which were fee-paying might be less progressive than those in the non fee-paying sector. To have a mix of students in a class necessitated a pro-active stance and collegiality. Principal (g) supervised break periods in her current school as the teachers there had never done so and did not see the need. Traditionally VSS would have been perceived to have fewer "discipline" problems than either VEC schools or community schools. Having worked in a community school (g) thought that the teachers there would have a greater appreciation of the need for supervision than in her current VSS although the need for supervision existed in both.

Other contrasts noted were the very different replies of the VSS principal (c) to questions on management of teaching and learning; the differences between principals appointed from within the school and from other schools particularly in the voluntary secondary sector and fee paying sector (formerly religious-run); the different approach to teaching and learning of the youngest principal (e) who had turned his school around; the different problems facing principals in the community sector. Principal (c) was optimistic in relation to teaching and learning achievements.

### 7.3.4 Other topics which may be significant to an understanding of instructional leadership

The principals, who all displayed great enthusiasm and dedication for their work, had been selected by NAPD for the interviews as leaders of best practice schools. It seemed that such enthusiasm was one reason for their inclusion in the group.

The principals who represented the different "traditions" of schools of the post-primary sector were all challenged by the task of leadership as none of the schools was easy to lead but they rose to the challenge.

In comments reminiscent of the Texan principals they communicated their love of the work and the opportunity to make a difference. Those principals with the least discipline problems might, according to one principal (g), have a less creative teaching staff who had become used to leaving matters beyond the classroom to the principal. This appeared to be the case in some voluntary secondary schools and fee-paying schools, which had formerly been run by the religious orders.

However a voluntary secondary school, despite its low income compared with a nearby fee-paying school, was able through a mix of pupils to have a positive effect on disadvantage. Similarly community schools, whose student intake differed from the intake of fee-paying schools, had structures in place to ensure that each child was looked after and encouraged to do well. All the principals were aware of the importance of working with their staff but where support from teachers was not forthcoming, the principal had to work with the most enthusiastic in order to progress teaching and learning among the students. A principal's personality was important as seen in the case of a school turned around by the current incumbent (e) who placed a high priority on "interpersonal relations".

The above matters were related to the prime task of the school (but not necessarily the principal's priority in practice), optimum teaching and learning of students. External developments i.e. legislation giving rise to the provision of Special Needs Education and WSE had made a difference as had the TYO and European initiatives to prevailing school cultures. Even the antipathy to other adults in the classroom was being eroded by the Special Needs programme with its Special Needs Assistants and WSE.

Constraints on the principal's ability to fully engage in teaching and learning issues (not necessarily according to the Texan model) included time, lack of resources and the perceived negative influence of trade unions re: inspection. Trade unions however were commended for their in-service courses.

7.3.5 Conclusion

Despite the recognition that their core aims were teaching and learning (principal (c) qualified this somewhat in his comments) there was no evidence that theory underpinned curriculum or instructional development. Professional development was encouraged but was not seen as the norm.

The author learned from the interviews with the post-principal principals of "best practice schools", selected by NAPD that curriculum/instructional leadership as described in an early informal interview with Heywood[69] was not practised in their schools. However, there were similarities to the replies of the Texan sample in the replies of principal (h). None of the principals referred to a theory of curriculum/instructional leadership although good work was undoubtedly being done in their schools in terms of the curriculum. Although the principals spoke enthusiastically about TYO[70], and the effect of such programmes on the teachers, they did not refer to the theory and a practice of instructional leadership as found in Heywood's levels of instruction and learning. The principals spoke about a high level of concern for teaching and learning issues (sometimes linked to discipline) at staff meetings but little evidence was found of a united professional approach to these issues. A contrast can be made between the large amount of time (according to the principals) given to the minutiae of financial management and staff management in training and in-service and the smaller amount of time given to teaching and learning issues in training and in-service.

The data from the interviews suggests that post-primary principals meet together at principals' meetings organised by different groups to discuss matters of mutual interest but not necessarily teaching and learning. The principals appeared to have little knowledge of what was really happening in other schools in terms of teaching and learning, unless they were being diplomatic.

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[69] Heywood explained the evolution of his thinking on instructional leadership from 1990, referring to his paper for the engineers, the courses in MLC (Trinity college) , the writing of *Engineering Education. Research and Development in Curriculum and Instruction.* New York: IEEE/Wiley 2005

[70] The alternative Leaving Certificate (LCA) mentioned by some of the principals was also praised.

Since they were extremely forthcoming on areas familiar to them there was no real reason to think that they were holding back on matters of teaching and learning. Finance and management of teachers were highlighted as the areas that were dealt with both formally and informally over tea or coffee. The principals stated that those times are often seen as the most significant part of a seminar or in-service day.

It emerged from the interviews that teaching and learning should deserve a planned approach in the interests of both the professional development of teachers and curriculum and instructional development in all schools.

The principals mentioned that encouragement could bring about a positive change in staff members With a planned approach to that development, those teachers currently ignored due to their refusal to participate in innovation, can be integrated into the staff and helped to make a positive input to teaching and learning. The vocabulary of teaching and learning (i.e. instructional leadership, curriculum leadership) needs to be familiar to all parties involved with the education of a future generation. The "analysis of problems that have arisen", which NAPD called for in 2005, is seen to be very necessary if instructional leadership is to be implemented.

Moving forward in the research programme, the interviews had shown a definite need for an understanding of the theory and practice of instructional leadership as favoured by NAPD. Further clarification of the theories and practice of instructional leadership was emerging from the concurrent literature review (2006-2008) described in chapter 6.

### 7.4 Interview with educator ( k: February 2007)

#### 7.4.1 Introduction

The educator (k) was selected for interview as he had an overall view of both past, present and future developments in Irish education due to his current employment. He was given the same questions, where appropriate, as the post-primary principals. Further questions were designed to elicit specialist knowledge from his overall view of post-primary education in Ireland.

7.4.2 Definitions

(k) identified school leadership as

> having a vision of what you believe an effective school to be, having that vision, having the wherewithal to bring that particular (thing) to a reality.

(k) defined instructional leadership as "being responsible for the core activity of the school" which he identified as teaching and learning, both formal and informal. (k) used the term "instructional leadership" to cover both work in the classroom and the more general approach, not dissimilar to the Texan principals' description, of overall leadership in the interests of good teaching and learning and optimum benefits for the student.

7.4.3 Principal's work

(k) stated, drawing on examples of "tremendous goodwill and commitment in the staff room" in one school, that the principal is the key to everything that happens in a school, "staffrooms can be turned around by the principal". However principals did not have to get "directly involved" in all matters and (k) recognised that leaders would employ different strategies at different times: "the principal cannot accomplish everything". The need for organisational change, which uses expertise rather than "everyone trying to be good at everything", is essential. (k) saw relationships as crucial. The principals need key people who will take responsibility and get things done. It is important to know staff and expertise. Other teams must be developed too. The relationship between principals and deputy principals is vitally important. It is the nucleus of a senior management team that will "take an amount of management functions from the principal and deputy principal and allow the principal and deputy principal to get on with instructional leadership rather than spending ninety nine per cent (99%) of their lives on purely administrative management". (k) commented that not all principals are adept in the leadership role due to their greater experience of management.

### 7.4.4 Implementation of instructional leadership

(k), referring to the onus on state and school to provide for the education of each young person, stated that the implementation of instructional leadership necessitates "guiding, challenging, sometimes having to control, having to be hands on but generally challenging the staff to ensure that each young person in the school gets the best possible opportunity" while in school. Referring to principals as instructional leaders (k) said that the principal's leadership in instruction "doesn't have to be hands on necessarily". (k) envisaged more co-operation between schools to bring this about. In regard to ineffective teachers, (k) thought that it is better to work from the start with teachers experiencing difficulty as otherwise the matter deteriorates. He concluded, "The Texan principals have a point". But such innovation itself could be a problem given the constraints. Referring to the Texan principals' practice of supporting ineffective teachers, he felt that they could assist teachers because they were working with them anyway. He would like to see teachers working side by side in classrooms and wanted to see more collegiality between teachers.

### 7.4.5 Teaching and learning

(k) agreed that the core activity of the school is teaching and learning. The principal had a wider remit now than twenty years ago in its organisation due to societal change. Principals have to work with restricted as well as extended professionals to achieve the overall aim of the school. A catalyst for change in the classroom had been the special needs provision resulting from the Education Act 1998 and ensuing legislation. Teachers were becoming familiar with the presence of special needs assistants in their classrooms. A problem here however was that principals had to find teachers to teach special needs and in over-quota schools particularly, teachers would be reluctant through inexperience and lack of professional training to take on such a task.

Learning style research would be significant too in terms of the organisation of the most suitable teaching and learning for all students, not only for special needs students.

### 7.4.6 Teaching, learning and discipline

Rapid societal change has brought new types of behaviour to the school. (k) has sympathy for those teachers who are confronted by change at a stage of life when their "best days are possibly behind them" and their "settled mode of instruction" is interrupted by young people with "very different needs and challenging behaviour".

### 7.4.7 Constraints

Distinguishing between management and leadership, (k) stated that the former tasks were taking up too much time to the detriment of the latter. The dichotomy between management and leadership, noted in the literature, was seen in the interview with (k). Linking his comments on collegiality with his comments about workload, he stated that in the past there had been "too much responsibility at the door of the principal". Cultural obstacles must be confronted. The former religious-run schools left a huge responsibility for one person "who cannot be expected to do everything". (k) identified the "sheer enormity of the work load" as the prime constraint across the sectors but suggested that the principals of voluntary secondary schools were particularly susceptible to workload pressure. The reason given was that the voluntary secondary schools, founded as they had been by the religious, had been both led and managed by the religious orders which had at that time large communities to support them in their work of their schools.

Culture was another constraint. A teacher who had always been "king of the castle" could resist change. In reply to a further question about the practice of classroom visits by the Texan principals (k) stated that "It's a cultural thing, the Texan principals and teachers were used to working together".

Change, or fear of change was also seen as a constraint. (k) identified a particular constraint to the development of teaching and learning whereby a teacher having spent thirty-five years in a classroom is not going "to change dramatically at this stage".

External constraints included some, but not all, of the activities of the trade unions. They necessarily had to represent their members in terms of pay and conditions, but in the past had overlooked the fact that their members are members of a profession:

> trade unions need to recognise that they are working with people who are members of a profession and there is an onus to ensure that each professional is as professional as possible.

(k) thought that the trade unions needed to recognise that some of their members are teachers[71] and principals who have reached a "comfort zone" in life and therefore needing support. The trade unions, although doing good work in professional training, had over-emphasised terms and conditions. Some teachers needed the encouragement of the trade unions in order to get involved in professional courses.

In relation to the DES, principals also faced problems in the implementation of innovatory programmes. Although special needs education was an essential and welcome development, the principal in an over-quota school would have no choice but to ask a non-specialist teacher to teach the class.

Time was also identified as a constraint. The social changes of the last twenty years had resulted in a wider remit for principals in terms of student in-take and discipline. There was an incorrect assumption that the principal, through being principal and having had training, can cope with such matters. Expertise must be shared both within and without the school and that necessitates organisational change

7.4.8 Research

(k) welcomed research into school related matters since satisfactory forward planning requires it. He commented that anecdotal evidence suggests that luck is involved in a school's ability to move forward. This is not a good way in the current world where specialists are required. It is not possible to "rely on luck" to have "the right person at the right time" in a job.

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[71] Swan has heard same phrase used in relation to principals who have reached last ten years in job.

The importance of small-scale research was mentioned as was the need to identify good practice and the need to determine how principals can work with teachers not familiar with change.

### 7.4.9 Training for principals and teachers

With regard to the role of the principal, (k) thought that there were three aspects to be addressed: induction, renewal and exit strategy. The new initiatives in training for principals were welcomed. LDS was seen as a great move forward "bringing principal service to a higher level". Noting that principals could expect to be principals for more than twenty years, (k) suggested that there was a need for research into the methods of renewal in other countries and that the implementation of these courses was urgent in the interests of student learning. Principals, after twenty years, might seek an exit but where could they go? He would like to see the trade unions work towards their members being as professional as possible through training.

He congratulated the education departments of these institutions as well as the universities and teacher training institutions and training providers on current innovations. He identified the need to look at opportunities for sideways movement, refreshment courses, sabbaticals, and re-training and exit strategy. Emphasising the needs of the constantly changing student body, (k) stated that a cohort of students moves quickly through a school, each cohort deserving good education irrespective of the "burn-out levels" of the principal and teaching staff. Training is required to undertake instructional leadership.

### 7.4.10 Situation today

(k) said that the principals and the teachers are all employees of Boards of Management, which is a change from former years. The principal must create an atmosphere where everyone is working for the good of the student. Currently there is an element of luck involved, in having the right person to carry out the plan at the right time. Innovation needs to be planned rather than based on luck.

Three innovations are welcome:

- WSE is giving an opportunity for principals to get people working together.
- The teachers' council is to be welcomed as it is "affirming good practice, and identifying good practice".
- Special needs assistants in the classroom are bringing change in the culture.

7.4.11 The Way Forward

(k) stated that there are many positive signs in Irish post–primary education including the increased interest in professional development by the trade unions. (k) commended the Department for Education and Science for its initiatives in Special Needs Education and other initiatives arising from the Education Act 1998. (k) stated that university teacher training has also taken innovations on board. (k) saw collaboration between schools as the way forward although this might be opposed by traditionalists for whom competition was essential. (k) concluded that educational development was 'Going in the right direction'.

**7.5 Interview with Heywood (February 2007)**

Heywood explained, before giving the philosophical context for the theory of instructional leadership that the book being written at that time for NAPD contained his specific definitions of the terms educational, curriculum and instructional leadership. His theory had emerged both from work, which he had done with the H.Dip. Ed. students in the 1980s and 1990s and Fitzmaurice's research (1997). At that time alternative strategies for teaching, distinct from chalk and talk, were being sought. The task was to get people to consider and, after reflection, to use the wide range of teaching strategies which had proved to be innovative both to teachers and the H.Dip. Ed students. Heywood found a reluctance in the teachers to consider curriculum studies as they argued that the Department of Education imposed the syllabus and concluded "that was that."

Heywood emphasised the need to have a theory of curriculum (including its philosophical, sociological and educational assumptions) before a written syllabus could be produced.

The complexity of designing a curriculum is matched by complexity in the delivery of curriculum (i.e. instructional leadership). The Trinity course in curriculum and instructional leadership was developed as a solution to that problem.

Heywood reiterated his definitions of leadership, which are set out in more detail in his writings. These are:

- Educational leadership is "all that makes school effective as a learning institution".
- Curriculum leadership is solely concerned with the mechanism through which educational aims are intended to be achieved. He referred to the TYO mentioning the collaboration with the Christian Brothers, which commenced in 1992.
- Instructional leadership is concerned with delivery of the curriculum.

In discussion with colleagues, Heywood (2005, pp.91-116) had developed levels of curriculum and instructional leadership from Level 0 (which had been suggested by Culver to describe teachers who did not conduct any form of self-evaluation) to Level 4 (political intervention in order to advance professionalism)[72]. Referring to NAPD, Heywood stated that teachers need to understand that research has shown that children need a variety of teaching techniques. He made the following suggestions and comments concerning the positive development of both teachers and students. The work of Argyris and Schön (1974; 1978) and Cohn and Kottkamp (1983) in the use of assumptional dialogue[73] is significant in developing teachers' professionalism. An assumptional dialogue on discipline would necessitate that the teachers would discuss discipline, based on their experience. The curriculum/instructional leader would ensure that a theoretical framework was given against which teachers could test their assumptions.

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Level 0 no attempt to develop professionalism
Level 1 teacher assesses his own performance in the classroom-what he is doing
Level 2 as developed with H.Dip, teachers test theory in the classroom-research into ones' own teaching
Level 3 response to query 'Can you assist us?' Teachers working together to advise others
Level 4 teacher prepared to talk with groups about curriculum

[73] "Assumptional dialogues" provide "opportunities to raise awareness and examine largely unrecognised assumptions that currently underlie (the) educational structures and practices (in a school)" Cohn and Kottkamp quoted in Heywood ( 2009, p.21)

Prior to introducing the teaching of higher order skills into schools, an assumptional dialogue should be set up to ascertain how this could be done. The usual response to replication in schools of the early work by H.Dip. Ed. students was that it could not be done due to the pressure of exams, which necessitate chalk and talk. Heywood commenting on the myth of the examinations stated that by teaching a child key concepts, transfer of learning will occur.

With regard to NAPD, Heywood thought that NAPD did not really understand what curriculum/instructional leaderships are. He suggested that the first step in a school would be to break down barriers between leadership in the school and the teacher in the classroom to enable colleagues and leaders to discuss issues of instruction and learning. Towards this end he has constructed a set of axioms, well within what can be achieved by Irish schools, which would change the culture in those schools.

Describing his use of circles to depict learning, Heywood identifies the central theme as curriculum leadership and instructional leadership. Governments have told people what to do at curriculum and instructional level but left them to deal with discipline and motivation. In Ireland, the TYO and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) course require from their co-ordinators, a knowledge of curriculum leadership and instructional leadership. The principal also needs that knowledge to ensure that he can support the co-ordinators. Heywood concluded by stating that his thoughts had not developed in a linear progression but rather as a mix of a lot of thoughts over the past eight years.

## 7.6 Future Directions

### 7.6.1 Overview of data from interviews

What had become clear from the material presented in this chapter was that there was a need for a general survey of principals concerning their response to NAPD's espousal of instructional leadership. The exploratory study 2001/2002 had given a glimpse of instructional leadership in practice in Texas and had revealed the thinking of a number of Irish post-primary principals in regard to their roles as administrators and managers.

Had the intervening years brought any change in thinking in Ireland? The evidence from the interviews did suggest some developments. The Ministerial statement in 2004 (NAPD, 2005) expressed the hope that principals would be leaders of education. The NAPD statement (2005) stated more specifically that principals were to be instructional leaders in schools whose core aims were teaching and learning. Principal (j) who had been involved in the drawing up of the NAPD statement explained that this came about through the wish to change practice. Principal (h) had spoken about some instructional leadership practices within his school. (k) the educator had also mentioned the influence of legislation from 1998 onwards including the introduction of Special Needs education, which was opening up classrooms to some extent. Heywood explained how his thinking on the theory of instructional leadership is a key factor in the pursuit of the inquiry-oriented school. He would explain this further in the book that he was writing for NAPD[74].

7.6.2 Emerging knowledge, from the interviews, which relates to the implementation of instructional leadership.

This chapter concludes with some aspects of the emerging knowledge from the interviews relating to the aims of the study[75]:

- the implementation of instructional leadership based on sound pedagogy is necessary for the optimum teaching and learning experience of students

- neither the theory nor practice of instructional leadership appears to be fully understood by principals in Ireland although instructional leadership is seen as a good idea

- much work has to be done in terms of providing clear direction for principals and their teachers across the post-primary sector in both the theory and

[74] Heywood's work in educational, curriculum and instructional leadership prior to the 2001/2002 exploratory studies is recorded in the EFEA account of those interviews. (Swan, Heywood and Mayo, 2005, p. 77,78). The relationship between educational leadership, curriculum leadership and instructional leadership is shown.

[75] The aim was to clarify the term "instructional leadership" both in theory and in practice; to find out what elements if any of "instructional leadership" can already be found in post-primary schools in Ireland; to identify a model for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in post-primary schools in Ireland.

practice of teaching and learning if instructional leadership is to be implemented

- different traditions and cultures within post-primary schools must be taken into account when planning for the implementation of instructional leadership

Other themes emerging are:

- Principalship is not easy in any post-primary school
- A more organised approach to teaching and learning is required
- The vocabulary of teaching and learning is required
- Interpersonal relationships are important
- External developments erg: legislation are making a difference
- Traditional ways are being eroded which is not necessarily seen as a bad thing
- Constraints include time, lack of resources, perceived negative aspect of Trade Unions

In brief, three questions emerge:

i) What is instructional leadership in theory?

ii) What is instructional leadership in practice?

iii) How can instructional leadership be implemented?

7.6.3 Definitions

The definitions which were drawn up from the literature review and the evidence from these interviews are reprinted below showing in italics the amendment made to the definition of teacher leadership, (that such leadership has to be a two-way process), from the evidence of the interviews:

- Educational Leadership

  Educational Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who through their shared professional experience in schools intend real changes and outcomes in the process of bringing up (i.e. ensuring optimum development of intellectual, spiritual and physical abilities) of children.

- Curriculum Leadership

  Curriculum Leadership is the task of developing the plan for the guidance and improvement of student learning in schools necessitating reference to content, assessment and evaluation.

- Instructional Leadership

  Instructional Leadership is the dynamic delivery of the curriculum in the classroom through strategies based on reflection, assessment and evaluation to ensure optimum learning.

- Teacher Leadership

  Teacher leadership is the exercise of the above leaderships, based on a thorough understanding of the pedagogic knowledge base for teaching and current developments in those areas, in the classroom giving support and encouragement to colleagues, *including the principals*, to ensure the best teaching and learning opportunities for the students *and all members of the school community and beyond.*

The italics show the amendments made in the light of the data from the interviews (2006/2007) which have been described in this chapter.

### 7.6.4 The Way Forward

Moving forward in the research programme, it was seen that the data from the interviews and the data from the literature (chapter 6) showed clearly that the next step in the research programme should be a survey of Irish post-primary principals to find out their thoughts on the matter of instructional leadership and related issues.

## 7.7 Summary

- No one definition had been found for instructional leadership.

- No evidence has been found that the practice of instructional leaders is common to all schools.

- Teaching and learning is recognised as very important but difficulties exist in achieving optimum levels due to constraints.

- Constraints include culture within staff rooms, traditions of school and also work practice.

- Confusion exists as to the management or the leadership role of principal.

- That confusion leads to confusion in other roles within school.

- Confusion exists as to the implementation of theory. Effective schools should be led by instructional leaders. How can this be implemented?

- How does the principal motivate teachers?

**7.8 Questions**

- Would response by larger group of post-primary principals be different?
- What do principals and teachers mean by teaching and learning?
- Who assists teachers in their craft?
- By whom should instructional leadership be undertaken?
- How far can Irish post-primary principals be managers as well as leaders?

# CHAPTER 8

# THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

**Abstract.**

In this chapter the survey instrument is described from its inception to its administration. A history of the research is given in order that the survey's purpose is understood. A brief description of the methodology is given identifying the rules and procedures that govern the use of the survey tool. The pilot study is described before a detailed justification for the survey questions is given. The chapter concludes with a reference to the administration of the survey, to be described in chapter 9.

## 8.1 Introduction.

In this chapter the survey of the post-primary principals and deputy principals which had been identified as essential for the achievement of NAPD's aim is described from its origin in questions arising from previous stages of research to its completion prior to its administration in January 2009. Part 2 identifies, from earlier stages of the investigation, the questions to be answered; part 3 outlines the survey in terms of methodology; part 4 gives details of the pilot survey; part 5 gives the letter of introduction and definitions sent to the members of NAPD and part 6 offers a justification for questions in the survey questionnaire, part 7 concludes the chapter.

## 8.2 The questions arising from previous stages of research.

The data, which emerged from the interviews 2006/2007 and were reinforced by the review of literature 2006 - 2008, seemed to require answers to the following questions, regarding the understanding of the definition, theory and practice of instructional leadership from the general body of post-primary principals and deputy principals:

- What is the theory of instructional leadership?
- What is instructional leadership in practice?
- How can instructional leadership be implemented?

The related topics, which had also emerged during the course of the research and upon which the presentation of literature in chapter 6 had been based, will be included in the survey items because their apparent importance was also indicated in the data of the earlier research:

- leadership, school effectiveness and school improvement
- leadership, management and administration
- educational leadership, curriculum leadership, instructional leadership and teacher leadership
- learning, teaching and discipline
- leadership, change and culture
- leadership, professional development and training
- constraints to leadership
- leadership and gender

The review of literature and the concurrent interviews cast further light on these matters and was discussed in chapters 6 and 7. Moreover the review of literature has confirmed that the survey of principals, concerning their understanding of, and opinions on, instructional leadership is urgent if the published aim of NAPD (2005) is to be achieved.

## 8.3 The Survey (preparations).

### 8.3.1 Introduction

In 2007/2008 (see Timeline, stages 9,12, Chapter 1.3, p.10), preparations for the survey were underway. Discussions took place with the NAPD member (j) as to the best time for administering a survey. Although its implementation was planned for 2008, because of the pressures of the school year, the best time was identified as January in any school year, which meant waiting a further six months until January 2009.

### 8.3.2 The instrument.

The chosen instrument for the survey was a questionnaire as it was hoped to survey a large number of principals and deputy principals.

The self-administered questionnaire, although having the poorest response rate of the different survey methods (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993, p. 347), does have the advantages of reaching large numbers, requiring no facilities and having a tendency to encourage response to sensitive topics. Its wide use as a means of collecting large amounts of data in a straightforward way is confirmed by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p.245) citing Wilson and McLean (1994). What is essential is that the instrument is correctly prepared with clear unambiguous questions, which can be justified by previous research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993, p.349).

The design of a questionnaire necessitates consideration of the response format, which will most likely include closed and open questions. Rating scales may also be used. Closed questions, which are easily analysed, are suitable for biographical detail which require one answer; open questions, although requiring lengthy analysis allow the respondents freedom to express their opinions in a way most appropriate to them (Munn and Drever, 1990, p.23). A coding method of the type used in interview analysis (Arksey and Knight, 1999) is required for the open questions. Tobin (2007), citing Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), states that rating scales allow the "respondent some degree of control over the intensity of the answers offered" while still being "amenable to statistical analysis". The use of a 5-point Likert scale is described in Field (2005, p.639).

### 8.3.3 The design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire on instructional leadership was designed to seek opinions on the theory and practice of instructional leadership in Ireland. It was hoped that data from the analysis would not only present a picture of current thinking but also suggest how best NAPD's goal might be attained and what model of instructional leadership, if any, would be most suited to Ireland. A mixture of closed and open items and rating scales was used. The items were initially arranged in topic groupings but were subsequently re-grouped out of sequence to ensure that the respondents had to think

about the response rather than answering automatically. For the same reason, items were included that had similar but different wording (items 6 and 40; 10 and 36).

On its first page, three definitions of leadership were given which had been drawn up in the light of the 2006/2007 interviews and the review of literature 2006/2008 as stated in chapter 6. It was decided to offer the respondents definitions of the leadership types rather than ask for their own definitions, as the data from the previous interviews had shown confusion and lack of understanding of the concepts. What was necessary was that respondents would have the opportunity to read definitions based on research before stating their agreement or disagreement with them.

8.3.4 The questionnaire-justification.

Justification is given for the items as they appeared in the final survey immediately following the description of the pilot survey. Some changes, as noted in the appendices, were made to the original questionnaire following the pilot study and in preparation for the data analysis programme.

8.3.5 Design of the sample

The design of any investigation requires consideration of sampling methods. Arber (1993, p. 71), having stated that the choice of method depends on the aims of the research, distinguishes between the two main types of sampling method:

> Probability sampling is where each element in a population is chosen at random and has a known, non-zero chance of selection. In purposive sampling, the chance of selection for each element in a population is unknown and for some elements zero.

In this study, decisions had to be made about both the pilot sample and the general survey. In the early stages of the investigation, purposive sampling was used in order to hear the views of the Irish principals, the Texan principals and Irish teachers in preparation for larger surveys. It was intended to use probability sampling for the survey of principals and deputy principals, selecting the sample by the Simple Random Sample (SRS) method (Arber, 1993). At a meeting to discuss the research into instructional leadership, the Director of NAPD suggested that the members of the

National Executive of NAPD would form the pilot sample and the total membership of NAPD would participate in the survey.

Even though there were a small number of principals and deputy principals who were not members of NAPD it was assumed that the NAPD membership as a whole would be representative. Therefore, the author accepted this offer.

### 8.4 Pilot study

The survey instrument was piloted in December 2008 before being administered by post in January 2009. Before the survey was distributed to members of the National Executive as a pilot study, it was given to a colleague (relative), in late November, to complete. The author was present in order to check time requirements and clarity of expression. The survey took twenty-five minutes to complete and no changes were made in terms of length or expression at this stage.

The pilot survey was distributed to the members of the National Executive at their meeting in early December by the Director of NAPD with the request that it would be returned to the author by post before Christmas. A stamped, addressed envelope was included with the questionnaire. Fifteen questionnaires were returned out of twenty-two questionnaires (representing a 68% response rate) and these were subsequently analysed during the Christmas holiday. (Three questionnaires were returned in early January, which was too late for them to be included in the pilot study). However it was clear that they followed the same trends as those eligible for inclusion.

The analysis of the fifteen questionnaires resulted in some minor changes and additions to the questionnaire in late December. Further changes were made to the format of the questionnaire for reasons of statistical analysis and clarity in early January.

## 8.5 The letter and introduction to the research study, which accompanied the final questionnaire as designed after the pilot study

### 8.5.1 Introduction

The documents below were sent with the questionnaire to the members of NAPD (post-primary principals and deputy principals, and principals and deputy principals of Further Education colleges) in January 2009.

Dear Principal / Deputy Principal

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, in a submission to the Department of Education and Science (April, 2005) on The Administrative Workload of Principals and Deputy Principals stated that "The core activity of a school is teaching and learning and yet the administrative workload is a serious impediment to the Principal and Deputy Principal being able to act as instructional leader".

As a Doctoral student in the University of Dublin, Trinity College, I am currently undertaking research in the following areas:

- To clarify the term "instructional leadership" both in theory and in practice
- To find out what elements, if any, of "instructional leadership" can already be found in Post-Primary schools in Ireland
- To identify a model for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in Post-Primary schools in Ireland

I should be very glad to have your assistance in completing the enclosed questionnaire. The questionnaire relates to one part of this research programme where the opinions of Post-Primary Principals are sought on 'instructional leadership'. The findings will be entirely confidential and no respondent will be identified through the research. A summary report of the general findings will be made available to you through the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD)

With many thanks for your help in this matter

Verity Swan M.St

746 Howth Road
Raheny
Dublin 5
pvswan@eircom.net

January 2009

**EXHIBIT 1. The Letter**

**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL / DEPUTY PRINCIPAL QUESTIONAIRE**

**Introduction**

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, in a submission to the Department of Education and Science (April, 2005) on The Administrative Workload of Principals and Deputy Principals stated that "The core activity of a school is teaching and learning and yet the administrative workload is a serious impediment to the Principal and Deputy Principal being able to act as instructional leader".

As a Doctoral student in the University of Dublin, Trinity College, I am currently undertaking research in the following areas:

- To clarify the term "instructional leadership" both in theory and in practice
- To find out what elements, if any, of "instructional leadership" can already be found in Post-Primary schools in Ireland
- To identify a model for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in Post-Primary schools in Ireland.

The definitions of "educational leadership", "curriculum leadership" and "instructional leadership" (Swan, 2008) are as follows:

**Educational Leadership**

Educational Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who through their shared professional experience in schools intend real changes and outcomes in the process of bringing up (i.e. ensuring optimum development of intellectual, spiritual and physical abilities of) children.

**Curriculum Leadership**

Curriculum Leadership is the task of developing the plan for the guidance and improvement of student learning in schools necessitating reference to content, assessment and evaluation.

**Instructional Leadership**

Instructional Leadership is the dynamic delivery of the curriculum in the classroom through strategies based on reflection, assessment and evaluation to ensure optimum learning.

I would be most grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire on these issues. The findings will be entirely confidential and no respondent will be identified through the research.

**EXHIBIT 2: Introduction to the research study**

## 8.6 Justification of items included in the questionnaire.

In the pages that follow a justification for the items within the questionnaire is given:

Section A: Background Information (Please tick √ appropriate box (es))
The justification for questions and items is in italics both in Section A and B. The questions and items were based on the research findings (literature review and interview data) in all cases. Repetition occurs in order to check understanding by respondents (i.e. where question is repeated using slightly different wording).

What is your gender? *Texan Principals had all been female; would gender have effect on opinions?*

Male ☐ Female ☐

What is your age? *Would age have effect on opinions?*

21 - 30 years ☐
31 - 40 years ☐
41 - 50 years ☐
51 - 60 years ☐
60+ years ☐

How many years have you taught in schools in total? *Does experience have effect on opinions?*

1 - 10 years ☐
11 - 20 years ☐
21 - 30 years ☐
31 - 40 years ☐
41+ years ☐

How many years have you been either a Deputy Principal or Principal or both? *As above*

1 - 10 years ☐
11 - 20 years ☐
21 - 30 years ☐
31 - 40 years ☐
41+ years ☐

In how many schools have you taught? 1) _ 2) _3) _ 4)_5)_ 6) _ 7)_8)_ As *above*

In how many schools have you been either a Deputy Principal or Principal? 1)_ 2)_3) _ *as above*

**Previous Work Experience (not including your current role)**

Which ***sectors*** have you worked in prior to your current job? (Tick√ all that apply)

Primary ☐
Post – Primary ☐

Third Level ☐

*Does experience of different schools effect opinions?*
Please indicate your experience of the following roles in Post-Primary Schools (tick√ all that apply)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher | ☐ | Deputy Principal | ☐ |
| Class Tutor | ☐ | Principal | ☐ |
| Year Head | ☐ | Other | ☐ |

If you indicated "other", please specify... *Does experience of different roles effect opinions? What types of role exist?*

Please indicate your experience (number of years) in the different types of Post-Primary Schools listed below:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Voluntary Secondary | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Vocational | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Fee Paying | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Community School | | |
| Community College (VEC) | | |
| Comprehensive School | | |
| Day School | | |
| Boarding School | | |
| Other | | |

*Would experience in different sectors affect opinions? Also importance of building up a picture of Irish Principals and Deputy Principals*

**Current Role**
Please indicate the type of school you are currently working in by ticking √ the appropriate box

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Voluntary Secondary | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Vocational | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Fee Paying | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | |
| Community School | | |
| Community College (VEC) | | |
| Comprehensive School | | |
| Day School | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Boarding School | | |
| Other | | |

*Are there differences in response between different sectors?*

In which type of location is your current school?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Urban – Inner City | | |
| Urban – Suburbs | | |
| Rural town | | |
| Rural | | |

*Does location make a difference to response?*

How many pupils are in your current school?
*Schools in Texas were large. What effect has size of school on opinions / concerns?*

How were you appointed to your current role of Deputy Principal?

| | |
|---|---|
| Appointed from staff | |
| Appointed from another school | |
| Other… | |

If you indicated "other" – please specify…
*What experience do respondents have of different types of post-primary schools within Irish education system? What mobility is there?*

How were you appointed to your current role of Principal?

| | |
|---|---|
| Appointed from staff | |
| Appointed from another school | |
| Other… | |

If you indicated "other" – please specify…
*What experience do respondents have of different types of post-primary schools within Irish education system? What mobility is there?*

**Section B, Part 1 (46 items on Likert 5 point rating scale)**

Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please tick √ one response for each statement)

SA = Strongly Agree
A=Agree
N= Neither Agree nor disagree
D= Disagree
SD= Strongly Disagree

Item 1
The definition of "educational leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view
*The importance of knowing what respondents understand by leadership terms – a theme which runs through this research. (See items 7, 11).*

Item 2
The core activity of a school is teaching and learning
*NAPD stated this (2005). Do Irish post-primary principals agree?*

Item 3
Learning is a product not a process
*To find out what respondents understand by learning as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction (See also items 5,14,18,24)*

Item 4
As principal I go into classrooms to work on curriculum and instructional strategies with teachers
*'The Texan scenario', understood to be crucial to the practice of instructional leadership by the Texan principals. Do any Irish principals or deputy principals go into the classroom?*

Item 5
Teaching is the act of setting problems for students to solve
*To find out what respondents understand by learning as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction (See items 3, 14, 18, 24)*

Item 6
Principals are managers not leaders
*Exploratory studies showed that Irish principals saw themselves as managers; Texan principals saw themselves as leaders. What is the current perception in Ireland? (See item 10).*

Item 7
The definition of "curriculum leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view
*Importance of knowing what respondents understand by leadership terms – a theme which runs through this research. (See items 1,11)*

Item 8
The curriculum must be designed to prepare students for future life
*To find out what principals and deputy principals understand to be the aim of education.*

Item 9
Teachers are reluctant to change teaching strategies
*Exploratory studies revealed that Irish principals had this opinion; it was restated during 2006 interviews with Irish principals; documented in the literature (Cohn and Kottkamp*

*1993). Is this still true? Identification of perceived inhibitor to learning (See items 23,25,33,38,43,46)*

Item 10
Leadership and management are mutually compatible tasks
*Division reported in interviews with Irish principals (2001/2002 and 2006). Do Irish principals see themselves as managers or leaders or both? (See item 6).*

Item 11
The definition of "instructional leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view
*Importance of knowing what respondents understand by instructional leadership terms – a theme which runs through this research (See items 1,7).*

Item 12
The teachers expect me to have a detailed knowledge of curriculum and instruction
*Division between views of Irish and Texan principals on role of principal; needed to ascertain how the principals and deputy principals think teachers regard* their *(respondents) work.*

Item 13.
"To lead is to learn"
*To find out whether principals and deputy principals see learning to be an intrinsic part of their roles as leaders (See 6,10).*

Item 14.
Teaching is the act of helping students to identify a problem, to analyse it and to gather resources to solve it.
*To find out what respondents understand by learning and teaching as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction (See items 3,5,18,24)*

Item 15.
Discovery learning is used at all levels within my school
*To find out how knowledgeable principals and deputy principals are about teaching, instruction and curriculum in different years (e.g. TYO) and to check the reality of teaching instruction and curriculum in their schools.*

Item 16.
Principals have the responsibility of ensuring teachers adjust their teaching strategies to current needs
*To identify extent of principal's role in teaching and learning.*

Item 17
The principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of "instructional leadership"
*To find out how principal envisages role of instructional leader.*

Item 18
Learning is the act of taking in information, remembering and reproducing information
*To find out what respondents understand by learning as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction (See items 3,5,14,24)*

Item 19
My staff invite members of the inspectorate to my school
*Concerns culture of the school; to find out "how things are done".*

Item 20
Effective teachers are those able to create synergy out of both leading professional roles and chief executive roles
*Dynamic role of teacher (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992) Teacher as manager of learning through specialised knowledge. How is the role of teacher regarded by principal and deputy principal?*

Item 21
The purpose of discipline is to enhance learning
*Examines the connection between teaching, learning and discipline - to continue to establish understanding of learning. How do principals and deputy principals see relationship between discipline and learning (See items 28, 35)?*

Item 22
Whole school evaluation has had a positive effect on students learning in my school
*Mentioned in principal interviews in 2006 and literature (CBR 2007) as positive innovation. What do principals and deputy principals think?*

Item 23
The culture of teaching is conservative
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning (See items 9,25,33,38,43,46)*

Item 24
Learning is the act of finding out how to dissect information, reflect on information and rebuild information
*To find out what respondents understand by learning as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction (See items 3,5,14,18)*

Item 25
The Trade Unions prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning (See items 9,23,33,38,43,46)*

Item 26
Schools, although sharing the same goals, achieve those goals in different way
*Organisational theory. Is there a common practice?*

Item 27
My school's goals and mission are reflected in classroom practice
*To ascertain whether principals believe that theory and practice are complementary? (See items 29, 31)*

Item 28
Motivation and discipline are two sides of the same coin

*Examines connection between teaching, learning and discipline, to continue to establish understanding of learning. How do principals and deputy principals see the relationship between discipline and learning (See items 21, 35)?*

Item 29
The organisation of my school facilitates achievement of my school's goals
*To ascertain whether principals believe that theory and practice are complementary?*

Item 30
Local culture within my school (i.e. tradition, how things are done), prevents me introducing innovations in learning and teaching
*Identification of inhibitors to change.*

Item 31
My school's mission statement emphasises goals in learning and teaching
*To ascertain whether principals believe that theory and practice are complementary.*

Item 32
The staff discuss my school's goals and mission statement when developing the school plan
*To what extent are teachers involved in overall teaching and learning strategies in school?*

Item 33
The Department of Education and Science, representing government policies, prevents me introducing innovations in learning and teaching
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning (See items 9,23,25 ,38,43,46)*

Item 34
My staff welcome members of the Inspectorate into my school
*Identification of the climate of school, do staff members feel sufficiently confident to welcome inspectors.*

Item 35.
Disciplined behaviour can be achieved through strategic instructional planning
*Examines connection between teaching, learning and discipline, to continue to establish understanding of learning. How do principals and deputy principals see relationship between discipline and learning (See items 21, 28)?*

Item 36
Leadership and management duties are complementary
*Division reported in interviews with Irish principals (2001/2002 and 2006). Do Irish principals see themselves as managers or leaders or both?*

Item 37
Teaching is the act of imparting knowledge and instruction
*To find out what respondents understand by learning as it is intimately related to instructional leadership. Current literature suggests movement from "telling students" what to do to giving them opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Guidance rather than direction*

Item 38
Time is a constraint on my practice of instructional and curriculum leadership
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning ((See items 9,23, 25,33,43,46)*

Item 39
Teachers engage in problem solving to generate my school plans
*How do principal and deputy principal regard the role of teacher?*

Item 40
Principals are leaders not managers
*Division reported in interviews with Irish principals (2001/2002 and 2006). Do Irish principals see themselves as managers or leaders or both?*

Item 41
"Instructional leadership" does not begin or end with the principal; rather "instructional leadership" must come from teachers
*To find out how principals respond to idea of teachers as instructional leaders.*

Item 42
The speed of societal change over the last 20 years has had a detrimental effect on students' learning
*Agreed by all principals in exploratory studies but Texan principals claimed that they could deal with results of such change. Do Irish principals and deputy principals have a positive or negative view of societal change?*

Item 43
Attitudes of students prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching.
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning (See items 9,23,25,33,38,46)*

Item 44
Goals and mission statement influence curriculum and instruction in my school
*To ascertain whether theory and practice are complementary? (See items 29, 31)*

Item 45
"Instructional leadership" does not necessarily have to be undertaken by the principal
*How does principal envisage organisation of instructional leadership?*

Item 46
Attitudes of parents prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching.
*Identification of perceived inhibitors to learning (See items 9,23,25,33,38,43,)*

**Section B: part 2** (5 point rating scale from never to always)

Please indicate the extent to which you carry out "instructional leadership practices" in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

*(These items relate to the practice of instructional leadership by the principal, based on McEwan's (2003) work on instructional leadership practice checklists. The purposes are to ascertain what principals claim to do in terms of teaching and learning and identify any examples of instructional leadership practice)*

Item 1
I work with teachers to improve the instructional programme in their classrooms, consistent with students' needs

Item 2
I facilitate instructional programme development based on trustworthy research and proven instructional practices

Item 3
I undertake regular informal classroom visits (drop-in visits of varying length with no written or verbal feedback to teachers)

Item 4
I undertake regular formal classroom observation (data is noted and communicated to teacher)

Item 5
I engage in planning of classroom observations

Item 6
I engage in post-observation conferences with the teacher that focus on the improvement of instruction

If you answered "Never" to any of the statements please state why that is the case.

If you answered "sometimes", "usually" or "always", please elaborate as to how you do this.....

**Section B (Part 3)** (5 point rating scale from never to always)

Please indicate the extent to which you carry out "instructional leadership practices" in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

*(These items relate to the organisation and practice of instructional leadership in school, based on Leithwood and Aitken's (1995) work on school organisation checklists. The purpose is to ascertain whether school organisation, as it is perceived by the principal and deputy principal, supports teaching and learning)*

Item 1
In my school teaching and learning is discussed at staff meetings

Item 2
In my school, teachers' lesson plans are available to the principal

Item 3
In my school information on incoming students includes information on the learning style of each student

Item 4
In my school the majority of teachers choose to involve themselves in professional development

Item 5
In my school the homework policy is seen as an intrinsic part of learning

If you have any comments on these instructional leadership practices please write them in the space provided below.....

**Section B (Part 4)**

Please indicate the extent to which "instructional leadership practices" are carried out in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

*These items are based on the practice of instructional leadership (Heywood 2008. The purpose is to ascertain whether Principals and Deputy Principals recognise these "instructional leadership practices" from practice in their own schools.*

Item 1
Teachers exercise self-accountability in the classroom by using evaluation tests such as minute papers

Item 2
Teachers invite colleagues into their classrooms to observe their teaching with a view to assessing suitability of methods

Item 3
Teachers undertake action research into classroom practice

Item 4
Teachers encourage other members of the teaching staff to engage in curriculum activities and improve their instruction

Item 5
Teachers communicate their research knowledge of classroom practice beyond the school

If you answered "Never" to any of the statements, please state, to your knowledge, why that is the case.....

If you answered "sometimes", "usually" or "always", please elaborate as to how your teachers do this to your knowledge.....

If you have any comments please write them in the space below

The original design of the questionnaire had included an item on assumptional dialogues (chapter 6.5.4.b, P.84) in section B part 4, which was omitted from the final version, as respondents in the pilot study did not understand it. Although section B

items 43 and 46 were originally one item in the first questionnaire, they were divided to prevent ambiguity.

### 8.7 Next Steps

The questionnaire, which had been designed for the survey on the basis of research already completed, was ready in May 2008 for initial testing followed by implementation. This would not occur until December 2008 due to the exigencies of the school year.

The next two chapters describe the course of the survey from its administration (January 2009) to the analysis (March 2009) and tentative conclusions (April 2009). Chapter 9 describes the survey in terms of methodology and analysis; chapter 10 contains a summary and discussion of the data.

In Chapter 11, the story of this study of instructional leadership is concluded.

# CHAPTER 9

# THE SURVEY AND ITS RELIABILITY

**Abstract**

In this chapter details of the procedures for the analysis of the survey are given, together with the steps taken to ensure its reliability. Details of the two clear factors, which were identified in the factor analysis, are given. The data from the survey are summarised and discussed in chapter 10.

## 9.1 Introduction

In this chapter details of the procedures for the analysis of the survey are given, together with the steps taken to ensure its reliability. A large amount of data emerged from the survey, which was analysed where appropriate by SPSS. Open questions were analysed manually. Part 2 gives details of the survey including details of the instrument, sample, response rate, methods of analysis, reliability tests, independent T-tests and factorial analysis. Part 3 concludes the chapter.

## 9.2 The Survey (January 2009)

### 9.2.1 Analysis

a. The Instrument

The survey instrument was described in chapter 8.3.2, p. 170

b. The Sample.

- The sample consisted of all members of NAPD (stated to be 900 in January 2009).
- Not all post-primary principals and deputies are members of NAPD but the majority are members and NAPD is unlikely not to be representative.
- The accompanying letter gave an assurance of confidentiality to all those choosing to participate in the survey.
- Anonymity of respondents was assured.
- The questionnaires were sent out by post from NAPD on Monday 5 January 2009 accompanied by a stamped envelope addressed to the author.

- A reminder to all members was sent out by the Director of NAPD in mid-January 2009.
- A notice went into the NAPD journal, published in February 2009, giving a further reminder about the return date for the survey.

c. Response rate

The respondents had been requested to return the questionnaires to the author by Saturday 31 January 2009. In the week following the mailing of the questionnaires the response rate was fifty per day. The rate rose again following the reminder in mid January but then decreased to one or two per day until 2 March when no further surveys were received. Since the author had foreseen that there would be some questionnaires, if only a few returned after January, she worked on other aspects of the research throughout February 2009.

| | Population size N | Population size % | Response rate N | Response Rate % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NAPD members | 900 | 100 | 398 | 44 |

**TABLE 19. Response rate 2009 (Survey)**

The response rate was 44%, (398 questionnaires were returned) which is reasonable for surveys of this kind according to data analysts. Response rates for surveys can vary from nil to ninety per cent. Kane (1983) citing Bailey (1978), states that a response rate of 50% - 60% is "the best to be expected where no follow up reminder is sent". In this case, two reminders were given so the response rate appears low. The author could only surmise whether work overload and time constraints (Leader and Boldt, 1994) had an effect on the response rate. (One questionnaire, correctly completed, was returned to the author in March 2010)! Leader and Boldt's (1994) questionnaire on the workload of the voluntary secondary school principal had an 87% response rate, which was seen as "exceptional" (1994, p.79).

However, the response rate of 63% in a recent thesis (Tobin, 2007) would have been considered high by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), who, cited by Tobin[76] (2007) suggest the likelihood of a lower response rate for self-administered postal surveys.

d. Method of analysis

The survey used mostly structured closed items to obtain demographic information in section A and semantic differential items (Likert scales) in the main body of the questionnaire in section B. Some open-ended items were also used. The closed question data was processed using the Statistical Package Programme for Social Scientists (SPSS programme) by Ms Sarah Heywood who had been given the data. In addition to descriptive data, independent sample t-tests were conducted as well as a factor analysis.

e. Reliability of the data

Reliability describes the extent to which a measure produces consistent responses. Since it was not appropriate to use the test-retest[77] or the alternate form[78] methods to check reliability in this survey, the split-half method was used (Anastasi and Urbina, 1997, pp. 92,102) which requires the division of the test into two halves to find the coefficient of internal consistency. Recognising that the split-half method can only supply the reliability for a half test unlike the test-retest and alternate form methods, it was deemed suitable for the purpose given the time constraints on participants.

Sections B, 1 and 2, were found to be reliable when the Cronbach-alpha co-efficient (Cronbach, 1951) was used.

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[76] Tobin: (2007) had a response rate of 63% in a smaller survey, the sample size being 59 teachers.

[77] Test-retest method: For example, when a person is given a questionnaire at two different points in time they should provide similar (if not the same) responses on both occasions. If the same or similar responses are received on two different occasions then this implies that the questionnaire is stable and dependable. Although the reliability of the data was not tested in this way in this survey, these details are included here as they are relevant to the discussion of the limitations of this research study in chapter 11. 2.

[78] Alternate -form test: requires that the persons who participated in the first test are re-tested with an equivalent test.

Procter (1993, p.128), having described stability and consistency as two "slightly different" concepts found in reliability, states that the Cronbach-alpha co-efficient is:

> almost universally used [...], is approximately the average of all the possible split-half correlations and thus measures the consistency of all items, globally and individually.

A Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of 0.7 is required for a questionnaire and tests to be considered reliable. The reliability analysis showed that the reliability ratings for section B, parts 2 and 4 were sound. The reliability rating for section B, part 1 at .668 was confirmed by an independent analyst as acceptable. The reliability ratings for section B part 3 showed inconsistency in the response although it can be argued that the low Cronbach-alpha score for the four items in section B, part 3 is not surprising as five items is too small a number to get good reliability. Since Section B, part 4 was sound other reasons for the low score on section B, part 3 must be considered.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cronbach's Alpha .668 | Section B part 1 | 46 items |
| Cronbach's Alpha .760 | Section B part 2 | 6 items |
| Cronbach's Alpha .586 | Section B part 3 | 5 items |
| Cronbach's Alpha .708 | Section B part 4 | 5 items |

**TABLE 20. Reliability Analysis**

The items in section B, part 3 related to the organisation of teaching and learning in the school. It is possible that the respondents did not understand the items or the difference between items or that practice was different in each school. Therefore they responded inconsistently suggesting some practices were undertaken and not others. They may have been unsure or ill informed as to what was happening in those areas (lesson plans, learning style information on incoming students, teachers' participation in professional courses, homework policy), which concurs with data from the

interviews. How the staff meeting would fit in to this argument is hard to see although the number of staff meetings appears to vary from school to school.

f. Independent Sample T-tests

Independent T-tests are used to determine whether two populations are the same with respect to the variable tested. A probability of 0.3 on a T-test suggests a 30% likelihood that no distinction may be made between the two populations in respect of the variable tested.

A number of independent T-tests (Table 21, p.192) were conducted to establish whether there were significant differences on the various elements of the questionnaire between: males and females, older and younger respondents, deputy principals employed from staff or from another school, principals employed from staff or from another school as well as differences between principals and deputy principals. The statistics failed to yield any significant differences between the aforementioned groups on any scale of the questionnaire.

In relation to the information in section A and the responses in section B, it had been envisaged that the age of principals, gender, length of experience, different types of experience, different types of school, different roles (i.e. principal or deputy principal) might affect the response to items in section B. In fact this was not so. The SPSS analysis found no such differences in the data on account of these variables. It can be assumed then that principals and deputy principals answered the questionnaire from the point of view of their common designated roles. Whether those roles were as leaders or managers was not yet clear.

**Part B Part 1**

| Groupings | T value | Df | P (significance) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Males and females | -.688 | 225 | P>.05 |
| Older and younger respondents (under 50 and 51+ years) | .018 | 209.516 | P>.05 |
| Deputy principals (appointed from staff or school) | 1.427 | 108 | P>.05 |
| Principals (appointed from staff or school) | .772 | 130 | P>.05 |
| Principals and deputy principals | .026 | 192 | P>.05 |

**Part B Part 2**

| Groupings | T value | Df | P (significance) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Males and females | -.124 | 362 | P>.05 |
| Older and younger respondents (under 50 and 51+ years) | -.491 | 362 | P>.05 |
| Deputy principals (appointed from staff or school) | -.362 | 194 | P>.05 |
| Principals (appointed from staff or school) | .970 | 187 | P>.05 |
| Principals and deputy principals | -.768 | 299 | P>.05 |

**Part B Part 3**

| Groupings | T value | Df | P (significance) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Males and females | . -2.098 | 372 | P>.05 |
| Older and younger respondents (under 50 and 51+ years) | -.895 | 373 | P>.05 |
| Deputy principals (appointed from staff or school) | .651 | 203 | P>.05 |
| Principals (appointed from staff or school) | .371 | 185 | P>.05 |
| Principals and deputy principals | .587 | 307 | P>.05 |

**Part B Part 4**

| Groupings | T value | Df | P (significance) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Males and females | -.952 | 351 | P>.05 |
| Older and younger respondents (under 50 and 51+ years) | .359 | 351 | P>.05 |
| Deputy principals (appointed from staff or school) | -.088 | 193 | P>.05 |
| Principals (appointed from staff or school) | -.095 | 173 | P>.05 |
| Principals and deputy principals | .604 | 291 | P>.05 |

**TABLE 21. Independent Sample T Tests**

g. Factorial analysis

Factor analysis serves several purposes. It can be used to find out whether a large number of variables, investigated in a single study can be grouped together into factors to assist data analysis and interpretation (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993, p.292) or to determine whether a research instrument (i.e. questionnaire) has been designed for the purpose intended (Field, 2005, chapter 15).

In this study, the SPSS program was used with a varimax rotation on section B, part 1. It showed two clear factors in the questionnaire. These were both reliable scales.

The factors were interpreted as leadership of learning and inhibitors to change:

- Leadership of learning (what interventions are required to bring about learning) items:

  **1, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31, 35, 36, 39, 41**

- Inhibitors to change items:

  ***9, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 42, 43, 46***

Table 22, p.194 rearranges the items and shows the relevance of the two factors to the six main areas of enquiry. Factor 1 items are shown in bold type, factor 2 items are shown in bold italics (as above). In table 22, p.194 those items in normal type were not involved in the factors.

| **Topics** (identified throughout the research) | **Questions** Section B Part 1 | **Related information in written statements and comments (Section B, Parts 2,3,4)** |
|---|---|---|
| 1) Definitions of leadership | **1**, 7, 11 | Does school practice relate to the definitions given in text, which were accepted by majority of participants? |
| 2a) Teaching and Learning | 2,3,5,**8**,**14**,18,24,37 | In what way, if at all, do principals and deputy principals lead teaching and learning in the schools? |
| 2b) Teaching, Learning and Discipline | **21, 28, 35** | Do principals and deputy principals see link in practice between teaching and discipline? |
| 2c) Implementation of "instructional leadership" | 4,12,**15,16,** **17,27,31**,*32*,**39,41**,44,45 | What evidence is there of practice of "instructional leadership" in Irish schools? |
| 3) Culture | 19,**22**,23,**26**,*29*, *34*, 42 | What effect does culture have on teaching and learning in the schools? |
| 4) Leadership practice | 6,**10,13,20,36**,40 | How do principals and deputy principals see themselves in the context of school's teaching and learning programme? |
| 5) Constraints | *9,25,30*,*33*,38,*43,46,* | What constraints are identified by the principals and deputy principals in their answers to Section B, Parts 2,3,4? |
| 6) Gender | All questions | Is there any difference between the answers to Section B, Parts 2,3,4? |

**TABLE 22. Factors 1& 2 (Bold type denotes Factor (1), bold italics denotes Factor (2))**

## 9.3 Conclusion

A large amount of data was gained from the administration of the survey. It was clear that those who chose to complete the questionnaire did so thoughtfully and carefully. Those who accepted the invitation to make written comments did so at length. Those comments were important in giving further information about the research questions as will be shown in chapter 10.

# CHAPTER 10

# SUMMARY, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA


## Abstract

The data from section A of the questionnaire are presented in percentage form followed by a commentary. The data from section B, 1, 2, 3, 4 are also presented in percentage form followed by a graphical analysis of the data. The written comments (section B, 2, 3, 4) are presented in tabular form with a commentary. The graphical analysis of section B 1 data is shown under topic headings, which reflect the categories that were identified during the research (Table 1, stage 9, 1 - 3 p.10). Discussion of the factorial analysis precedes the concluding section in which the main arguments are reiterated.


## 10.1 Introduction

A presentation of, and commentary on, the survey data follows. In part 2, the personal and demographic data from section A are presented and discussed. It is to be noted that the response rate suggested that some respondents were reluctant to answer "personal" questions. In part 3, the data from section B, 1, 2, 3 and 4 are presented in percentage form. In part 4, a graphical analysis of the data from section B, part 1 is given with an accompanying commentary, followed by a graphical analysis of section B, 2,3,4 with an accompanying commentary. This part shows the opinions of the respondents on both the theory and the practice. In part 5, the written comments are listed in tabular form accompanied by a commentary. The factorial analysis findings, which were shown in chapter 9.2.1.g, p.193 are discussed in part 6. In part 7, a summary of the main arguments from the discussion of survey data is given in preparation for the final chapter.

## 10.2 Presentation of the data from section A.

10.2.1 Presentation of data (percentages)

The percentages are provided below as an introduction to the discussion, which follows immediately. Where no percentage is available, explanatory comments are placed immediately below the item. The "no response" rate is also given.

**Section A: Background Information**

- What is your gender?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 70% | Female | 30% |

- What is your age?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21 - 30 years | 2% | 51 - 60 years | 44% |
| 31 - 40 years | 10% | 60+ years | 6% |
| 41 - 50 years | 35% | *No response* | 3% |

- How many years have you taught in schools in total?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - 10 years | 5% | 31 - 40 years | 33% |
| 11 - 20 years | 18% | 41+ years | 1% |
| 21 - 30 years | 40% | *No response* | 3% |

- How many years have you been either a Deputy Principal or Principal or both?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - 10 years | 69% | 31 - 40 years | 1% |
| 11 - 20 years | 19% | 41+ years | 0% |
| 21 - 30 years | 8% | *No response* | 3% |

- In how many schools have you taught? *No response* 2%

| | |
|---|---|
| One school | 29% |
| Two schools | 28% |
| Three schools | 21% |
| Four schools | 10% |
| Five schools | 6% |
| Six schools | 2% |
| Seven schools | 1% |
| Eight schools | 1% |

- In how many schools have you been either a Deputy Principal or Principal? *No response 1%*

| | |
|---|---|
| One school | 82% |
| Two schools | 16% |
| Three schools | 1% |

- Which ***sectors*** have you worked in prior to your current job? (tick√ all that apply) *No response 23%*

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary | 2% |
| Post – Primary | 73% |
| Third Level | 2% |

- Please indicate your experience of the following roles in Post-Primary Schools (tick√ all that apply)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher | 134 | Deputy Principal | 108 |
| Class Tutor | 108 | Principal | 51 |
| Year Head | 108 | Other | 18 |

This question generated multiple responses, which was expected. All 134 respondents had been teachers. Forty-five, who are now principals, had also been class tutor, year head and deputy principal prior to their current role. Sixty-two, who are now deputy principals, had previously been class tutor and year head. Of the remaining twenty-seven, 18 indicated that in addition to being a teacher, they had a position in the school other than those listed. Of the remaining nine, one had been a class tutor, one had been a year head prior to appointment to their current role. Two deputy principals and five principals had been appointed directly from the classroom.

Since the opportunity was given to specify what other role(s) had been held by the respondent, a wide range of responsibilities was mentioned including photographic assistant. The most popular "other" role was that of co-ordinator TYO.

- Please indicate your experience (number of years) in the different types of Post-Primary Schools listed below: *No response 57% (The % number of respondents in each category is shown in these figures)*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Voluntary Secondary | Boys | 8% |
| | Girls | 10% |
| | Mixed | 4% |
| Vocational | Boys | |
| | Girls | |
| | Mixed | 11% |
| Community School | | 3% |
| Community College (VEC) | | 3% |
| Comprehensive School | | 1% |
| Day School | | |
| Boarding School | | |
| Fee Paying | Boys | 0.25% |
| | Girls | 0.25% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Mixed | 1.5% |
| Other | | 1% |

- Current Role - please indicate the type of school you are currently working in by ticking √ the appropriate box. *No response* 6.5% *(The number of respondents in each category is shown in these figures)*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Voluntary Secondary | Boys | 14% |
| | Girls | 18% |
| | Mixed | 11% |
| Vocational | Boys | |
| | Girls | 0.5% |
| | Mixed | 19% |
| Community School | | 15% |
| Community College (VEC) | | 8% |
| Comprehensive School | | 2% |
| Day School | | |
| Boarding School | | |
| Fee Paying | Boys | 1% |
| | Girls | 1% |
| | Mixed | 1% |
| Other | | 2% |

- In which type of location is your current school? *No response* 2%

| | |
|---|---|
| Urban – Inner City | 10% |
| Urban – Suburbs | 37% |
| Rural town | 40% |
| Rural | 11% |

- How many pupils are in your current school?

Since the majority of respondents chose not to answer this question, no pattern was discernible in relation to school numbers. From the replies received, the smallest school had fewer than 120 students, and the largest over fifteen hundred students. On checking with NAPD, the average school population is approximately five hundred and fifty to six hundred.

- How were you appointed to your current role of Deputy Principal? *No response* 4%

| | |
|---|---|
| Appointed from staff | 73% |
| Appointed from another school | 20% |
| Other… | 3% |

If you indicated "other" – please specify. *A small minority came from other sectors, secondment and Acting Principalship*

- How were you appointed to your current role of Principal? *No response* 4%

| | |
|---|---|
| Appointed from staff | 52% |
| Appointed from another school | 41% |
| Other… | 3% |

If you indicated "other" – please specify. *A small minority came from other sectors, secondment and Acting Principalship*

10.2.2 Section A: Survey Findings, a discussion

The picture painted by the data gained from section A of the questionnaire was that the majority of post-primary principals were between forty-one years and sixty years. They had been teachers for more than twenty-one years. The majority of principals had been in principalship for ten years or less; their experience of teaching lay in three schools or less; their experience of principalship lay in one school; they had worked solely in the post-primary sector, their distribution in the different types of school in the post-primary sector following the national pattern[1]; the range of roles that the principals and deputy principals had held as teachers in those schools was wide; their current employment similarly reflected the national pattern; their schools were located either in urban suburbs (37%) or rural town (40%) with a smaller but almost equal number in inner city (10%) or rural schools (11%). As noted above, the response rate for the question on school size was too low to allow for meaningful analysis; the reason for non-response is unknown. What is clear, however, from information supplied by NAPD is that school size in Ireland is considerably lower than in the Texan sample (See Table 4, Chapter 2.3.2, p 26)

A greater number of deputy principals than principals were appointed from the staff of their own schools; in both cases, some came from other second level schools and a small number, in each case, had returned from secondment or had come from other sectors. Although a small number of respondents chose to give details of their former roles, it was interesting to see that the majority of both principals and deputy principals had been both class tutor and year head and in the case of principal, deputy principal. The range of "other" roles seems to suggest the different types of internal organisation within the Irish school system.

[1] The majority were voluntary secondary schools, followed by vocational schools, community schools, comprehensive schools and fee-paying schools.

In relation to teaching and learning in schools, the majority of principals had come into teaching at least ten years before the Education Act (1998) and ensuing legislation[2], brought some change into educational practice in all Irish post-primary schools.[3] Undoubtedly some schools before 1998 thrived on innovation but many, from the evidence even of this study, preferred to maintain the status quo, achieving steady results in the state examinations in a secure unchanging climate.

By the late eighties the social change already experienced in the outside world was to bring change to the Irish classroom too and result not only in a raft of legislation but also urgent discussion in some schools as to how to cope with the many challenges that lay on all sides. The data from the questionnaire suggest however that in schools where, due both to demographic circumstances and the practice of working within the school, the challenge was not recognised, the teaching culture remained conservative. Since, according to the data, many principals and more deputy principals have taught in only one school their outlook is likely to be governed by their early experience (Swan, 1996). The conservative character of teaching pre-1998 meant that a teacher had to choose to be an extended professional (this practice still pertains since professional courses are not mandatory). The principals in this study had in the majority taught initially in a safe climate particularly in the VSS section. Principal (g), who had made the transition from a large community school into principalship in a privately owned voluntary secondary *(fee-paying)* school made this point in the 2006/2007 interviews (chapter 7.3.3, p.150). However there was evidence in the data that many schools offered teachers the opportunity to take on different roles within the school which permitted some measure of experience. In terms of gender there was no surprise[4] about the predominance of male principals despite the greater number of females in teaching at both primary and post-primary levels. This is also in line with international data (Law and Glover, 2000).

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[2] Appendix A.
[3] Such change includes WSE and SDP.
[4] The majority of teachers in post-primary schools are female (60%). The majority of principals in post-primary schools are male (VSS, 60%; VEC schools and community colleges, 65%; community and comprehensive Schools, 76%) – Source CBR 2007.

In terms of this study there had been evidence at earlier stages of the research that gender might make a difference (Table 1, stages 1,4, chapter 1.3, p.10) but the T-tests (Chapter 9.2.1.f, p. 191) did not show any difference between the responses of the males and females. Thus no differentiation has been made in the tables that follow. Similarly and for the same reasons, no differentiation has been made in the tables, which follow between principals and deputy principals.

## 10.3 Presentation of data from section B, Parts 1,2,3,4 in percentage form

10.3.1 Section B: presentation of data.

The data from the survey (Section B, 1,2,3,4) is presented in percentage form below on the original question sheet. A graphical presentation of the same data follows, arranged in the category groupings, which have been identified in the analysis. A commentary accompanies the presentation.

**SECTION B (Part 1)**
Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please tick √ one response for each statement)

SA = Strongly Agree
A=Agree
N= Neither Agree nor disagree
D= Disagree
SD= Strongly Disagree

| | Percentage Response | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Statement** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1.The definition of "educational leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view | 35 | 55 | 8 | 2 | - |
| 2.The core activity of a school is teaching and learning | 78 | 19 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 3. Learning is a product not a process | 4 | 7 | 10 | 34 | 45 |
| 4. As Principal I go into classrooms to work on curriculum and instructional strategies with teachers | 2 | 11 | 31 | 36 | 20 |
| 5. Teaching is the act of setting problems for students to solve | 3 | 15 | 31 | 33 | 18 |
| 6. Principals are managers not leaders | 3 | 8 | 12 | 38 | 39 |
| 7.The definition of "curriculum leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view | 30 | 58 | 10 | 2 | - |
| 8.The curriculum must be designed to prepare students for future life | 42 | 48 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| 9.Teachers are reluctant to change teaching strategies | 8 | 42 | 18 | 29 | 3 |
| 10. Leadership and management are mutually compatible tasks | 19 | 56 | 11 | 12 | 2 |
| 11. The definition of "instructional leadership" at the beginning of this questionnaire is in accordance with my view | 31 | 57 | 9 | 3 | - |
| 12. The teachers expect me to have a detailed knowledge of curriculum and instruction | 12 | 38 | 20 | 28 | 2 |
| 13. "To lead is to learn" | 40 | 48 | 9 | 2 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. Teaching is the act of helping students to identify a problem, to analyse it and to gather resources to solve it. | 23 | 55 | 14 | 7 | 1 |
| 15. Discovery learning is used at all levels within my school | 5 | 38 | 30 | 26 | 1 |
| 16. Principals have the responsibility of ensuring teachers adjust their teaching strategies to current needs | 25 | 61 | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| 17. The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of "instructional leadership" | 26 | 58 | 7 | 8 | 1 |
| 18. Learning is the act of taking in information, remembering and reproducing information | 1 | 11 | 14 | 50 | 24 |
| 19. My staff invite members of the Inspectorate to my school | 2 | 11 | 18 | 39 | 30 |
| 20. Effective teachers are those able to create synergy out of both leading professional roles and chief executive roles | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 | 1 |
| 21. The purpose of discipline is to enhance learning | 1 | 33 | 47 | 10 | 9 |
| 22. Whole school evaluation has had a positive effect on students learning in my school | 20 | 34 | 39 | 5 | 2 |
| 23. The culture of teaching is conservative | 10 | 57 | 15 | 16 | 2 |
| 24. Learning is the act of finding out how to dissect information, reflect on information and rebuild information | 11 | 66 | 14 | 7 | 2 |
| 25. The Trade Unions prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching | 8 | 19 | 22 | 41 | 10 |
| 26. Schools, although sharing the same goals, achieve those goals in different ways | 17 | 72 | 7 | 4 | - |
| 27. My school's goals and mission are reflected in classroom practice | 15 | 75 | 9 | 1 | - |
| 28. Motivation and discipline are two sides of the same coin | 19 | 60 | 12 | 8 | 1 |
| 29. The organisation of my school facilitates achievement of my school's goals | 24 | 65 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| 30. Local culture within my school (i.e. tradition, how things are done), prevents me introducing innovations in learning and teaching | 2 | 15 | 18 | 49 | 16 |
| 31. My school's mission statement emphasises goals in learning and teaching | 26 | 62 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| 32. The staff discuss my school's goals and mission statement when developing the school plan | 26 | 61 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| 33. The Department of Education and Science, representing government policies, prevents me introducing innovations in learning and teaching | 10 | 18 | 23 | 40 | 9 |
| 34. My staff welcome members of the Inspectorate into my school | 11 | 48 | 24 | 13 | 4 |
| 35. Disciplined behaviour can be achieved through strategic instructional planning | 19 | 65 | 12 | 4 | - |
| 36. Leadership and management duties are complementary | 21 | 61 | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| 37. Teaching is the act of imparting knowledge and instruction | 4 | 42 | 24 | 24 | 6 |
| 38. Time is a constraint on my practice of instructional and curriculum leadership | 47 | 43 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| 39. Teachers engage in problem solving to generate my school plans | 5 | 45 | 34 | 13 | 3 |
| 40. Principals are leaders not managers | 12 | 21 | 26 | 35 | 6 |
| 41. "Instructional leadership" does not begin or end with the Principal, rather "instructional leadership" must come from teachers | 24 | 54 | 11 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42. The speed of societal change over the last 20 years has had a detrimental effect on students' learning | 11 | 34 | 18 | 31 | 6 |
| 43. Attitudes of students prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching. | 3 | 11 | 14 | 55 | 17 |
| 44. Goals and mission statement influence curriculum and instruction in my school | 14 | 65 | 15 | 5 | 1 |
| 45. "Instructional leadership" does not necessarily have to be undertaken by the Principal. | 16 | 50 | 7 | 20 | 7 |
| 46. Attitudes of parents prevent me introducing innovations in learning and teaching. | 2 | 6 | 16 | 54 | 22 |

**Section B (Part 2)**

Please indicate the extent to which you carry out "instructional leadership practices" in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I work with teachers to improve the instructional programme in their classrooms, consistent with students' needs | 3 | 13 | 46 | 28 | 9 |
| I facilitate instructional programme development based on trustworthy research and proven instructional practices | 3 | 14 | 29 | 39 | 12 |
| I undertake regular informal classroom visits (drop-in visits of varying length with no written or verbal feedback to teachers) | 27 | 27 | 24 | 14 | 6 |
| I undertake regular formal classroom observation (data is noted and communicated to teacher) | 60 | 23 | 10 | 3 | 4 |
| I engage in planning of classroom observations | 52 | 29 | 11 | 5 | 1 |
| I engage in post-observation conferences with the teacher that focus on the improvement of instruction | 50 | 25 | 17 | 5 | 1 |

If you answered "Never" to any of the statements, please state why...

If you answered "sometimes", "usually" or "always", please elaborate as to how you do this.....

**Section B (Part 3)**

Please indicate the extent to which you carry out "instructional leadership practices" in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In my school teaching and learning is discussed at staff meetings | 1 | 6 | 31 | 38 | 23 |
| In my school teachers' lesson plans are available to the Principal | 16 | 21 | 14 | 20 | 28 |
| In my school information on incoming students includes information on the learning style of each student | 19 | 25 | 29 | 18 | 7 |
| In my school the majority of teachers choose to involve themselves in professional development | 1 | 3 | 16 | 46 | 34 |
| In my school the homework policy is seen as an intrinsic part of learning | 2 | 6 | 13 | 34 | 42 |

If you have any comments on these instructional leadership practices please write them in the space provided below.....

**Section B (Part 4)**

Please indicate the extent to which "instructional leadership practices" are carried out in your school.

1=never 2=seldom 3=sometimes 4=usually 5=always

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teachers exercise self accountability in the classroom by using evaluation tests such as minute papers | 25 | 27 | 23 | 18 | 2 |
| Teachers invite colleagues into their classrooms to observe their teaching with a view to assessing suitability of methods | 33 | 38 | 24 | 3 | 1 |
| Teachers undertake action research into classroom practice | 16 | 37 | 38 | 6 | 1 |
| Teachers encourage other members of the teaching staff to engage in curriculum activities and improve their instruction | 6 | 21 | 45 | 23 | 4 |
| Teachers communicate their research knowledge of classroom practice beyond the school | 9 | 25 | 42 | 16 | 3 |

If you answered "Never" to any of the statements, please state, to your knowledge, why that is the case.....

If you answered "sometimes", "usually" or "always", please elaborate as to how your teachers do this to your knowledge.....

If you have any comments, please write them in the space provided below.....

**10.4** Presentation of the data from Section B, Part 1 and commentary

10.4.1 Graphical analysis of the data from Section B, part 1 with commentary

The data from the questionnaire (section B, part 1) is reconstructed in the graphical analysis, which follows to show the items grouped in their related categories. A commentary accompanies each table.

The discussion of the survey findings will focus on the groups of items as they appear in Chapter 10, which were identified earlier in the research programme. As stated in chapter 9, it appeared that opinions given in the questionnaire (section B, part 1) were not supported in practice (sections B, 2, 3 and 4).

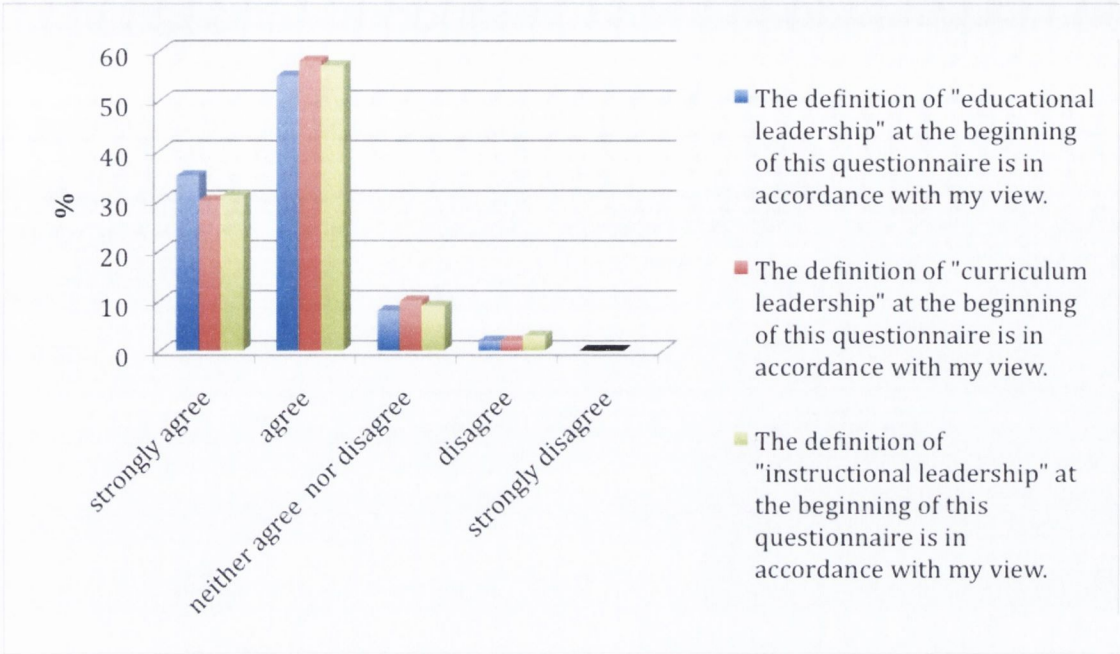


**FIGURE 1. Definitions of leadership terms, Section B, Part 1: Items 1, 7 and 11**

FIGURE 1

Definitions of leadership terms within the questionnaire

Figure 1 shows that the respondents agreed to the definitions with those respondents, stating neither agreement nor disagreement, no higher than 10% and those respondents expressing disagreement, no more than 3%. The issue was whether practice would correspond with the high rates of agreement.

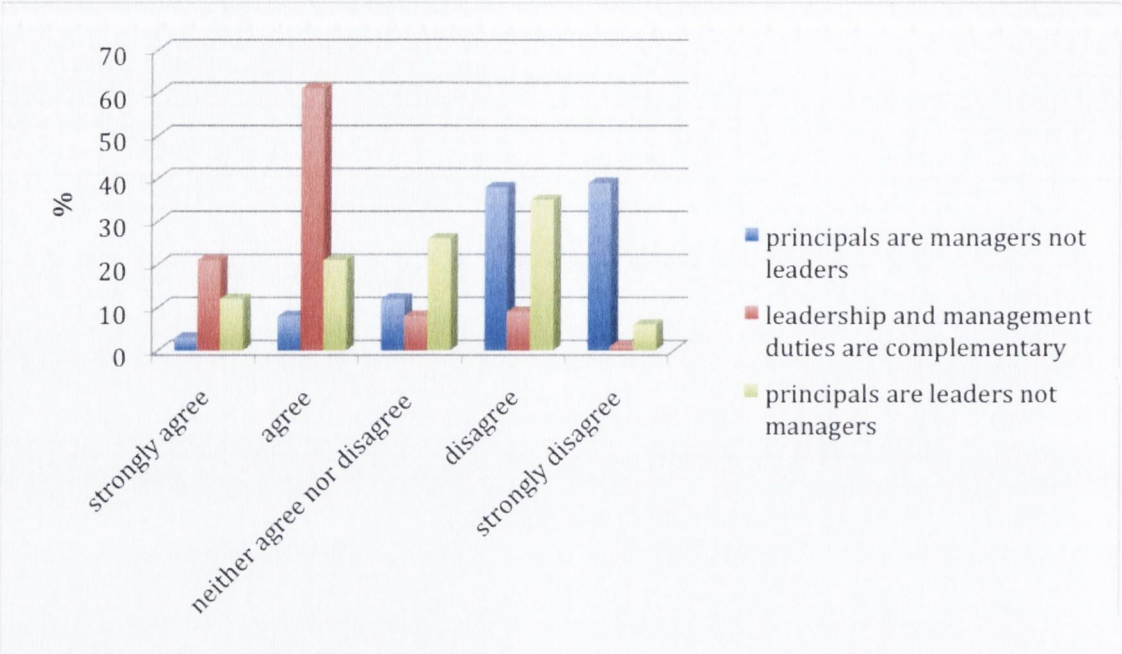


**FIGURE 2. Leadership and management (1), Section B, Part 1: Items 6, 36 and 40**

**FIGURE 3. Leadership and management (2), Section B, Part 1: Item 10**

FIGURES 2 and 3

Leadership and management within the questionnaire

Figures 2 and 3 show that the respondents did not agree with the statement "that principals were managers not leaders" which was interesting when compared with the 2001 interviewees who saw themselves as managers (chapter 2.2). The respondents accepted the compatibility of leadership and management which, as has been seen in (chapter 6.7.2.c) is a developing concept in the literature.

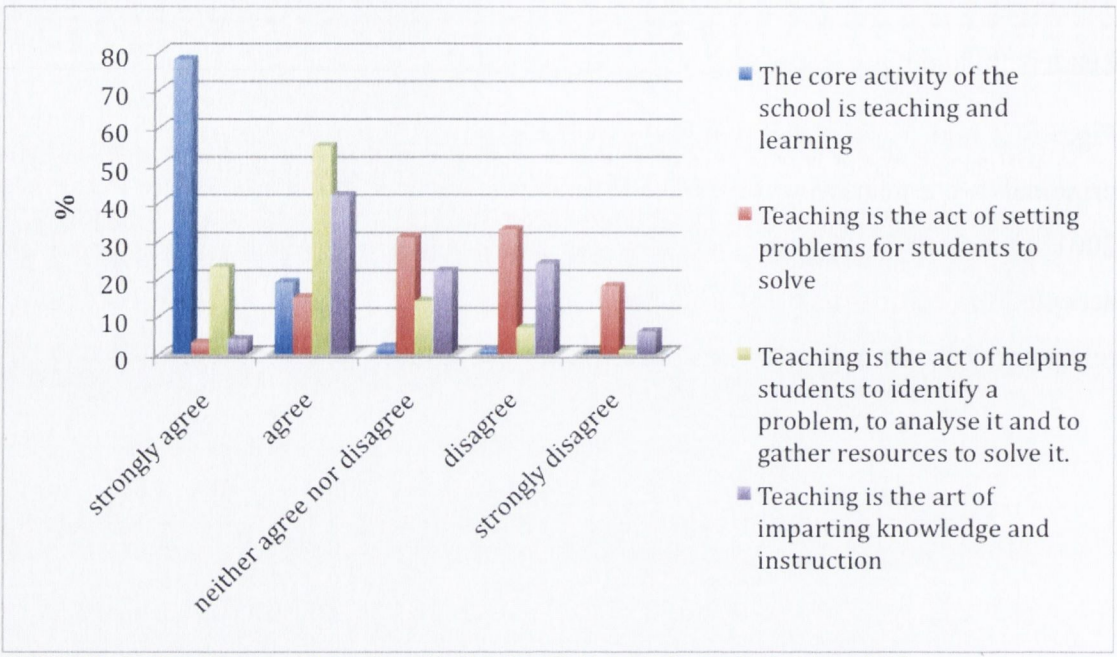


**FIGURE 4. Teaching and learning (1), Section B, Part 1: Items 2, 5, 14, and 37**

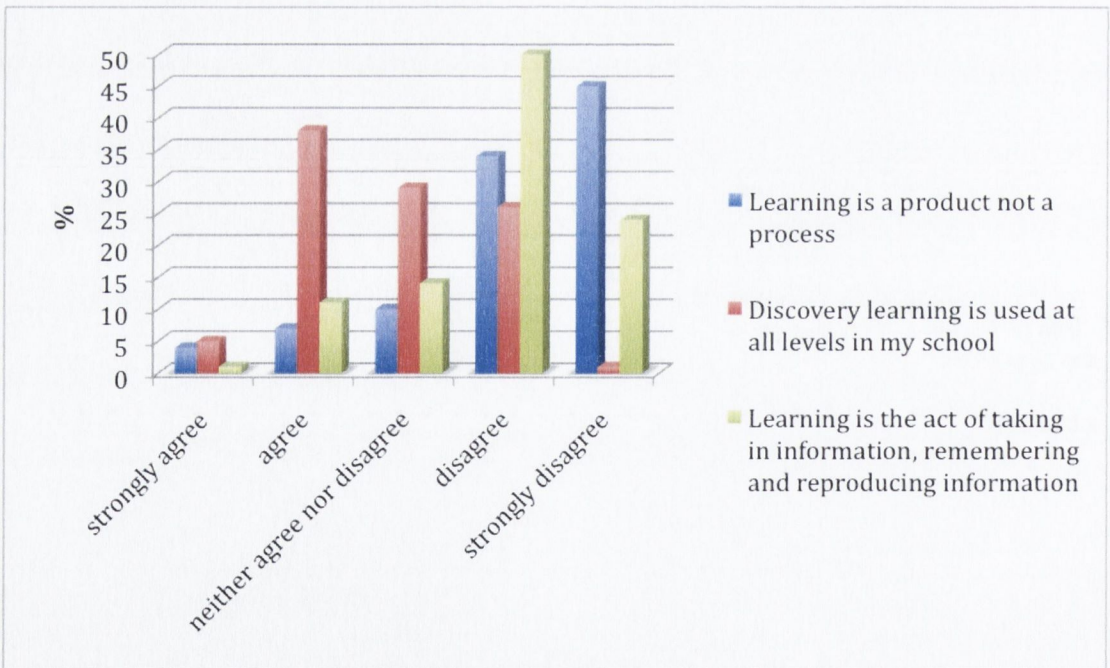


**FIGURE 5. Teaching and learning (2), Section B, Part 1: Items 3, 15, and 18**

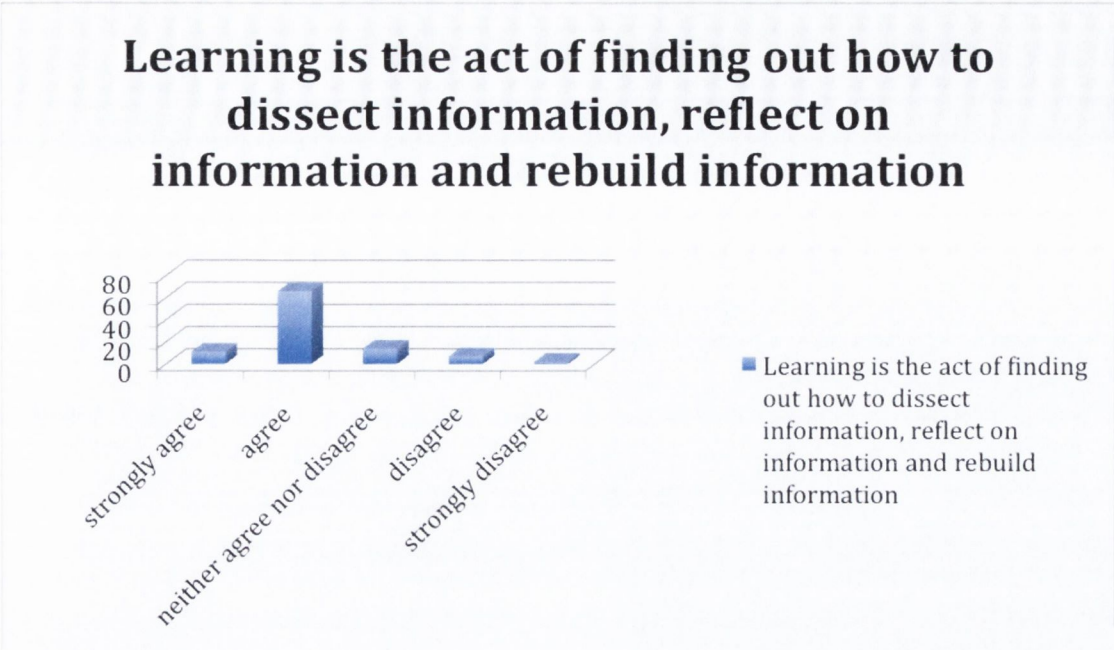


**FIGURE 6. Teaching and learning (3), Section B, Part 1: Item 24**

FIGURES 4, 5 and 6

Teaching and learning within the questionnaire

Figures 4, 5 and 6 show that the respondents, having agreed that teaching and learning is the core activity of the school, showed in their answers that they accepted current theories of teaching and learning which go far beyond "rote" learning (Bowring-Carr, 2005). They agreed that teaching was "helping students to identify a problem" (Item 14) but did not, in the same numbers, state that discovery learning is used at all levels in their schools (Item15). The responses to questions on learning supported their views on teaching (Item 2).

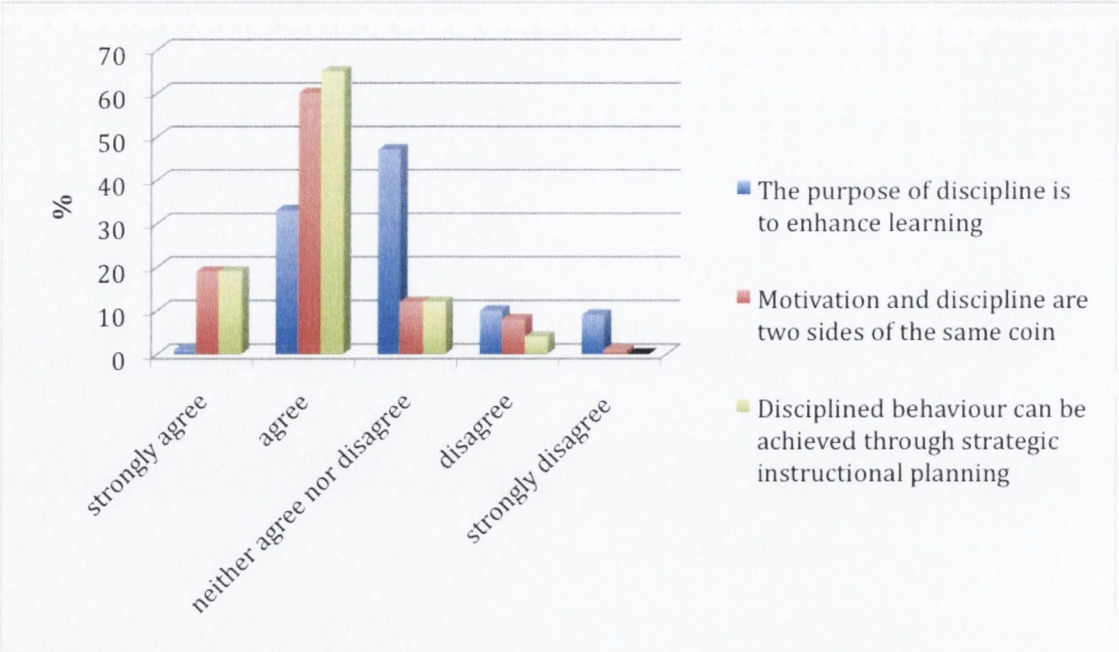


**FIGURE 7. Teaching, learning and discipline, Section B, Part 1: Items 21, 28 and 35**

FIGURE 7

Teaching, learning and discipline within the questionnaire

Figure 7 shows that although only 34% of the respondents agreed with Item 21 that "the purpose of discipline is to enhance learning", 84% agreed with Item 35 that "disciplined behaviour can be achieved through strategic instructional planning" and 79% with Item 28 that "motivation and discipline are two sides of the same coin". The reason for this can only be conjectured. Perhaps the word "enhance" was not familiar to the respondents in its usage in Item 21. Since it appears that discipline is frequently used as a term for "control" as noted by interviewee (h) in the 2006 interviews, an intrinsic connection between teaching and discipline as envisaged in Item 21 may not be recognised. In Items 28 and 35 the respondents may have detected the notion of "classroom control" and getting on with the job of teaching.

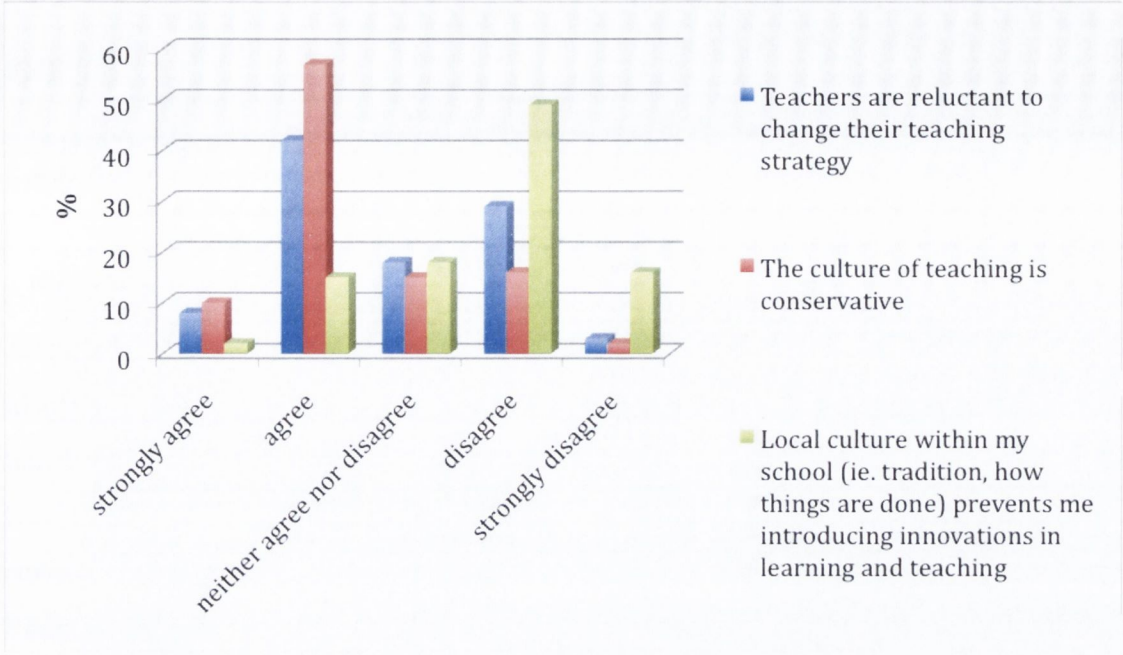


**FIGURE 8. Inhibitors to innovation in learning and teaching (1), Section B, Part 1: Items 9, 23, and 30**

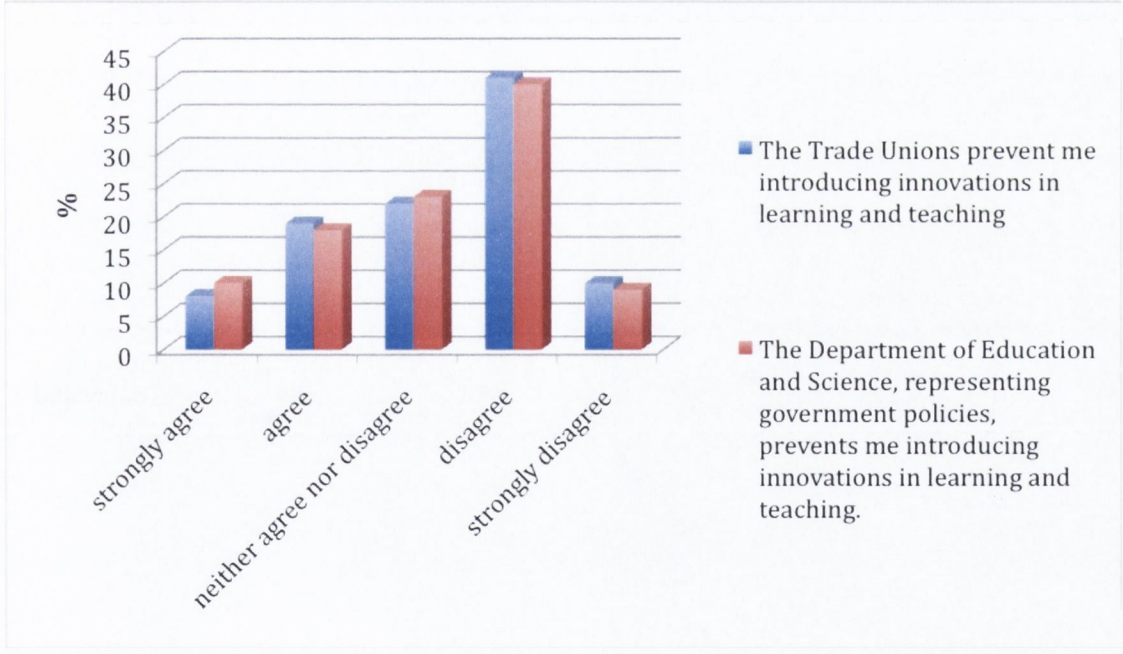


**FIGURE 9. Inhibitors to innovations in learning and teaching (2), Section B, Part 1: Items 25 and 33**

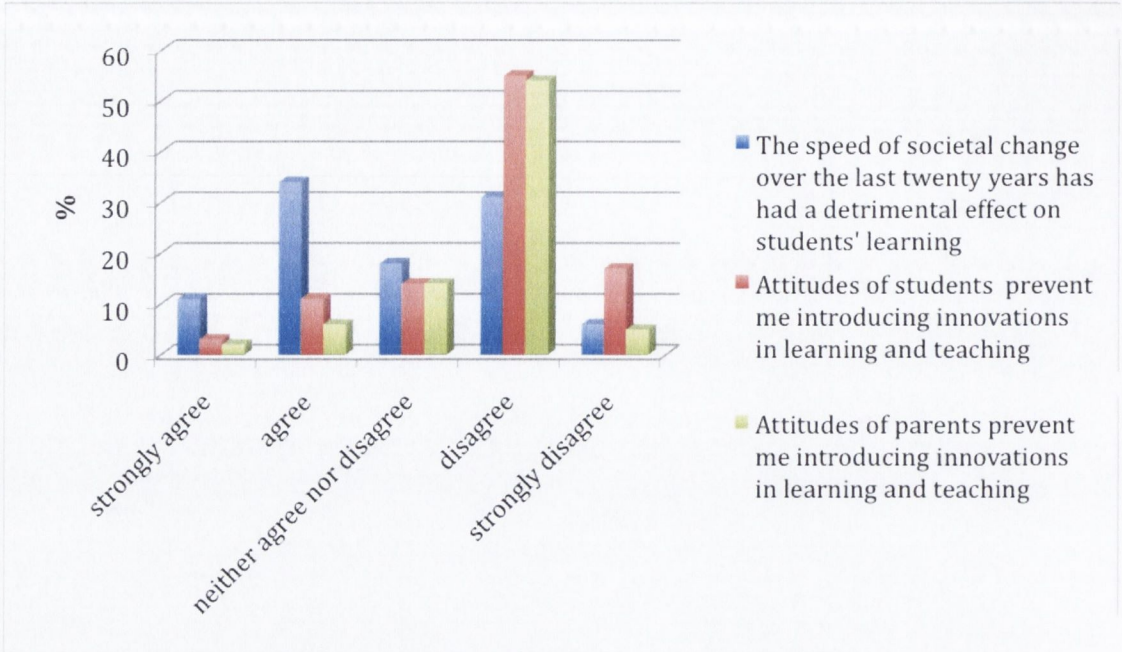


**FIGURE 10. Inhibitors to innovation in learning and teaching (3), Section B, Part 1: Items 42, 43, and 46**

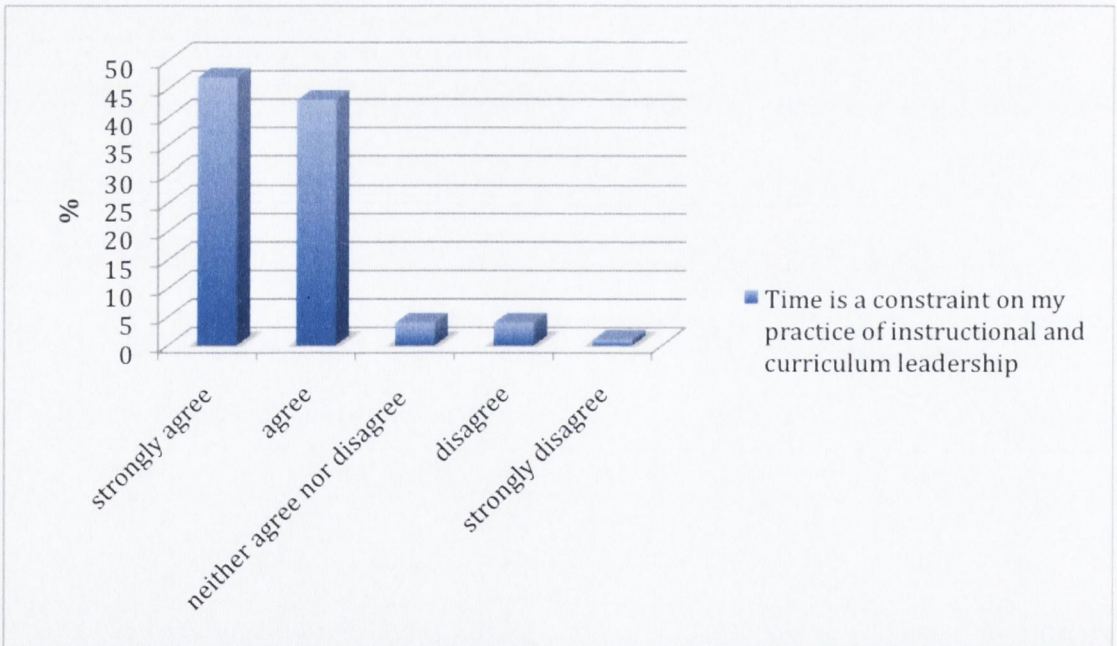


**FIGURE 11. Inhibitors to learning and teaching (4), Section B, Part 1 Item 38**

FIGURES 8, 9, 10 and 11

Inhibitors to learning within the questionnaire

A number of questions examined the perception that the respondents had of the constructs that inhibit learning. Figures 8, 9, 10 and 11 show the response. Time was identified as a constraint by 90% of the respondents (Item 38). The reluctance of teachers to change teaching strategies (Item 9) and the conservative culture of teaching was also affirmed (Item 23). Other inhibitors that had been identified in earlier stages of the research were not confirmed as such in this survey. These were trade unions (Item 25), local culture within school (Item 30), DES (Item 33). The attitudes of students (Item 43) and the attitudes of parents (Item 46) were not identified as inhibitors by the respondents.

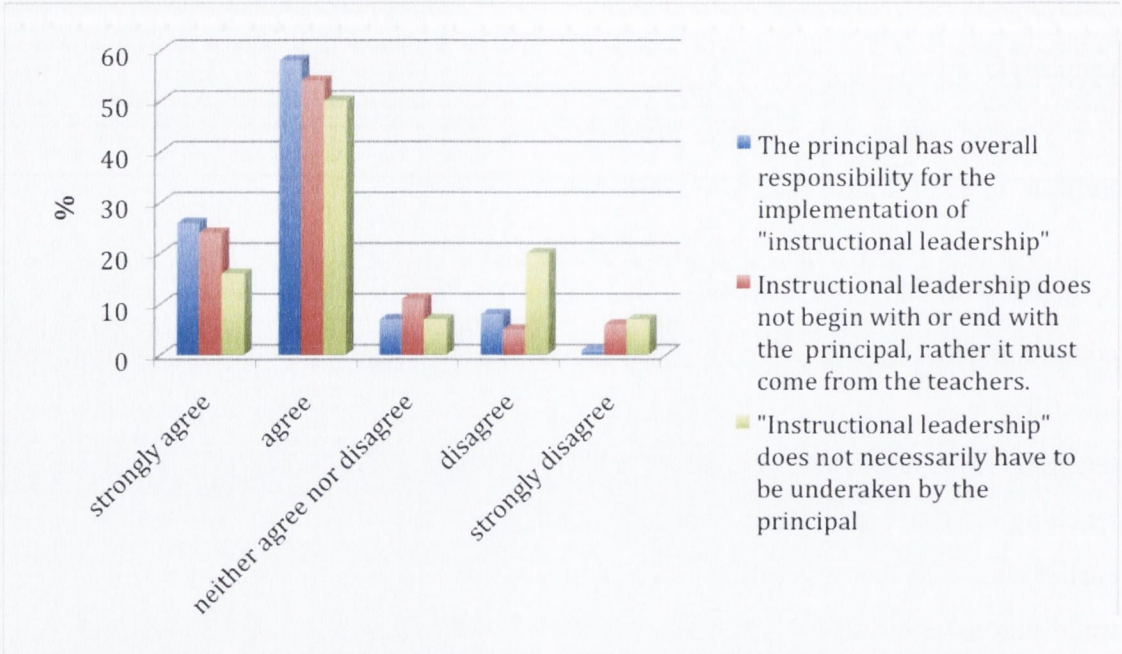


**FIGURE 12. Responsibility for the implementation of instructional leadership, Section B, Part 1: Items 17, 41, and 45**

FIGURE 12

Responsibility for the implementation of instructional leadership

Figure 12 shows that the respondents agreed that they had overall responsibility as instructional leaders (Item17), but also agreed that it must come from the teachers (Item 41) and that it does not necessarily have to be undertaken by the principal (Item 45). As has been seen in chapter 6, similar distinctions exist in the literature (Marzano, 2003, McEwan 2003, Sergiovanni, 2001, Lieberman and Miller, 2004, Heywood, 2008)

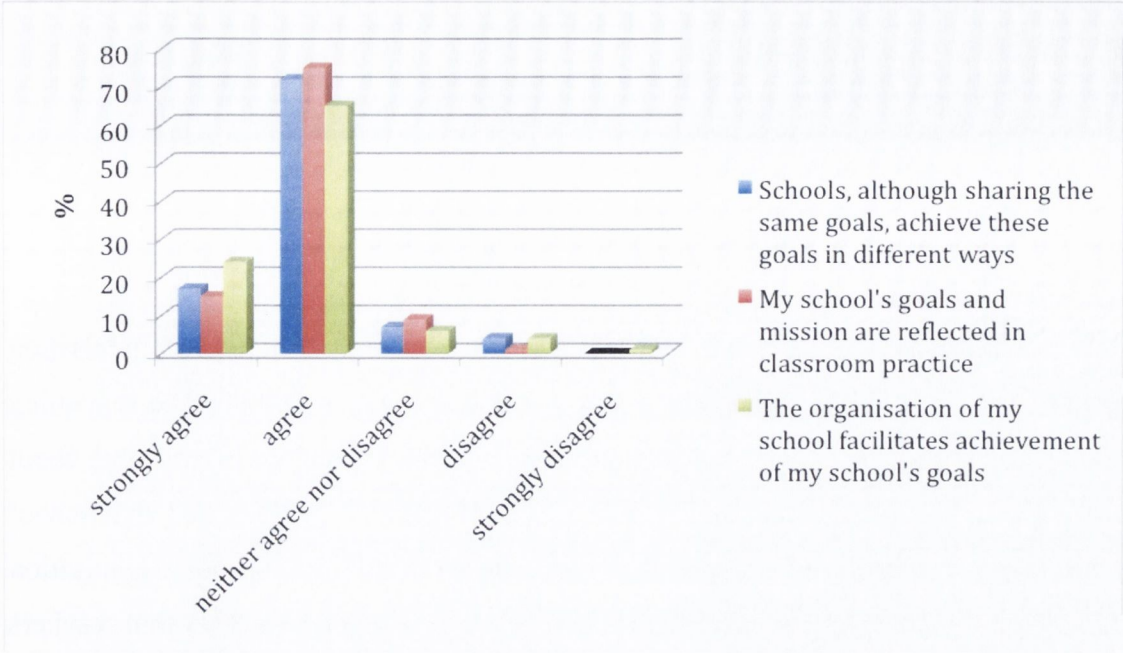


**FIGURE 13. Goals and mission, Section B, Part 1: Items 26, 27, and 29**

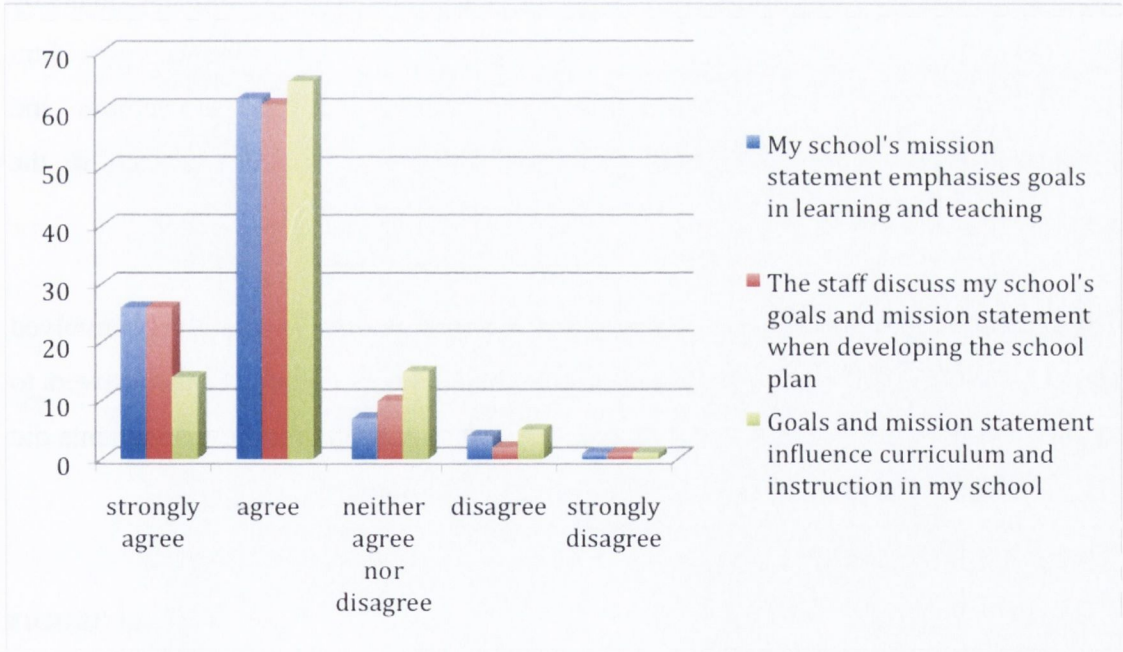


**FIGURE 14. Goals and mission statements, Section B, Part 1: Items 31, 32, and 44**

FIGURES 13 and 14

The goals and mission of the school within the questionnaire

It was agreed that although the aims were the same, schools differed in organisation (Item 26). This view is supported in the literature (Spillane, 2006). The remaining answers here suggested that the respondents were active in, and knowledgeable about the organisation of teaching and learning in their schools. 90% stated that school goals were reflected in classroom practice 89% stated that school organisation facilitated the achievement of goals (Item 29). It was agreed by 87% that teachers discussed school goals and mission statements when working on the school plan (Item 32). 50% agreed that teachers engaged in problem solving to generate school plans (Item 39). Teaching and learning goals were stated to be in the mission statements by 87% (Item 31) and 79% agreed that goals and mission statement influence curriculum in their schools (Item 44). The close relationship between curriculum and instructional leadership and school goals and mission statements is seen in the literature (Heywood, 2008).

The responses outlined above suggested that the respondents were actively involved in the organisation of teaching and learning in their schools. However the answers to items in Section B Parts 2, 3 and 4 (Figures 19-24) indicated that the respondents did not necessarily know what was happening in the classrooms.

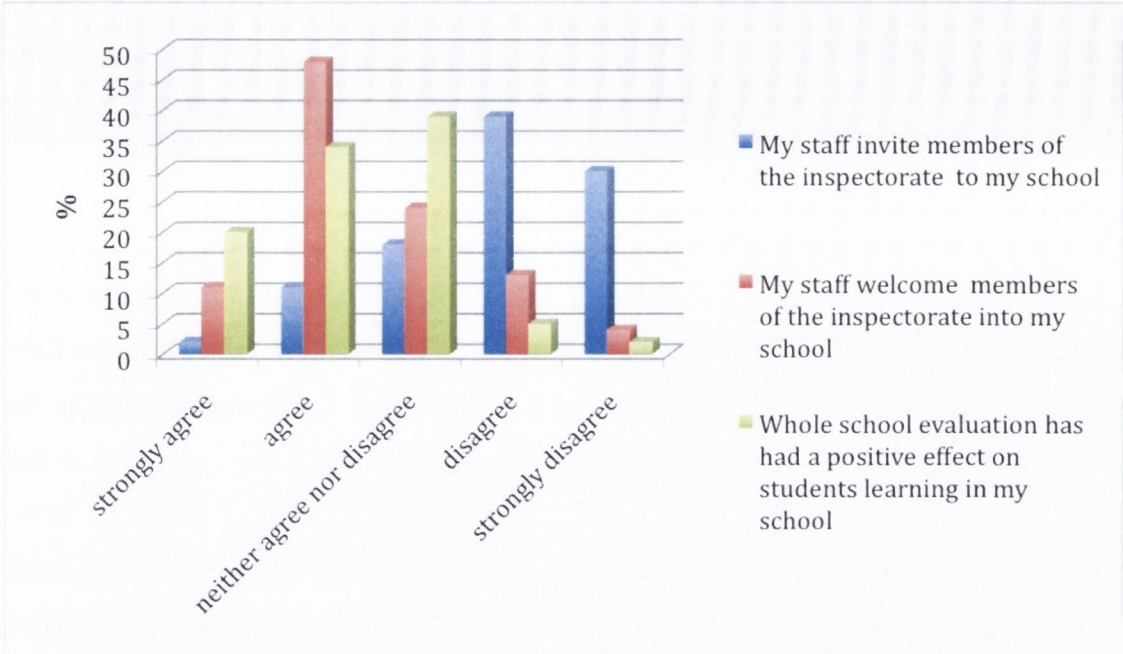


**FIGURE 15. School climate (1), Section B, Part 1: Items 19, 34, and 22**

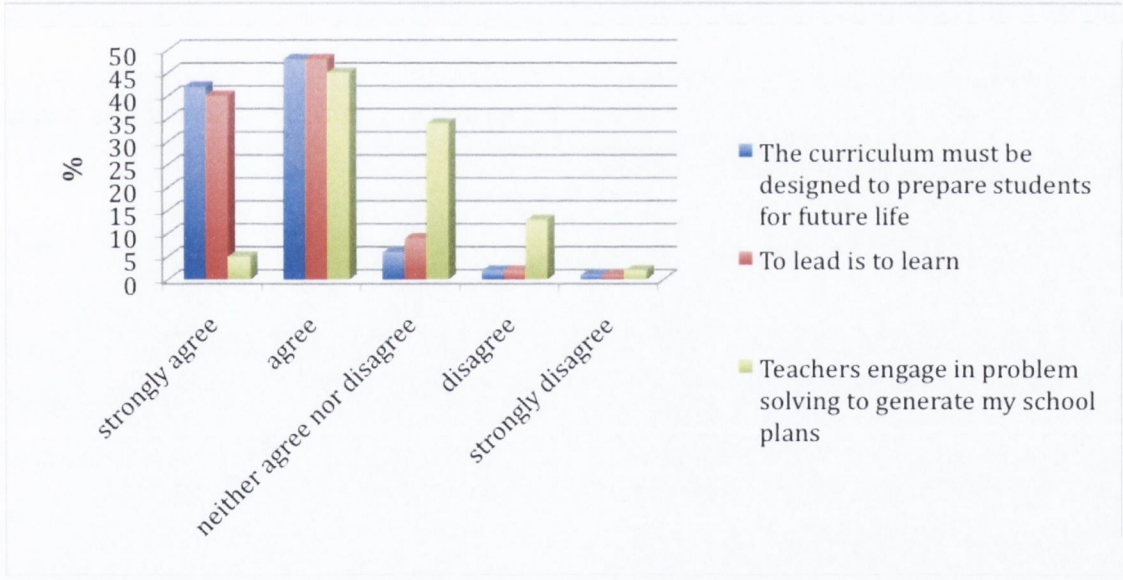


**FIGURE 16. School climate (2), Section B, Part 1: Questions 8, 13, and 39**

FIGURES 15 and 16

School climate within the questionnaire

The responses to questions concerning school climate show that there has been some change in the traditional view, in post-primary schools in Ireland, of the inspectorate and classroom visitation. That teachers do not invite members of the inspectorate to the school was confirmed (Item 19); however visiting inspectors are welcomed to the school by staff (Item 34). That WSE has had a positive effect was agreed by 74%. This change is also found in the literature (CBR, 2007) and the interviews with teachers in 2004 and the interviews in 2006/2007 in this study. It appears that teachers are involved in "generating school plans" too (Item 39), that the schools are moving towards being "learning institutions" (Item 13) and that the students are supported by a curriculum which looks to their futures (Item 8).

Nevertheless the evidence from Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4 does suggest some distance between aspiration and practice.

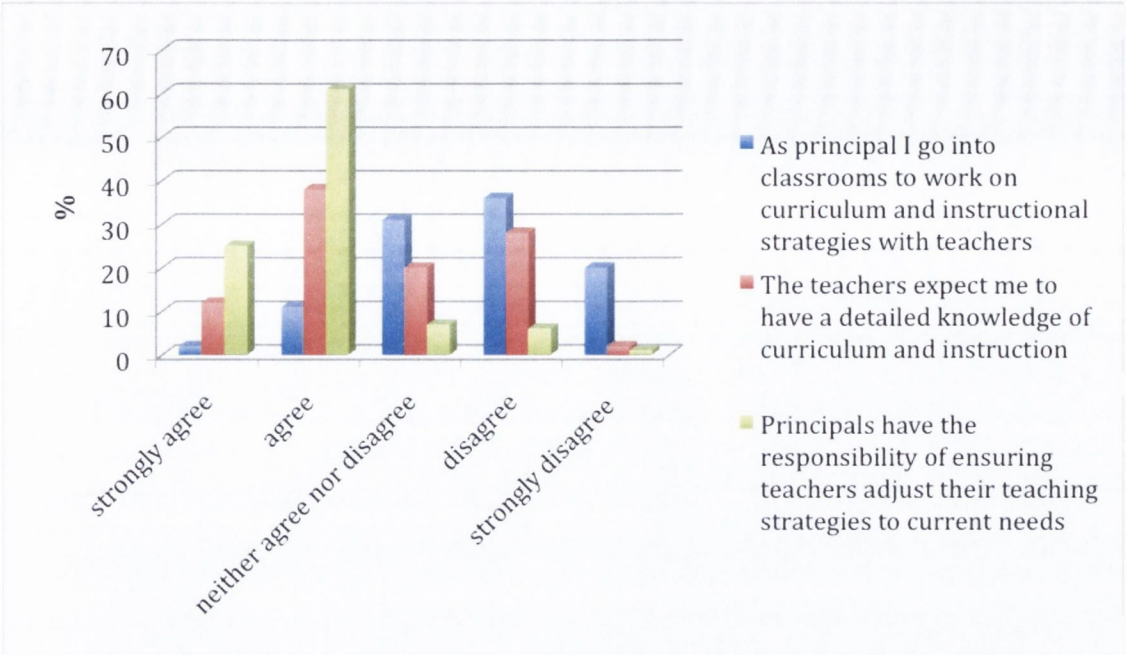


**FIGURE 17. Responsibilities of principals, Section B, Part 1: Items 4, 12, and 16**

FIGURE 17

Responsibilities of principals within the questionnaire

The response to Item 4 showed clearly that, despite the change suggested by the response to the two previous categories shown in Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16, the tradition of the classroom as the "domain" of the teacher remains. Half the principals believed that their teaching staff expected them to have a detailed knowledge of curriculum and instruction. However, thirty percent thought otherwise, which reminds the reader of the "subject orientation" in post-primary schools and echoes the comment of a post-primary principal whose expertise in curriculum was not acknowledged in his school (chapter 5.1, p .59). The agreement that principals have the "responsibility of ensuring teachers adjust their teaching strategies to current needs" does raise the question as to how this may done in the light of the response to items in Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4.

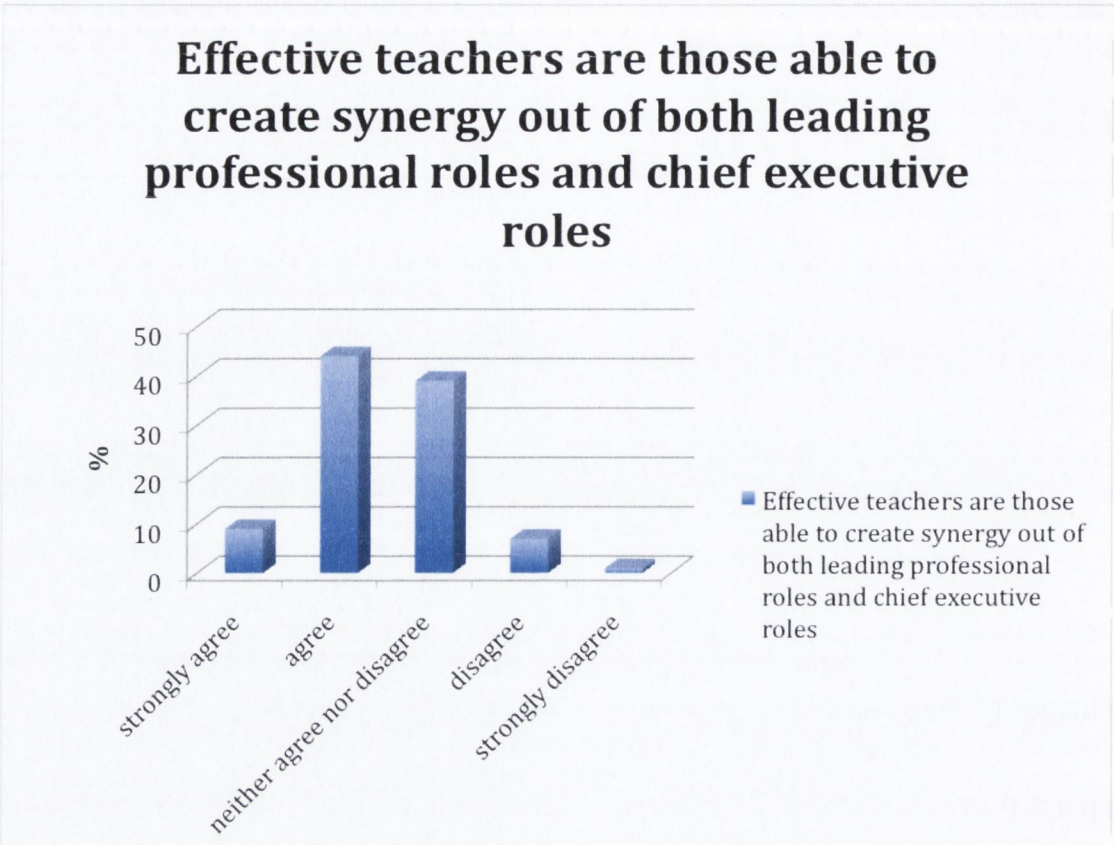


**FIGURE 18. Effective teachers, Section B, Part 1: Item 20**

FIGURE 18.

Effective teachers within the questionnaire

The link between the effective schools movement, the improving schools movement and curriculum and instructional leadership (Marzano, 2003) as seen in the literature (chapter 6) gave rise to the item on the effectiveness of teaching which also links the role of the teacher (Clandinin and Connolly, 1992, Bradley, 2004) to the relationship between leadership and management (Law and Glover, 2000).

It appears that the sentence and the use of the word "synergy" may not have been fully understood as 45 % neither agreed nor disagreed (Item 20). The pilot study had not identified that problem.

10.4.2. Graphical analysis presentation of the data from Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4 with commentary

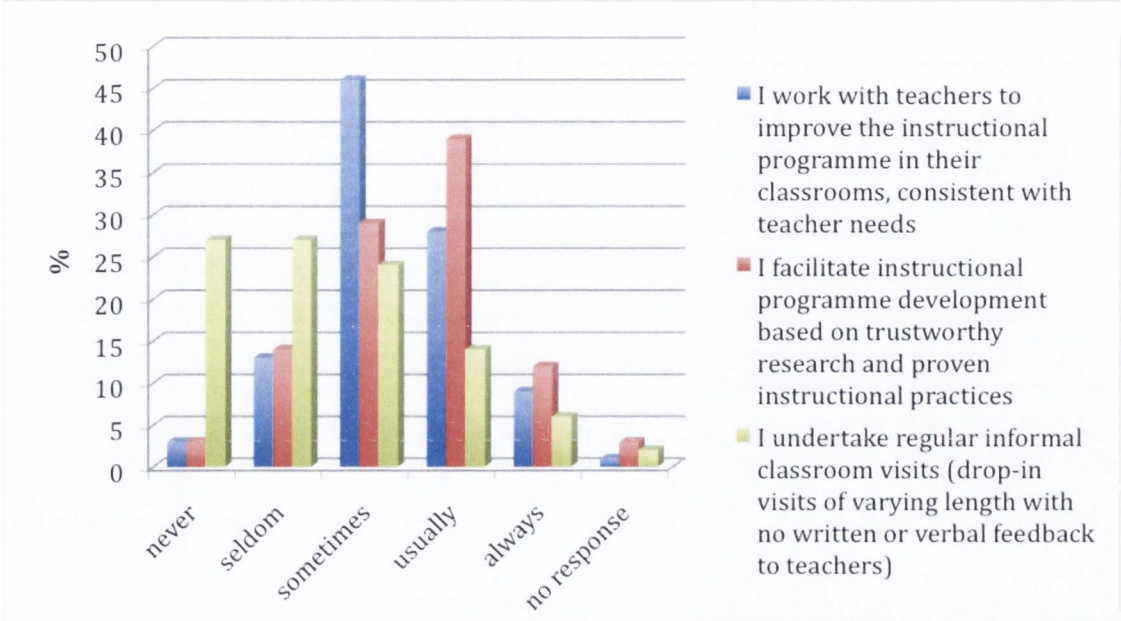


**FIGURE 19. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: role of principal and deputy principal (1)**

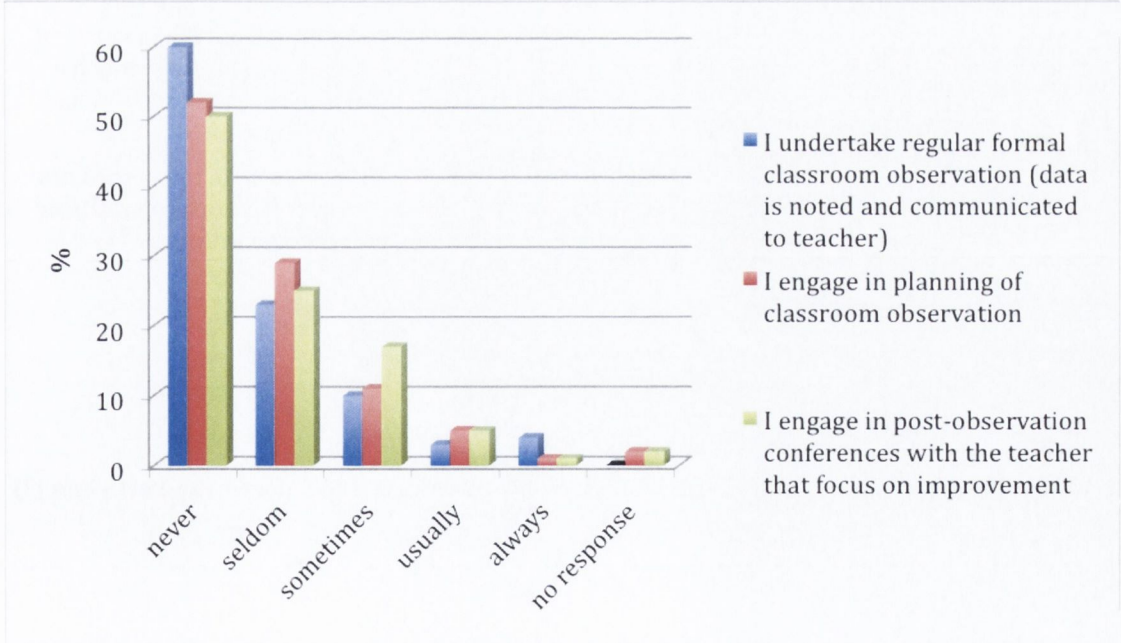


**FIGURE 20. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: role of principal and deputy principal (2)**

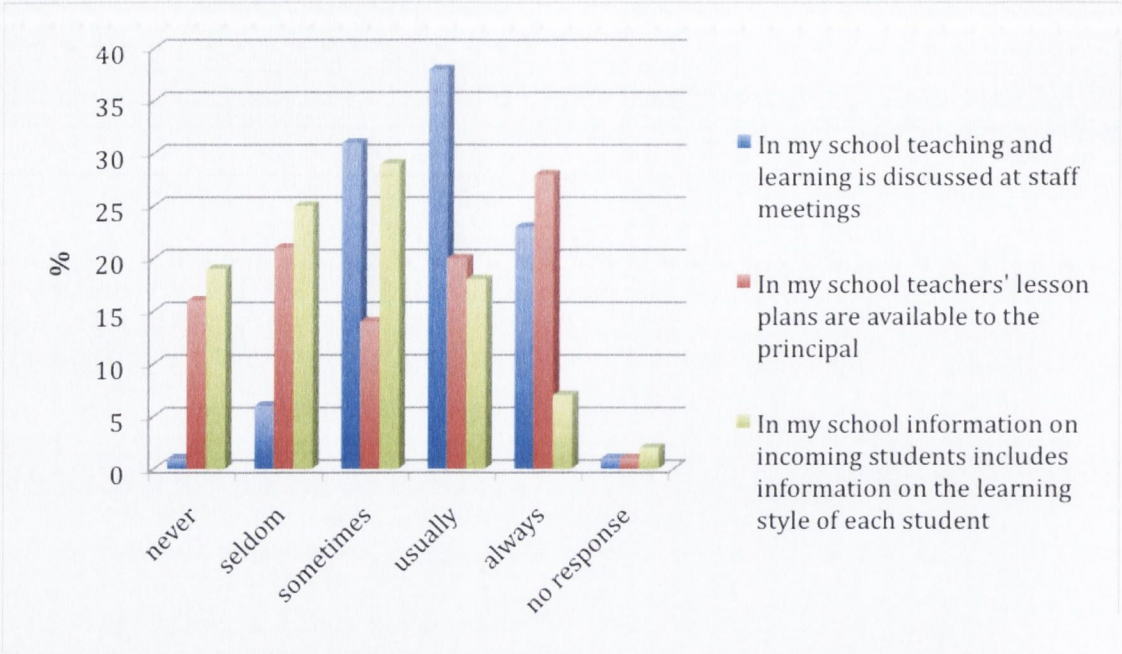


**FIGURE 21. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: school policies and activities (1)**

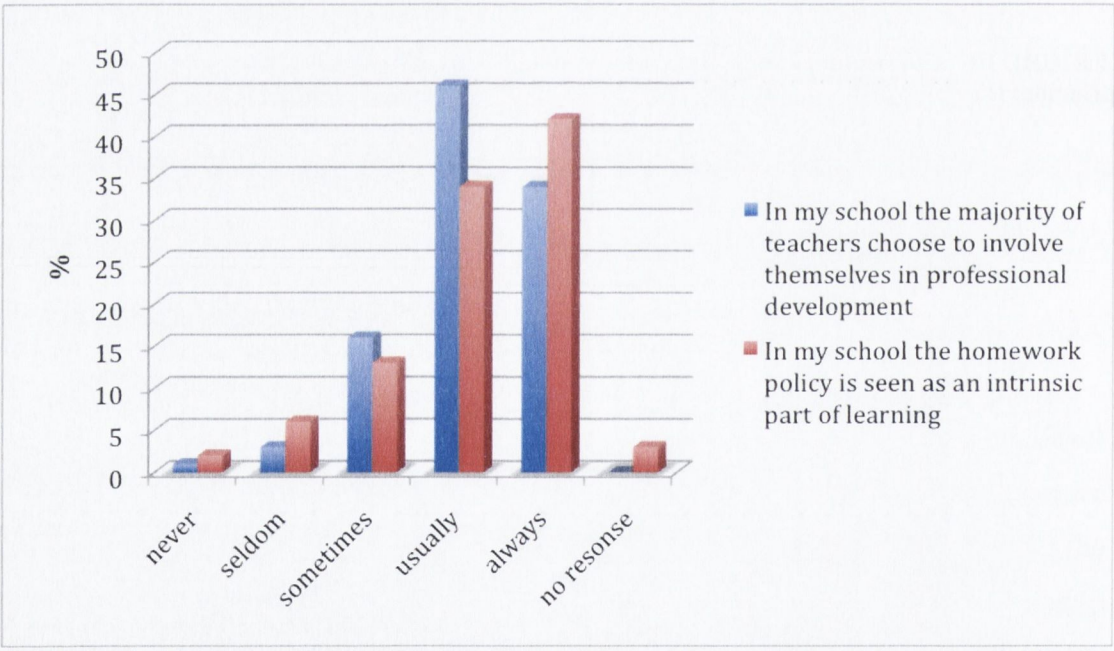


**FIGURE 22. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: school policies and activities (2)**

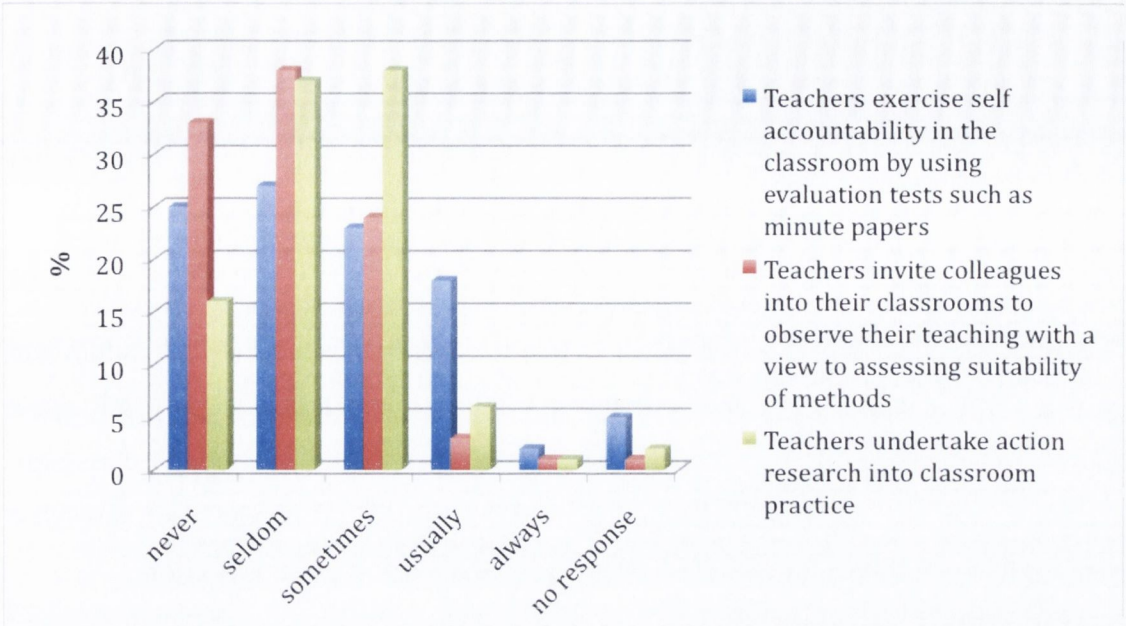


**FIGURE 23. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: Teachers' role (1)**

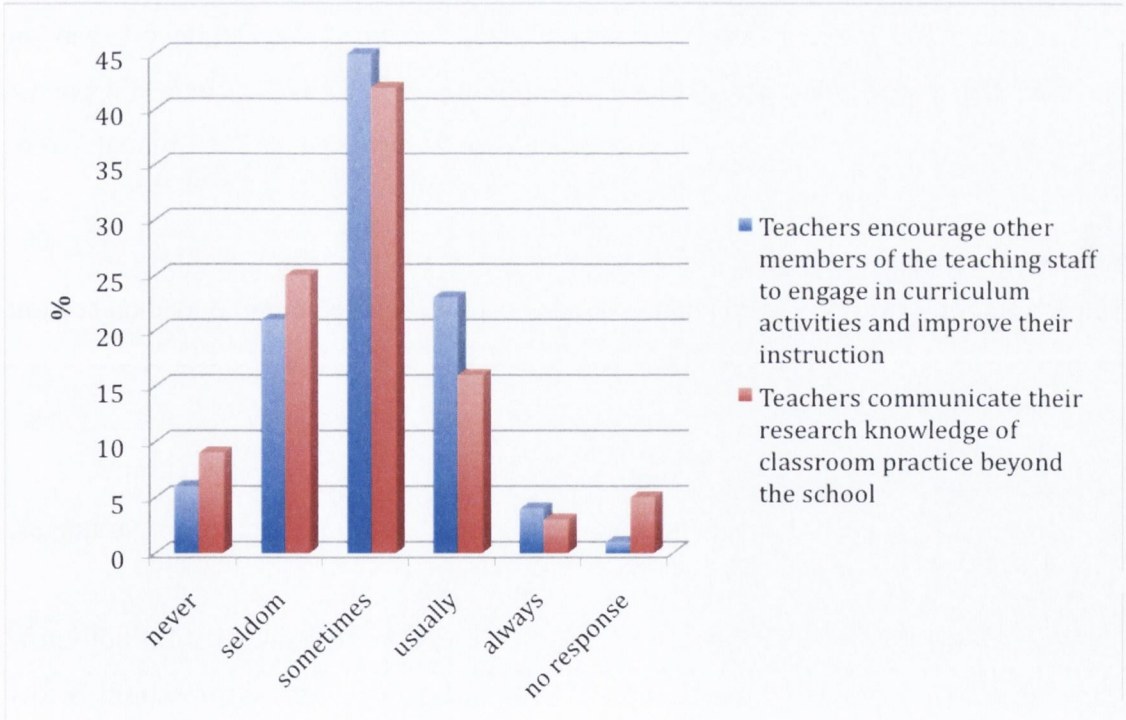


**FIGURE 24. Curriculum and instructional leadership practices: Teachers' role (2)**

10.4.2 – Analysis continued

a. Curriculum and instructional leadership: principals' and deputy principals' role

Figures 19 and 20, page 221 show clearly that the essential aspects of curriculum and instructional leadership are not undertaken by the principals and deputy principals despite the response to related questions in Section B, Part 1. Although classroom visitation was not undertaken (Section B, Part 1, item 4), other responses showed a more active role in teaching and learning than in the response to this section.

b. Curriculum and instructional leadership: school policies and activities (Figures 21 and 22, page 222)

In the response to Section B, part 3; it was clear that a number of schools did ensure that teaching and learning was discussed at staff meetings, that homework was an intrinsic part of the teaching and learning programme and that teachers did pursue professional development. It was also clear from Figure 21 that such matters were only undertaken sometimes.

Interestingly it was this Section that engendered fewer written comments than section B, parts 2 and 4.

c. Curriculum and instructional leadership: teachers' role and classroom strategies. (Figures 23 and 24, page 223)

In Section B, part 4, it was particularly noticeable that the respondents did not know about the detail of classroom activities. The incidence of classroom research is low according to the respondents and very little inter-communication exists on a regular basis between teachers.

## 10.5 Written responses to Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4

### 10.5.1 Introduction

Approximately 25% of the respondents accepted the invitation to write further comments. These will be presented in tabular form with accompanying commentary.

### 10.5.2 Section B, Part 2

Participants were invited to give reasons if "never" had been the answer to any of the statements in Section B (Part 2) and to elaborate as to how they did these things if they had answered in the affirmative at all; 222 participants responded to the invitation.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total Number Respondents** | 398 |
| **Number giving no comment** | 176 |
| **Number giving written comments** | 222 |
| **Never** | 88 |
| **Reasons for choice other than "never"** | 137 |

**TABLE 23. Numerical details, Section B, Part 2**

Of the 222 responses, 88 participants chose to explain why they had replied "never" to the instructional leadership practices of a principal; 137 chose to explain why they had chosen boxes other than "never" for their replies. 176 participants chose not to make any comment in this section. A summary of the data received is given in the table 24.

| Reasons for using "never" box | Incidence of references: 100 % | Incidence of references: 159 |
|---|---|---|
| **Culture/tradition of school** | 47% | 74 |
| **Time** | 18% | 28 |
| **Role prevents action (DP)** | 13% | 21 |
| **To avoid teacher anxiety** | 11% | 17 |
| **Role prevents action (P)** | 4% | 7 |
| **Unnecessary** | 2% | 3 |
| **Workload** | 2% | 3 |
| **Training (lack of)** | 1% | 2 |
| **Not best use of time** | .5% | 1 |
| **"never suggested" to respondent (P)** | .5% | 1 |
| **"Have knocked on doors" but no invitation to enter** | .5% | 1 |
| **"I don't do it but know it is coming in" (P)** | .5% | 1 |

**TABLE 24. Reasons for "never" response**

Culture was mentioned most as an inhibitor to classroom visits. Time which has been found to be an inhibitor in the literature (Leader and Boldt, 1994) was also referred to but was not found to be an inhibitor in the factorial analysis (Chapter 9). This will be discussed in the next section

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher anxiety | Inappropriate in view of teachers |
| Distrust of inspection | 'Catch people out' |
| Tension | Negative impact |
| Encroachment | Unwelcome |
| Alienate | Resistance |
| Won't be appreciated | Union issue |
| Unacceptable to established teacher | Not allowed |

**TABLE 25. Vocabulary associated with "never" response**

The choice of words suggests a negative situation.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Induction and mentoring programmes for new teachers, beginning teachers** | 22 |
| **Informal visits to encourage students and teacher- less formal, less threatening - preferable except for situations of underperformance** | 11 |
| **To visit teacher who is experiencing difficulties** | 7 |
| **To visit classroom if there is need** | 7 |
| **To visit classroom if there is need, but rarely a need** | 1 |
| **To visit teacher at teacher's invitation** | 2 |
| **To visit teacher and give feedback subsequently** | 1 |
| **To undertake formal observation during probation** | 1 |
| **To visit informally on school business e.g.: to collect rolls** | 1 |
| **To talk about school matters e.g. 'punctuality', notification to Year Head re visit** | 1 |
| **To team teach** | 1 |
| **To break the culture of teacher 'being boss' in own classroom: 'I have nothing more to learn' or 'what would you know?' mentality** | 1 |

**TABLE 26. "Sometimes", "usually" or "always" practice**

| | |
|---|---|
| **To support teaching and learning in school by discussion outside classroom: Staff Meetings, Subject Meetings, Department meetings, Special Needs meetings etc** | 43 |
| **To develop programmes for new teachers – probation, induction and mentoring** | 22 |
| **To have informal conversations in relaxed manner with members of staff at different times with view to improvement** | 14 |
| **To assist teacher, who requests help, through one to one meetings, outside the classroom** | 11 |
| **To organise in-school in-service with staff presentations** | 8 |
| **To work with teacher (in own subject area) on methodologies and new programmes** | 6 |
| **To use external support services (SLSS) as well as SDP in-service** | 5 |
| **To give advice to teacher privately and send to another teacher's classroom to observe teaching strategies** | 4 |
| **'Teachers visit each others' classrooms, observe so "I don't need to do that"'** | 1 |
| **To suit strategy for improvement in teaching to particular individual teacher's personality etc** | 1 |
| **To include teaching and learning at weekly staff meetings** | 1 |
| **Regular seminars for improvement of delivery of curriculum with "regular staff development, regular weekly staff meetings to include work on teaching and learning** | 1 |
| **Pointless practice** | 1 |

**TABLE 27. Support of teaching and learning outside classroom**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Encouragement of 'teacher leaders' welcomed** | 1 |
| **Teacher leaders – interesting model** | 1 |
| **Colleagues work together** | 1 |
| **Teacher leaders facilitating 'instructional leadership' among staff** | 1 |
| **Preference for informal means of communication – speak with Year Head re teacher's classroom and Year Head talks with teacher** | 1 |
| **System of professional mentoring has been developed in which teachers observe each other** | 1 |
| **Working on probation mentoring and general management, aims and objectives** | 1 |
| **Genuinely has confidence in the effective teaching and learning in school, highly skilled 'nature' of the teachers, promotes professional development** | 1 |
| **Discussion on strategies undertaken** | 1 |
| **Informal dialogues with teachers, students, parents** | 1 |
| **Supports the class teachers with resources** | 1 |
| **Encourages dialogue** | 1 |
| **New to school, huge job, beginning to focus on teaching and learning leadership** | 1 |
| **New to school, lots of ideas, looking at practice of new members of staff** | 1 |
| **Would not be against 'instructional leadership' innovations** | 1 |
| **The intention was not 'to spook the teacher' (thus no classroom visits were undertaken) but rather 'to encourage and affirm by other means'** | 1 |

**TABLE 28. Miscellaneous Comments**

Out of a total of one hundred and eighty seven participants, some elaborated on how and why they entered classrooms and other participants gave examples of practice, other than entering classrooms, for the implementation of instructional leadership. It appeared these respondents wanted to undertake these activities, reminiscent of similar comments in the interviews in 2006/2007.

| | |
|---|---|
| Invitation | Informal |
| Formal | team teach |
| Feedback | Advise |
| Support | Observe |
| Encourage (both teachers and students) | to change from culture of isolation |
| Mentoring | Induction |
| Probation | "teacher in difficulties" |

**TABLE 29. Vocabulary associated with classroom visits**

It is notable that the vocabulary is more positive.

10.5.3 Section B, Part 3: presentation of data

Section B (part 3) enquired about the extent of "instructional leadership practice" within the school by asking participants to indicate their practice along a continuum from "never" to "always". As compared with the other parts of Section B, few respondents chose to comment on section B, part 3. The table below (Table 30) shows the number of those who chose to give written comments:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total Number Respondents** | **398** |
| **Number giving no comment** | 362 |
| **Number giving written comment** | 36 |

**TABLE 30. Numerical details: Section B, Part 3**

| **Comments on practice of instructional leadership** | **Incidence of comments** |
|---|---|
| **Learning styles information** | 13 |
| **Lesson plans** | 11 |
| **Challenge of changing culture** | 5 |
| **Further education** | 4 |
| **Homework policy** | 3 |
| **Professional development** | 1 |

**TABLE 31. Comments: Section B, Part 3**

Those respondents who chose to comment showed a desire to know more about these matters.

10.5.4 Section B, Part 4: presentation of data

Section B (Part 4) enquired about the extent of "instructional leadership practice" by teachers within the school, asking part "always". The table below (Table 32) shows the number of those who chose to give written comments:

| **Total Number Respondents** | **398** |
|---|---|
| **Number giving no comment** | 124 |
| **Number giving written comments** | 274 |
| **"Never" choice** | 115 |
| **Reasons for choice other than "never"** | 159 |

**TABLE 32. Numerical Details: Section B, Part 4**

Of the 274 responses, 115 participants chose to explain why they had replied "never" to the instructional leadership practices of a principal; 159 chose to explain why they had chosen boxes other than "never" for their replies. 124 participants chose not to make any comment in this section.

| Reasons for using "never" box | Incidence of references: |
|---|---|
| Culture/tradition of school | 45 |
| Independence of teachers, "slow to engage across disciplines" | 9 |
| Time constraints affecting both principal and deputy principal and teachers | 9 |
| To avoid teacher anxiety | 8 |
| Shyness of teacher | 1 |
| Challenge of change | 8 |
| Lack of knowledge of methods of evaluation e.g.: minute papers | 7 |
| Fear of doing this | 7 |
| Little interest shown by teachers | 3 |
| "No leadership-yet!" (new principal) | 1 |
| No leadership | 2 |
| Reluctance of older teachers to "infringe" professionalism of younger teachers | 2 |
| "Not the role of teachers to observe colleagues" | 2 |
| "Administrative duties take up time" | 2 |
| "Lack of opportunity to know about instructional leadership" | 1 |
| "Lack of appropriate forum" | 1 |
| "Culture of observation not common in Ireland" | 1 |
| "Unions' position" | 1 |
| "No appropriate structure for this" | 1 |
| "Teachers do not wish to do these things" | 1 |
| "Peer evaluation does not appeal to teachers" | 1 |
| "No legal obligation so why should we bother" | 1 |
| "Lack of motivation for classroom research" | 1 |
| "Never thought about it" reference to practice outlined in Section B, Part 4 | 1 |
| "Laziness" prevents such practice | 1 |

TABLE 33. Comments: Section B, Part 4

| | |
|---|---|
| **Planning/helping/sharing ideas/new methods/** | 40 |
| **Extra-curricular study is encouraged** | 26 |
| **In-service with other schools/teachers give this/sit on education boards etc** | 20 |
| **In-school research/mutual observation/active learning** | 17 |
| **Team teaching/ curriculum planning/subject committees** | 11 |
| **Importance of encouragement/leadership** | 7 |
| **Sharing/significance of SDP, WSE etc** | 6 |
| **Depends on interest of teachers in any year *(Suggestion of flexibility here)*** | 5 |
| **Peer to peer in-service/ in-service/ peer observation/ evaluation** | 4 |
| **Student involvement in evaluating programmes** | 3 |
| **"TL21/SDP has helped to change culture"** | 3 |
| **Mentoring is arranged** | 2 |
| **Time made available for planning by teachers** | 2 |
| **"Change is coming"** | 2 |
| **"How can change come about?"** | 2 |
| **"School seen as a model in our area-we help others"** | 1 |
| **"Intercultural days, cross-curricular projects"** | 1 |
| **"Depends on individual teachers"** | 1 |
| **"New staff need to hear about culture. Are principals right in concentrating on young teachers?"** | 1 |
| **"Co-operation helps"** | 1 |
| **"Good middle management programme, professionalism is encouraged"** | 1 |
| **"I change programmes where necessary" depending on teachers and students** | 1 |
| **"Staff development days help"** | 1 |
| **"Learning support essential otherwise teacher is isolated"** | 1 |
| **"Lack of time is a problem" to implementation of these practices but they are positive** | 1 |
| **"I'm a manager rather than leader" but practices are positive** | 1 |
| **"I would love to say these are always done in my school but reality is different"** | 1 |

**TABLE 34. Details of practice: "Sometimes", "usually" or "always"**

### 10.5.5 Conclusion

The written comments gave respondents a chance to share their personal insights with the author. Many of the comments suggested that more research would be welcome even where the respondents either personally took a "negative" view of innovation or felt it imposed by external constraints.

## 10.6 The two factors, a discussion.

### 10.6.1. Leadership of Learning

The two factors identified in the factorial analysis were leadership of learning and inhibitors to change.

a. Leadership of learning (what interventions are required to bring about learning)
Items: **1, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31, 35, 36, 39 and 41**

Despite the majority agreement of the principals and deputy principals to the definitions of educational leadership (Item 1) curriculum leadership (Item 7) and instructional leadership (Item 11) supplied in the questionnaire, the answers to other items particularly in Section B, parts 2,3,4, cast doubt on the reality of their implementation and hinted at confusion.

The questions on promoting and enhancing teaching and learning through instructional leadership (Items 8, 13, 14, 16, 17, 24, 26, 27 and 31) had all been accepted by a majority of participants as were the questions on leadership (Items 10, 36 and 41) and discipline in respect of two out of three questions (Items 28 and 35). There was a mixed reaction to the idea that discipline would enhance learning (Item 21). The fact that the participants' vision of teaching and learning was claimed to be based on current theory (Item 24) was encouraging in terms of the aims of NAPD as were their claims that leadership and management are compatible (Items 10 and 36) and that, with the exception of one statement (Item 21), teaching, learning and discipline are connected. The response to item 22 was similarly encouraging in terms of the positive effect of WSE on student learning.

Interestingly there was a mixed reaction to the use of discovery learning at all levels in the school; 114 participants neither agreed nor disagreed that it was used, suggesting perhaps a lack of knowledge of what went on in classrooms. Questions which did not receive majority agreement were that effective teachers are those able to create synergy out of both leading professional roles and chief executive roles (Item 20), that the purpose of discipline is to enhance learning (Item 21) and that "teachers engage in problem solving to generate my school plans" (Item 39).

Reasons for the lack of agreement on these questions, although they were similar to others in this list, may have been that principals and deputies, as some noted in the margin, did not understand the first statement (Item 20); that the word enhance seems unfamiliar in its use to link discipline with learning (Item 21); that teachers engaging in problem solving may be too far removed from the conservative culture (Item 23) as identified and agreed by respondents.

With regard to the leadership of learning the respondents agreed with the definition of educational leadership (Item 1) and assented to definitions of instructional and curriculum leadership, although evidence from the analysis suggested that their understanding was weak. The response to items 6 and 40, which were not identified in the factor analysis was ambivalent suggesting that the principals and deputy principals did not know whether they were managers or leaders, and that they did not necessarily equate the theory to the practice.

This is supported by the evidence of practice in Section B Parts 2, 3 and 4 where examples of practice associated with instructional leadership were not implemented in the schools on a regular basis. That the principal does not visit classrooms (Section B Part 1. iv) calls into question the answer to Section B, Part 2 (ii) regarding proven instructional practice. Although assent was given to the responsibility of the principal in ensuring "teachers adjust strategies to current needs" it is difficult to see how this can be achieved without first hand knowledge of what happens in classrooms.

Likewise in item 27 how does a principal know that goals and mission are reflected in classroom practice? The responses to Item 20, relating to the teacher's role in the classroom as professional and chief executive may also reveal a lack of familiarity with classroom practice. The other answers in that section confirmed that respondents by and large do not enter classrooms, so leadership of teaching and learning is undertaken at a remove. This was confirmed by the responses to the open questions in Section B Parts 2, 3 and 4 where respondents commented on the influence of trade unions, culture of teaching and the schools "tradition'" as inhibitors to such practice.

In regard to teaching and learning the respondents were very clear as to its purpose in allowing students to take responsibility in "preparation for future life". This is in line

with current thinking. The curriculum should be designed for this purpose (Item 8). That discipline is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning was assented to in two of the three items (Items 28, 35) but the third item (Item 21) relating to the enhancement of learning received less support, which creates doubt as to the practice. Similarly the response to the item on discovery learning (Item 15) and the information that lesson plans were not uniformly available and information on learning styles was not the norm (Section B, Part 3) also suggested aspirations might be ahead of practice. However the response to items on leadership and management (Items 10 and 36) suggest that there has been movement in thinking (since the interviews in Ireland 2001), to a point where the same person can undertake both roles.

The response of the principals to instructional leadership suggested that they were prepared for overall responsibility but that the impetus must come from the teachers. But can all teachers access that knowledge? That teachers are not necessarily involved in school planning was seen in the response to the statement on problem solving in preparation of these plans (Item 39).

b. Inhibitors to change (Items: ***9, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 42, 43 and 46***)

In chapter 8.6, p.176 a justification is made for the items in the questionnaire. Eight items (items 9, 23, 25, 30, 33, 38, 43 and 46) sought the opinions of the respondents on perceived inhibitors to learning, which had been identified earlier in the research (chapters 6 and 7). In the factor analysis that followed the return of data in March 2009, inhibitors to change was the second reliable factor found in the analysis. It would appear that innovation in learning and change are closely linked. A comparison of the items shows that six items are common to both lists.

The respondents agreed that teachers are reluctant to change their teaching strategies (item 9) but did not from their answers appear to see trade unions (item 25), local culture within the school (Item 30), the DES (item 33), the inspectorate (item 34), attitudes of students (item 43) and attitudes of parents (item 46) as inhibitors to innovation in learning (See figures 8 - 11).

Neither item 23, which refers to the conservative culture of teaching (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993) nor item 38 which refers to time as a constraint on the practice of instructional and curriculum leadership (Leader and Boldt, 1994) was included in the factorial analysis list of inhibitors to change. Both statements received the agreement of the respondents.

Four items were included in the list of inhibitors to change (Items 29, 32, 34 and 42), which refer to school organisation, staff involvement in school planning, relationship with the inspectorate and the speed of societal change. The respondents took a positive view of change in their replies to the first three statements (Tables 13, 14, 15). They were divided as to the effect of the speed of societal change on student learning.

The agreement by 196 respondents that teachers were reluctant to change their teaching strategies (Item 9) was supported by the answers in Section B, Part 4. However the fact that a majority of participants stated that their teachers undertake professional development suggests a willingness among teachers to find out more about their work and develop relevant skills and competencies.

The question then arises what prevents teachers, who are interested in learning more about their craft, using their knowledge in the classroom?

Is the absence of a "sharing" culture, so evident in the comments in Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4 a reason for this? Are the "professional development courses" concerned with something other than teaching and learning? Are the courses if they are focused on teaching and learning too ambitious for the individual teacher? Does the lack of discussion, again mentioned in the comments by participants in Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4, discourage the teacher?

The gap between the teacher in the classroom and the principal discussed in the previous section is once again seen. Concerning other inhibitors to change, which were identified in the factor analysis, none were seen in that light in Section B Part 1.

Respondents denied that trade unions, school organisation, local culture, teachers, Department of Education, students or parents were inhibitors to change. However the written comments, albeit from the smaller number of participants who wanted to take the opportunity to give further information, did identify inhibitors of which culture was seen as the greatest hindrance or ready excuse. A constraint to the practice of curriculum and instructional leadership was time. Although time was identified by a large majority of the respondents in Section B Part 1 it was not identified in the factorial analysis as an inhibitor, which was unexpected.

It may be concluded from this brief discussion on the leadership of learning that the understanding of educational leadership including curriculum and instructional leadership is not fully understood or implemented. Aspirations are not supported in all cases by practice. The separation of the principal from the teacher in the classroom, evident in the responses to open questions in Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4 is regrettable.

A large amount of data relating to the respondents' opinions on these matters emanated from the open questions where respondents felt free to express their concerns about the above issues. The inhibitors to change coincided to a great extent with the constraints identified at earlier stages of the research. From the evidence of the survey a number of those "constraints" are no longer a concern to the majority. On the other hand some of the respondents who chose to answer the open questions and make comments in Section B, Parts 2, 3 and 4 displayed a continuing anxiety.

## 10.7 Conclusion

### 10.7.1 Introduction

The survey data, as shown in the presentation, commentary and discussion in this chapter brings to an end this illuminative evaluation of instructional leadership. Several issues deserve to be mentioned in this the penultimate chapter before the general conclusions are given in chapter 11.

### 10.7.2 Response rate

Since 56% of the population chose not to complete the questionnaire, their views are not known. The reasons why they chose not to complete the questionnaire can only be conjectured. In answers to some items in the questionnaire, there are high levels of "neither agreement nor disagreement". Taken with the 56% identified above, very high levels of "no opinion" are suggested.

### 10.7.3 The factorial analysis

The factorial analysis identified two clear factors: leadership of learning and inhibitors to change. Surprisingly time was not identified as one of the inhibitors in the factorial analysis although it was seen to be a constraint in an item in section B, part 2 and was mentioned in the written comments, coming in second place to culture. The incidence of comments about time was 15% whereas the incidence for comments on culture was over 70%.

### 10.7.4 The written statements

Although only some of the respondents chose to make written comments, these were lengthy and generally showed the concern with which the writers approached their work. There were many enthusiastic comments about the research programme, which were not listed in section B, parts 2,3,4 as they applied to the whole survey whereas the comment "pointless" referred to the principals' role in teaching and learning.

The author thinks that both the negative and positive comments, listed above, are important in terms of reflection on innovation and must be seen as part of the research programme.

### 10.7.5 Further education colleges

Returns from principals and deputy principals of further education colleges, who make up a small proportion of NAPD membership, suggested that they saw their institutions differently. There were several written comments as to the age of students in their institutions, which meant that the "instructional leadership" models as described in Section B, Parts 2,3 and 4, would not apply. However the work done by

Angelo and Cross (1993), although adaptable for use in a second level classroom, was originally designed for community colleges in the US.

### 10.7.6 Constraints

The written comments relating to constraints and inhibitors did suggest that different agencies and interested parties such as trade unions, and DES, parents and students were blamed for matters over which they really little influence. The responses in Section B, 1 did not agree with the written comments in Section B, 2,3 and 4.

The author having been surprised by the list of comments that suggested that trade unions are an inhibitor decided since there was no time formally to collect data, she would seek clarification informally from interested parties.

Such enquiries led her to conclude that, if interpersonal relations are sound, and matters of concern are addressed professionally, well-planned innovations, prepared in such a way to ensure common ownership, are acceptable. However if interpersonal relations are poor or non-existent, matters of concern are not dealt with professionally, teacher "pay and conditions " are neglected within the school and innovation is imposed, then innovation is doomed to failure. Trade unions, as described in the survey, have done good work in terms of education and training; ensure pay and conditions generally; on occasion involve themselves in particular

### 10.7.7 Final comments

The picture gained from the presentation and discussion of data from Section B, parts 1,2,3 and 4 is that the reality of practice by the respondents (parts 2,3 and 4) is different from their claims (Section B part 1). This finding is supported in the literature (Reeves, 2006)

# CHAPTER 11

# CONCLUSIONS

## 11.1 Introduction

> The final aspect of our model is the very process of *Evaluation* itself, by which we mean the placing of value upon our findings and presenting them in a way, which we consider will be helpful to those who must decide on what should happen next. {...}. Successful evaluation of an illuminative nature should not spring many surprises at its conclusion. {...} At the end of the day, however, a primary purpose of this form of evaluation is to aid the stakeholders in their decision-making about whether to continue as before, to change their plans or actions, or to discontinue the project. (Burden, 1998, p.17)

In this chapter the conclusions, which are based on the evidence emerging from this illuminative evaluation of instructional leadership are set down in relation to the aims of the research programme:

- to clarify the term "instructional leadership" both in theory and in practice.
- to find out what elements if any of "instructional leadership" can already be found in post-primary schools in Ireland.
- to identify a model for the implementation of "instructional leadership" in post -primary schools in Ireland.

Part 2 identifies the limitations; Part 3 presents the findings in relation to each of the three aims of this research study; part 4 offers a personal view of the rationale of instructional leadership; part 5 identifies a model which is based on data findings; part 5; part 6 outlines training requirements; part 7 gives suggestions for future research; part 8 offers some concluding comments.

## 11.2 Limitations within this study

Certain limitations exist in this study, some of which can be rectified in further research. The author hoped that a survey of post-primary teachers' opinions on instructional leadership would be undertaken comparable to the survey of post-primary principals and deputy principals. This was not to be, due to time constraints.

Such constraints prevented the author from ascertaining why the response rate to the survey was in her opinion comparatively low even though consistent with many other similar studies. It is envisaged that further work with post-primary principals will shed light on this.

With regard to the survey, a larger pilot sample would have been preferable as it would have permitted factorial analysis of the semantic differential using test-retest reliability coefficients (chapter 9.2.1.e p. 189) and might have led to a better design.

## 11.3 Findings

### 11.3.1 Introduction

> The ongoing collaborative process of collecting information and gathering participants' perceptions should incorporate also feedback and discussion of a regular nature such that the final illuminations are made up of a number of small candles (or even fireworks...) which have been lit along the way (Burden, 1998, p.17)

### 11.3.2 Clarification of the term "instructional leadership"

The following definition of instructional leadership emerged from the study of literature and the 2006/2007 interviews:

> Instructional leadership is the dynamic delivery of the curriculum in the classroom through strategies based on reflection, assessment and evaluation to ensure optimum learning.[1]

This definition was accepted by a large number of respondents in the 2009 survey of principals and deputy principals but was not supported by their practice according to their response to questions in the survey (Section B, parts 2,3,4) which has been presented and discussed in chapter 10.3; 10.4; 10.5.

The definition needs to be read in conjunction with definitions of educational leadership and curriculum leadership as these three leaderships are interconnected, not only in the literature (McEwan, 2003; Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead, 2006) but also in the examples of "common sense, everyday practice" as found in operational definitions (Bradley, 2004; Heywood, 2008) and also in the response of principals and

[1] The derivation of this definition is found in the work of Clandinin and Connelly 1992, Heywood, 2008, Bradley 2004.

deputy principals who referred to "happy schools" in the 2006/2007 interviews and those who responded in a positive way to the relevant questions in the survey in 2009.

In general, most literature does not define any of these leaderships clearly which has resulted in extensive searches of literature on school leadership in order to construct sound definitions. However the author found a development in the general theory of leadership (chapter 6) from individual leadership to shared leadership, which is reflected in the thinking on educational leadership (Sergiovanni 1991; Rallis and Goldring, 2000) where it focuses particularly on teaching and learning. A recent study of transformational leadership and instructional leadership (Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe, 2008) has shown the outstanding importance of instructional leadership for teaching and learning - the core aims of the school (NAPD, 2005)

a. Clarification of the term "instructional leadership" in practice.

- Although the definitions were accepted by the principals and deputy principals in the survey, factorial analysis of the data suggests strongly that they are generally not understood and thus their practice, if any, must be uneven (chapter 9.2.1.g. p.193).

b. Practice of instructional leadership, if at all, within Irish post-primary schools.

- It is clear that elements of instructional leadership are being practised in some post-primary schools in Ireland but frequently are not recognised as such. These practices included homework policy, discussions on teaching and learning, classroom visitation that some respondents in the 2009 survey claimed to do (chapter 10. 4; 10.5).

c. Views of interested partners

NAPD has stated that instructional leadership is the way forward. This aspiration is in line with international literature on what must be done to ensure good teaching and learning (Mc Kinsey, 2007).

From the evidence of this research all education partners are avowedly enthusiastic in terms of ensuring optimum teaching and learning for students. The introduction of instructional leadership has to start with the teacher in the classroom with the support of the principal who is himself or herself well versed in instructional and curriculum leadership through relevant training. Literature exists for this purpose including the book *Instructional and Curriculum Leadership Towards Inquiry Oriented Schools* by Heywood[2] (2008), which was sponsored by NAPD.

d. Current obstacles to the practice of "instructional leadership" in Irish post-primary schools.

That classroom visitation is not a tradition in Ireland, is an obstacle to instructional leadership. Currently the principal appears to be apart from the classroom experience of teaching and learning (chapters 2, 7 and 10). Although instructional leadership is included in training courses (LDS 2002), the evidence from the responses in the survey (chapter 10.4.2 and 10.5.) suggests that there may well be a "knowing-doing gap" (Pfeffer and Sutton, 2000 cited by Reeves, 2006) in modules devoted to teaching and learning. From the response of teachers undertaking the courses organised by the Division of In-Service Education of Trinity College Dublin, their interest in the possibilities of "instructional leadership" was accompanied by an apparent lack of awareness of associated teaching and learning strategies as well as classroom evaluation techniques (chapter 1). The culture in some Irish post-primary schools appears from the evidence of the written comments in section B, 2,3,4 in the survey, (chapter 10.5) to have remained unchanged in a changing world, thus creating difficulties for those who would wish to innovate in order to deal with the needs of that changing world (chapters 7 and 10).

### 11.4. The rationale of instructional leadership-a personal view

> Unlike Parlett, we do not believe that this (evaluation) can ever be a neutral process. Every evaluator, just like every educational psychologist, brings her/his values to bear on all that she/he does. The successful evaluator is aware of these and presents them openly and honestly as part of her/his reflections on what has been revealed. (Burden, 1998, p.17)

[2] Heywood's books (2008, 2009) show how the three leaderships are interconnected in the context of the inquiry-oriented school.

The author is satisfied that instructional leadership focusing as it does on teaching and learning in the classroom is an essential leadership for post-primary schools. As seen in the literature (chapter 6.7.4.b. p. 98), what happens in the classroom whether through the planned curriculum, the hidden curriculum or indeed the null curriculum (Bradley, 2004, p. 13) has a major effect on the student in the immediate and long-term future.

Like any other innovation, instructional leadership has to start in a small way respecting the undoubtedly good work that has been and is being done generally in many Irish post-primary schools. The author's contention is that, if instructional leadership is implemented, all members of the school community can move forward in the knowledge that whatever the current economic, political or social climate, optimum teaching and learning is being achieved for their students. Better relations between members of the school community will arise from the preparation, which must precede the implementation of instructional leadership. Implementation will also ensure other current difficulties are overcome including better use of time by members of the school community. That instructional leadership is not the norm in Irish post-primary schools means that there are many lost opportunities for both teachers and students and according to the data from the survey, poor interpersonal relationships in some schools.

It is shocking to think that some post-primary principals (10% of survey respondents) can report in 2010 that they cannot enter classrooms. The literature on leadership shows the development from one sole leader to a sharing leadership yet students in schools where lack of good inter-personal and inter-professional relationships prevent their principals and teachers working together gives a very different message. The author does not think that instructional leadership necessitates that the principal works with the teacher in the classroom (Marzano, 2003) but thinks that the opportunity and possibility must be there. Leaving aside the notion that every teacher is a manager (Heywood, 2009), the distinction between the principal managing the school and the teacher managing the classroom is acceptable in terms of responsibilities and duties. What is unacceptable is that, from the evidence of the survey of principals and deputy principals in 2009, in some schools the respondents felt excluded from classrooms or felt that they had no place there (chapter 10. 4; 10.5, pp. 209-221)

These fears may not be based on reality since there is evidence too (CBR, 2007) to suggest that teachers' attitudes towards their principals are changing. But certainly, from the evidence of this research, such misunderstanding becomes an obstacle to innovation in some post-primary schools.

The research data from this study also suggested that the knowledge which some principals and deputy principals have of Department of Education's policies and trade unions regulations appear to be at variance with current agreements (Chapter 10. 5, pp. 214-222). Discussions that the author has had with officers of the trade unions have shown their interest in education research as well as their interest in innovation with the proviso that conditions for their members are right. Other misconceptions were uncovered during the research study.

The principals in 2001 and to a lesser extent in 2006 suggested that some teachers were unenthusiastic about innovation such as instructional leadership. A number of principals in 2006 mentioned their difficulty in bringing all teachers with them on the road to change (Table 15, chapter 15.7.3.2.p.140). The survey in 2009 certainly showed that some principals felt they could not go ahead with innovation since the teachers would object. The evidence from teachers in this research is that they will be happy to involve themselves in change for the well being of their students, provided that they are fully aware of the reasons for innovation and have the knowledge to implement innovation where appropriate (chapter 3.3.3.p.49). It seems that some principals may misinterpret their teachers' attitudes.

As is noted in the glossary, the term "happy school" was used by interviewees to suggest a school in which the core aims of teaching and learning are being achieved in a positive school climate where all members of the school community are respected. What emerged from the research was that some teachers and some principals are not happy in their respective work.

The discussion therefore returns to the importance of "fit" between teachers and school (Evans, 1998) and overall educational leadership. "Fit" should also take account of teachers' learning styles (Kolb, 1984) and those of the students. In an action research project in the early nineteen nineties, the author researched the

learning styles of both the teachers and the students in a TYO project. Where there was "fit" between the teachers and the students, discipline was much better.

The teachers on the instructional leadership course in 2008, organised by the Division of In-Service Education of Trinity College Dublin (chapter 1.3, p.18) were thrilled by the idea of instructional leadership and surprised by the literature. Classroom strategies such as those designed by Angelo and Cross (1993) interested them and were deemed to be useful as a basis for action research.

This suggests that initial training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs to be reviewed in relation to current thinking on teaching and learning. According to Heywood and Murray (2005) such training should be problem based and can be done in networks. Change is inevitable and it is important that this is recognised. Instructional leadership can be a catalyst for better relations in schools whereby roles are understood in a culture of openness for all.

From the evidence of principals and deputy principals who do engage in such activities in Ireland there is a culture of openness beneficial to all within the learning community of their schools, which subsequently has an influence on society. Students in such schools see teachers working together, teachers working with the principal and deputy principal, teachers welcoming "visitors" to the school. Usually in such school climates, the students too have been actively involved in school life, which makes it possible to implement recent directives from the DES requiring student councils in schools.

## 11.5. The chosen model: an instructional leadership involving all members of the school community.

### 11.5.1 Introduction

The author proposes a model of instructional leadership which involves all members of the school and which will lead to an inquiry-oriented school (Heywood, 2008). The model requires teacher leadership in the classroom in conjunction with an educational leadership in the school (focused on teaching and learning) and a

curriculum leadership, which serves both. These leaderships are all exercised by those who, through training, have a thorough understanding of the dynamic qualities of instructional leadership.

11.5.2 The model

The model of instructional leadership which this research study has identified is one in which the teacher in the classroom becomes the instructional leader, implementing strategies (based on action research) which will ensure the optimum learning for the students, on a daily basis. The principal with a close knowledge of the practice of instructional leadership both as a former teacher and as an active participant in instructional leadership training programmes which will be described in the next section, ensures educational leadership for all instructional and curriculum leaders within the school and beyond[3]. The important matter is that leadership of teaching and learning (instructional leadership) commences in the classroom in the daily relationship between teacher and students, which affirms Heywood's model (2008, 2009) of instructional leadership.

Where this model clarifies Heywood's model is that the individual teacher is the instructional leader requiring the support of a principal who has a full understanding of instructional leadership from his/her current role as an educational leader and from his/her former role as an instructional leader in the classroom.

Curriculum leadership will be undertaken by teachers who as instructional leaders are fully conversant with the pedagogic knowledge base, share their ideas in an active manner and conduct their work through reflection, discussion and evaluation in a learning environment. According to Bradley (2005, p.10) a different order of work practice is required from curriculum leaders than from instructional or educational leaders as has been described in chapter 6.7.4.e, p. 101.

[3] This model allows for the implementation of systems leadership (Pont, Nusche and Moorman: 2008) whereby principals work with schools other than their own.

In this model the teachers work together as instructional leaders and share the responsibility with their colleagues, including the principal, in the inquiry-oriented school, which is focused on teaching and learning.
This model has the advantage of overcoming obstacles such as subject specialisation in the post-primary schools, which differentiates the sector from the primary school sector, and the perceived opposition from different agencies (chapter 10.5). A recent study by Rushe (2010) illustrates the differences between the primary and post-primary sectors in relation to instructional leadership.

Once in place this model will become self-generating. However the introduction of such a model necessitates certain steps, which are based on the findings of this research study.

**11.6.Training requirements**

The implementation of instructional leadership necessitates training for each member of the school community in instructional and curriculum leadership; training is required in all schools, but on an individual school basis. There has to be the recognition that:

- schools are different.
- long held traditions exist (classroom visitations are not the usual practice).
- positive interpersonal, professional relationships are essential for the well being (and thus the successful learning of students, teachers and principals) in any school.

This research has identified three different cultures in schools, there may be more.
These are:

- Schools in which principal and teachers are used to working together and principals feel comfortable about visiting classrooms.

- Schools where principal and teachers have no traditions of classroom visits but do have a mutual respect.

- Schools in which there appears to be a culture which inhibits any innovation.

Recognising the importance of "fit" between teacher and school (Evans, 1998), the author suggests that training must take account of these differences. The results of this approach should be better teaching and learning and better relationships between principals and teachers since everyone together moves towards an inquiry-oriented school.

### 11.7 Further Research

The author recognises that a survey of post-primary teachers comparable to the survey of post-primary principals and deputy principals in 2009 was not undertaken due to time constraints. "The teachers' voice" within this study has, due to those constraints, come from the interviews with Irish post-primary teachers in 2004 and the work with the teachers in the Sligo Education Centre in 2007 and in Trinity College Dublin in 2008. It has been heard too in many informal conversations with teachers in Ireland and abroad. Cohn and Kottkamp (1993) recommend that, where educational innovation is concerned, it is essential to "ask the teachers".

The author is pleased to note that further research into instructional leadership and related areas is being undertaken currently in Ireland. This work includes a study of teacher motivation by Sheridan and a study of the role of deputy principal as instructional leader in the primary school by O'Hara (M.St students, 2009/2010).

The implementation of instructional leadership will itself be a matter of on-going research since any such innovation requires pilot studies. It can also be assumed that instructional leadership itself will engender more research within the classroom initially and, as teachers become more confident, beyond the classroom (Lieberman and Miller, 2004).

## 11.8 Closing Remarks

> To work in this way is not to seek to reveal the *truth* about any institution and what takes place within it. I have come to believe that illuminative evaluation does not provide a torch to reveal what may be shrouded in darkness. Rather, it offers something more like a set of distorting fairground mirrors each of which reflects something vaguely akin to reality. If each of those reflections is combined then something begins to emerge which people can identify as approximating to their conception of themselves. They can then decide what they think and feel about the match and mismatch between what is beginning to emerge and their original self-concepts and whether they want to do anything about it. (Burden, 1998, pp. 21,22)

What emerges clearly is that many persons connected with the education of young people are open to innovation but do not know how to go about it. The author strongly suggests that the classroom is the place to start[4], and that current principals should involve themselves in the professional development for instructional leadership that is necessary for the teachers in the classroom. This will ensure that their support has a knowledge base and that they are seen as colleagues as well as leaders (CBR, 2007)[5]. The next generation of principals who are now post-primary teachers, will have that knowledge base in instructional and curriculum leadership through training, CPD and their current work in the classroom.

What is essential now is that all members of the school community have the benefit of training so that all members of the inquiry-oriented school can enjoy the advantages of instructional leadership.

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[4] The data suggests that many teachers do not know how to go about action research.

[5] The information that teachers have come to see their principals as leaders as reported in CBR 2007 is itself a development.

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*Appendix A*

*Post-Primary Education in Ireland*

**Post - Primary Education in Ireland – background information**

In Ireland societal change has affected post-primary schools of whose principals and teachers much has been expected. With the advent of free education in 1967, the school population increased greatly. Many religious-run single sex voluntary secondary schools entered the free scheme and appointed more teachers, becoming the largest group of schools in the post-primary sector. The vocational schools, set up under the Vocational Education Act 1930, continued to operate as free schools but introduced intermediate and leaving certificate courses in subjects previously considered too academic for those schools. During the 1970s, the government set up community and comprehensive schools on green-field sites (ie: mainly undeveloped sites in once rural areas) totally funded by the state, offering a full range of subjects to boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18. Two major differences existed between the voluntary secondary schools and the other post-primary schools. Whereas principals in the voluntary secondary schools were members of the religious orders which owned the schools, principals of the other schools were lay people working with boards of management. From the late 1980s, lay principals could be appointed to voluntary secondary schools in which boards of management had been introduced. Whereas appointments to positions of responsibility were made on seniority in the voluntary secondary schools under the terms of the 1969 tri-partite agreement, in all other post-primary schools they were made on merit. Under the programme for competiveness at work (PCW) agreement of 1998, the Government has sought to change the former system of appointment but the tradition remains in internal appointments. Vacancies for deputy principalships and principalships of all schools with an enrolment exceeding 500 pupils are advertised nationally. The introduction of the Education Act, the Educational Welfare Act and Teachers' Council Act between 1996 and 2002 have brought further changes in Irish education. Principals and deputy principals have had to keep abreast of the increased demands of legislation which has a daily influence on life in their schools. Recent innovations include School Development Planning (SDP) and Whole School Evaluation (WSE). SDP was introduced in 2001 to ensure that schools were prepared to meet the challenge of change. All schools have to provide written plans of their intentions regarding high quality teaching and learning, professional development of teachers, management of change. The plan is intended to be a guide and reference point for monitoring progress

and evaluation. WSE was introduced in 2006. All schools are visited and evaluated by inspectors from the Department of Education and Science. Whereas subject inspections focus on teaching and learning in a specific subject area, WSE looks at the key areas of the work of a school including teaching and learning in some subjects. Key areas include: planning processes, how well a school is managed, quality of curriculum, involvement of parents, special needs provision, quality of teaching and learning.

**Statistics**

Number of schools aided by Department of Education and Science 2004/2005

Second Level

| | |
|---|---|
| Secondary | 403 |
| Community and Comprehensive | 92 |
| Vocational | 247 |

Source CBR 2007

Number of full time students in schools aided by Department of Education and Science 2004/2005

Second Level

| | |
|---|---|
| Secondary | 183,026 |
| Community / Comprehensive | 52,443 |
| Vocational | 97,693 |

Source CBR 2007

Number of teachers in schools aided by Department of Education and Science 2005/2006

| | |
|---|---|
| Second Level | 24,990 |

Source NAPD 2009

Legislative Acts (main legislative acts passed since 1998 which apply to schools)

Education Act, 1998

Education Welfare Act, 2000

Teaching Council Act, 2001

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004

Source: CBR 2007 (citing JMB Survey: The Workload of the Principal 2005)

Support Services set up by the Teacher Education Section, Department of Education and Science

School Development Planning Initiative (SDPI)
Second Level Support Service (SLSS)
Leadership Development for Schools (LDS)
Special Education Support service (SESS)
Source: CBR 2007

**Training Programmes for Principals and Deputy Principals (Post –Primary)**

Misneach – programme of induction and support for newly appointed primary and post-primary principals (LDS, 2002) during first two years. Participants attend four or five residential courses during the two year period and are offered mentoring services.

It is based on School Leadership – a Profile (LDS 2002) which includes Personal Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Instructional Leadership and Organisational Leadership linked by Ethical Leadership (CBR 2007: p. 25).

The following themes are addressed in modular form: Unpacking Leadership, Leading Learning, Leading People, Leading the organisation, Relationship Building, Enhanced Personal Leadership Skills.

It is one of the few training courses to be evaluated externally (Morgan and Sugrue, 2005).

Forbairt – a programme for experienced principals and their deputy principals which focuses on identifying and developing leadership capacities. It is based on the concept of leading learning through leading others.

Tanaiste – a programme for post-primary deputy principals with the aim of supporting the deputy in their work with the principals and other school leaders to facilitate high quality learning. Three two-day residential sessions, one of which takes place following appointment but before the school year commences

Source: CBR 2007

## *Appendix B*

## *Comparative study of the factors influencing the retention of teachers in Ireland and Texas*

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE RETENTION OF TEACHERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND TEXAS

Verity Swan
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Teacher shortage has been a major problem in the USA and the United Kingdom for the past twenty years (USA National Commission and America's Future, 1997; Travers and Cooper in Durham and Varna, 1998). In both countries there have been attempts to recruit more teachers but the problem remains (Ingersoll, 2001, pp. 500-504; Spear *et al.*, 1999, p.6). In Ireland,[6] where traditionally teachers have enjoyed a relatively high status, the problem of shortage has only recently been identified (ASTIR: 2001, pp.16-17).[7] The CBR Report (OECD, 2003), although reporting that "Ireland experiences no problems at present in attracting high level recruits to the teaching profession" does note that "recruitment is not without its problems".[8] In terms of teacher retention the same report notes that "Ireland does not appear to have a problem of retaining effective teachers but it is also the case that Ireland does not know enough about the issue".

[6] The use of the term 'Ireland' in the subsequent text will denote the Republic of Ireland

[7] The ASTI survey of 408 Post-Primary Principals found that in the 2000/2001 school year, 69% of schools had experienced difficulty in recruitment of teachers whereas 53% of schools in 1999/2000 had experienced difficulty.

[8] Problems identified include gender imbalance, lack of recruitment from minority groups and shortages in some subject areas in secondary schools.





Swan, having in the course of her work as deputy principal of a large second-level school experienced the increasing difficulty of filling temporary vacancies for teachers in certain subject areas in the late nineteen nineties[9], began to wonder whether the issue of teacher shortage in Ireland was receiving sufficient attention in terms of empirical research and policy initiatives. Currently teachers who were appointed in the late 1960s and early 1970s are approaching retirement age. Such retirements may be expected to improve employment opportunities for beginning teachers[10]. But will those beginning teachers choose to stay in teaching throughout their careers as their predecessors have done?

In the USA and UK, where teachers can get permanent jobs at an early stage of their careers, many teachers choose to leave teaching within their first five years (Ingersoll, 2001; Smithers and Robinson, 2001). Teacher turnover which prevents educational improvement in schools (Murnane *et al.*, 1991, p. 65) then becomes the problem rather than teacher shortage. Seeking solutions to this problem leads to a consideration of the question of teacher retention. That this has not been a problem as yet in Ireland, may be due to cultural differences between the jurisdictions.

There were many changes in the last thirty years in terms of the economy and society both at a national and international levels. It can be assumed that there will be many changes in the next thirty years leading to periods of growth and periods of decline in the economy. If in the future jobs become readily available for the newly-trained teachers outside of teaching, as they were during the 'Celtic Tiger' period[11], will they choose to remain as teachers? This issue leads the authors to ask: why do teachers stay in teaching? Changes in society[12], some of which have created difficulties in

[9] Mainly par.-time

[10] Informal conversations (2003/2004) with teachers newly qualified in Ireland.suggest that a difficulty exists for them in obtaining permanent positions. They are employed as part-time teachers or substitutes in the first years of their career.

[11] Period of economic prosperity

[12] In Ireland societal change has affected post-primary schools of whose principals and teachers much has been expected. With the advent of free education in 1967, the school population increased greatly. Many religious-run single sex voluntary secondary schools entered the free scheme and appointed more teachers, becoming the

discipline in schools, have increased the incidence of stress in teachers (Kyriacou, in Dunham and Varna, 1988, p. 6). This issue leads the authors to ask: what can be done to increase the coping ability of teachers in those circumstances? The question of recruiting and retaining high quality teachers who can deal with the challenge set by societal change has to be addressed in order to maintain a high standard of education irrespective of the economic climate.

Related to these issues, Heywood (2002)[13] put forward the view at a seminar of the European Forum for Educational Administration that one of the reasons why teachers lacked status was that they were socialized into what Hoyle (1975) has called 'restricted professionalism'. Heywood used the American study by Cohn and Kottkamp (1992) to reinforce his view. Previously, in a document to the Committee on the Training of Secondary

largest group of schools in the post-primary sector. The vocational schools, set up under the Vocational Education Act 1930, continued to operate as free schools but introduced Intermediate and Leaving Certificate courses in subjects previously considered too academic for those schools. During the 1970s, the Government set up community and comprehensive schools on green-field sites (mainly undeveloped sites in once rural areas) totally funded by the state, offering a full range of subjects to boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18. Two major differences existed between the voluntary secondary schools and the other post-primary schools. Whereas principals in the voluntary secondary schools were members of the religious orders which owned the schools, principals of the other schools were lay people working with boards of management. From the late 1980s, lay principals could be appointed to voluntary secondary schools in which boards of management had been introduced. Whereas appointments to positions of responsibility were made on seniority in the voluntary secondary schools under the terms of the 1969 tri-partite agreement, in all other post-primary schools they were made on merit. Under the PCW agreement of 1998, the Government has sought to change the former system of appointment but the tradition remains in internal appointments. Vacancies for deputy principalships and principalships of all schools with an enrolment exceeding 500 pupils are advertised nationally. The introduction of the Education Act, the Educational Welfare Act and Teachers' Council 1996-2002 have brought further changes in Irish education. Principals and deputy principals have had to keep abreast of the increased demands of legislation which has a daily influence on life in their schools. A lack of resources in agencies other than the schools has resulted in the teacher's role becoming less defined as s/he copes with social issues in the classroom, frequently without the necessary training, while the principal and deputy principal are overburdened by a myriad of tasks.

[13] Papers relating to this seminar published in Heywood and Taylor (2002).



Teachers in Ireland (Heywood, 1999) he had argued that a combination of poor training and a controlled curriculum reinforced the attitude of restricted professionalism. He had suggested that teachers by and large do not want to be extended professionals and that this plays into the hands of Governments who want to tightly control what teachers do[14]. It is a circle of restricted professionalism, and plays to the hygiene factors of Herzberg's model.[15] If teachers are to be retained then they have to break out of this cycle and this has considerable implications for the organisation of education and teacher training.

During 1998/1999 Heywood had learned that the turnover of teachers in Texas[16] was very high in each five year period and suggested to Mayo, a colleague at Stephen F. Austin University, Texas, that although teacher retention was not perceived to be a problem in Ireland he saw merits in a comparative study of the problem using qualitative research methods. Heywood thought that despite the difference in size of the two jurisdictions, lessons might be learned from an enquiry into the retention of able teachers in both countries. In the autumn of 2001 he interviewed a small number of principals and senior educators in Ireland for their views as to why such teachers chose to remain in teaching.

[14] A recent article by Michael Smith suggests that UK government's school leadership initiative arises from governmental desire to "establish an official orthodoxy with regard to the leadership and management of schools" (2002, p. 21).

[15] Herzberg (1966). His 2-factor theory states that hygiene factors (which include salary, working conditions, job security, company policy, relations with colleagues and supervisors) cause *job dissatisfaction* when absent but do not give job satisfaction when present. Only satisfier or motivator factors (which include achievement, independence, recognition, responsibility, challenge and creativity) give job satisfaction.

[16] The State of Texas, where "calls for accountability in schools have been answered with increased standardised testing, accountability and accreditation processes", has seen great change in its education systems over the past ten years (Holliday, 1999, p.7). A recent document from the Texas Public Policy Foundation (September 2002, states that there is no overall shortage of teachers in Texas although there is a shortage in certain subject areas. Retention is identified as the problem since 60% teachers leave in the first five years of teaching: "if unchecked" this "will precipitate a broad-scale shortage of teachers in all Texas public schools within the decade".

## The Literature: Introduction

Literature from the UK suggests that major teacher shortage problems have existed there for some years. In the 1990s, Travers and Cooper, 1998, p. 66) had noted that although a turnover rate of between 7%-8% may be seen as healthy in any profession, some teacher surveys had shown higher rates of turnover. Recently Morton in her review of the teacher shortage problem cites a report by Smithers and Robinson (2001) which states that "over half those who trained to be teachers were lost" within the training year and the first three years of teaching[17] (Morton: 2002,p.3). The findings of a further report by Smithers and Robinson (June 2003), which was intended to inform future government policy on teacher retention, were quoted by David Miliband MP[18], in a speech at the General Teaching Council Conference on Retention (24 June 2003). Miliband stated that "having turned the corner on recruitment, it is right to discuss retention".

In the USA there have been substantial teacher shortages during the past twenty years (USA National Commission and America's Future 1997). In the 1980s, research in the USA predicted that increasing student enrolments and teacher attrition caused by an ageing workforce with many imminent retirements would create major problems for those administrators with the responsibility for the staffing in schools. Murnane *et al.* (1991, p.65) forecast that 2 million new teachers would be needed in the following decade (p.14). A decade later, Ingersoll (2001) has identified the main challenge of teacher shortage to be teacher turnover rather than recruitment.

Meanwhile in his annual report on Teacher Quality, the Secretary of Education in the USA refers to the challenge for each state of the "No Child Left Behind Act" 2002. By the end of the school year 2005-2006 there has to be a 'highly qualified' teacher in every classroom in the USA (US Dept of Education, Secretary's Annual Report 2002, p.iii). Identifying traditional certification as a major problem in the search for high quality teachers the report states that "Schools will not meet this challenge by trying a little harder or making small adjustments. Schools will only be able to place a

[17] The figures given by Smithers and Robinson in *Teachers Leaving* study (2001) are: 12% non-completion of training year, 30% post completion, 18% new teachers

[18] Minister of State for School Standards





highly qualified teacher in every classroom if the states take bold action to fundamentally alter certification systems" (2002, p. 39). In terms of certification of teachers, research cited in the report suggests that states should concentrate on verbal ability and solid content knowledge in their teachers since these are "the only measurable teacher attributes that relate directly to improved student achievement" (2002, p.39). Moreover states are advised strongly to raise the academic bar for incoming teachers rather than lowering it, in order to ensure high quality teachers (2002, p.39). How states implement the policies in the "No Child Left Behind Act" 2002 is left to each state due to the federal structure of the USA.

A recent document from the Texas Public Policy Foundation states that there is no overall shortage of teachers in Texas although there is a shortage in certain subject areas. Retention is identified as the problem since 60% teachers leave in the first five years of teaching. "If unchecked", this "will precipitate a broad-scale shortage of teachers in all Texas public schools within the decade" (TPPF, 2002).

In Ireland the problems which had been noted in the ASTI survey (2000) continue in relation to shortage in particular subject areas such as Irish, Mathematics and Science. The matter is further complicated in Ireland by the numbers of temporary teachers employed to cover career breaks and secondments, as well as by the use of part-time teachers in schools where permanent teachers are not being replaced[19]. That teacher training courses are fully subscribed in 2003 does not mean that there will automatically be high quality[20] teachers in ten years' time. A high quality teaching profession requires careful nurturing not only in the early years[21] but at significant stages of each teacher's career (Huberman, 1993).

[19] Informal discussions with school principals, Summer 2003

[20] The author defines 'high quality' teachers as those teachers who are able to achieve the goals of 'effective schools' as defined by Mortimore (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore 1995 ). His definition of an effective school is "one in which students progress further than might be expected from its intake of students" (Heywood, 2001, p. 3).

[21] Recommendations on teacher training, recruitment and induction are contained in the recent unpublished report of the Expert Advisory Group on Post-Primary Teacher Education, 2002 (CBR:OECD, 2003, p.36)

## The Literature: Retention Issues

From the general review of literature a number of issues were identified as relevant to the current research including school staffing problems[22], teachers as professional educators within new models of schools suited to the twenty-first century, teacher attitudes to change, teacher motivation, organisational analysis and leadership. Since the initial hypothesis had been based on Herzberg's theory, an enquiry was made into the application of that theory to educational matters.

During the 1990s the response to school staffing problems in the USA was "a wide range of recruitment initiatives" while empirical research concentrated on teacher turnover as "a function of the characteristics of individual teachers" (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 500). Having defined school staffing problems as the "inability of schools to adequately staff classrooms with qualified teachers"[23] Ingersoll has suggested that a high rate of teacher turnover may indicate underlying problems in how well schools function, and that recruitment programmes alone will not solve school staffing problems if the problem of teacher retention is not addressed. In Texas, Mann *et al.* (1998), in their review of national teacher shortage statistics, refer to the link between teacher retention and professional development: "professional development not only assists teachers in improving instruction it supports teacher retention" (Mann, 1998). The cost of teacher turnover is not only financial. Stronge (2002, p.10) quotes research which shows that 'Teachers with more than 3 years experience are more effective than those with 3 or fewer years" (p.10) In Ireland, Heywood has argued that research should concentrate on teacher retention.

Heywood's (2001) work in the curriculum has led him to consider the different forms of leadership found in learning institutions. He identifies educational leadership as an 'overarching concept' which aims to ensure the implementation of school effectiveness. It is equivalent to the 'professional

[22] School staffing problems in this paper include teacher recruitment, shortage, turnover and retention

[23] Ingersoll has undertaken recent research in the USA based on data from the schools and Staffing Survey and its supplement, the Teacher Follow-up Survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics beginning in the 1980s (2001, pp. 500-504).



leadership', a key characteristic of effective schools[24], to be exercised by all principals. Curriculum leadership[25] is defined by Heywood as the "formal mechanism through which educational aims are intended to be achieved and as such, it embraces content, assessment and evaluation, instruction and learning"[26]. Heywood, when reviewing Fitzmaurice's[27] operational definition of an instructional leader, states that Fitzmaurice was "clearly providing curriculum leadership rather than instructional leadership". Heywood regards instructional leadership as part of curriculum leadership.

In his analysis of curriculum leadership Heywood notes not only the effect of the received curriculum on teacher professionalism but also, referring to the work of Hoyle and MacMahon (1976), the constraints which restricted professionalism puts on curriculum change. Finding serious flaws in traditional teacher training which tends to emphasise 'a restricted professionalism' in teachers rather than 'an extended professionalism', Heywood notes that governmental control of the curriculum through a received curriculum influenced by examination needs, prevents the development of curriculum leadership[28].

Although the later years of the 20th century have been described as a period of immense social change in national and global terms, this change has not been reflected overall in the training of teachers and the model of schools. The physical working environment of a teacher has undergone little change, with few lasting innovations in teacher training and induction. Lortie's (1975) description of a teacher's job and flat career path are still recognisable, as a comparative study of Dade County teachers undertaken by Cohn and Kottkamp in 1984, twenty years after Lortie's survey in 1964,

[24] Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995).

[25] Heywood (2001), referring to the work of Angelo and Cross (1993 ), identifies four levels of curriculum leadership. Level one: evaluation of learning in the classroom; level two: research into classroom practice; level three: application of the results of this knowledge throughout learning institution; level four: dialogue with outside agencies.

[26] Heywood (2001, p. 4).

[27] Fitzmaurice (1997) gives an overview of the vast literature on instructional leadership.

[28] Transition Year in Ireland is noted as an exception since it encourages independent action in developing curriculum. See J Heywood and M Murray (2005).

revealed. As Abbott and Ryan (2000, p.215) note, "The present arrangements for conventional schooling" have their roots in the needs of the Industrial Revolution. These studies give rise to questions concerning teacher professionalism and the current model of schools. Does the traditional training of teachers produce people with a professional outlook? Is the current model of schools the most suitable for students learning in the twenty-first century? Murray in his work on school autonomy in Ireland refers to Hoyle's (1976) restricted and extended professionality (2000, p. 45) before putting forward the ideal of schools as "self-directing learning organizations" (*ibid.*, p. 48). Cohn and Kottkamp (1993, p.262) have suggested that teacher retention requires more than "the recruitment and retention of enthusiastic individuals". They would argue that system and teachers must "undergo substantial change" (*ibid.*, p. 262).

However changes in practice can engender fear among teachers, as is seen from the literature concerning recent radical changes introduced into secondary education in the Netherlands[29]. Evers referred to Kwakman's research (1999), also in the Netherlands, which showed that although the professional development of teachers takes place in their classrooms on a daily basis, little interest in this is evident in the schools. Teachers were identified as being the missing voice in educational reform by Cohn and Kottkamp who advised "listening to the teachers" (1993, p.290) when changes in education were envisaged. Currently the question of alternative teacher training is being discussed in Ireland following the sanction of privately-funded "on-line primary teacher training courses" by the Department of Education and ensuing protests from students in traditional teacher training institutions. (Radio Eireann, Marian Finucane Show Nov 6 2003; *Irish Times*, Nov 5 2003).

Observing the issue of teacher retention as a matter for organisational

[29] These include the *Study-home* system in which teachers, using a pupil-centred approach, develop the independent and creative thinking of higher secondary pupils on an individual basis in schools which have become places of study (Evers: 2002, p. 229). In a study which focussed on teacher burnout in this new situation, Evers in the Netherlands found, in line with other research (Cohn and Kottkamp,1993, p.153) that teachers who positively rated their teaching capabilities suffered less from burnout than those who had lower scores in self-efficacy (2002, p.237). Teachers with strong self-efficacy beliefs were also more likely to welcome innovation in their classrooms.





analysis, Ingersoll (2001, p.528) states that the ways in which teachers and schools are managed must be seen as significant factors in plans to resolve school staffing problems. He also expresses concern about one aspect of these problems, namely the lack of research into the effect of teacher turnover on the school community and school performance. The importance of organisational analysis is seen also in recent research in the UK on teacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation. Evans (2001, p.292) finds "schoolteacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation to be influenced much less by externally initiated factors, such as salary, educational policy and reforms and conditions of service, than by factors emanating from the more immediate context within which teachers work: school specific or, more precisely, job specific factors". She identifies restricted and extended professionality in the teachers in her study (1998, pp.74-76). Christ *et al.* (2003, p. 339) have found that "teachers go the extra mile"[30] when they are closely identified with their schools in terms of 'organisational citizenship behaviour'.

It would appear from a brief inspection of current international literature that a study of teacher retention will encompass many issues including the relationship between school staffing problems and school organisation (USA: Ingersoll; Germany: Christ), teacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation (UK: Evans) and teacher burnout (Netherlands: Evers). Swan (1996), in her study on induction found other strands which may be relevant to a study of teacher retention. These include the question of the professionalism of teachers (Lortie, 1975); the need for sensitivity in managing the professional careers of staff (Huberman, 1973); the need for support systems for teachers at different stages of their careers (Dunham, 1992, pp.149-150); the significance of stress for teachers (Travers and Cooper, 1993)[31]. It appeared that such literature was relevant to the education systems in Ireland and Texas. In Ireland where education policies decided now will influence the lives of teachers and their students until 2040, teacher shortage has become apparent (ASTIR, 2000, pp. 16-17); in

[30] 'Going the extra mile' was a phrase used frequently by Texas principals in the interviews reported below.

[31] Travers and Cooper (1996) found teaching to be a very stressful job when compared with other professions.

Texas, teacher shortage has been identified as a serious and growing problem (Wicker: 1999, p. 4).[32].

How far is Herzberg's theory applicable to the question of teacher retention?[33] Although originally developed from empirical research on job satisfaction with engineers and accountants, the theory, acknowledged as "one of the most influential theories on motivation since World War II" (Statt, 1994, p. 281) has been used in a number of studies relating to teacher job satisfaction. Nias (1981; 1989), in her study of nineteen primary school teachers in the UK found that motivators intrinsic to the job were in line with Herzberg's satisfiers or motivators[34]. Motivators extrinsic to the job, which Herzberg called hygiene factors, incapable of satisfying, were found by Nias to be capable of satisfying teachers. Evans (1998, p.9) suggests that a difference in interpretation between Herzberg and Nias as to what constitutes job satisfaction led to Nias's conclusions that her findings did not corroborate Herzberg's theory. Evans (1998, p.12) in her reappraisal of Herzberg's two-factor theory, has found two components of job satisfaction: job comfort and job fulfilment. She notes, as did Sergiovanni (1968), that "there appears to be a link between Maslow's (1954) theory of human motivation and Herzberg's (1968) theory", whereby hygiene factors are lower order needs and satisfiers are higher order needs (1998, p.12). Job comfort, as described by Evans, concerns lower order needs *with* which a teacher may be satisfied and job fulfilment concerns higher order needs *by* which a teacher may be satisfied. Evans (1998, pp.35-37) who gives an overview of key motivation theories including those of Maslow (1954) and McClelland (1961, 1962, 1971)[35], sees achievement as the root of all

[32] Wicker quotes Texas Center for Educational Research (TCER) *Texas Teacher Recruitment and Retention Study: February 1999* prepared for the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Support Center.

[33] Daft (2002, p.283) notes THE significance of Herzberg's theory for leaders: "to go beyond the removal of dissatisfiers to the use of motivators to meet higher-level needs and propel employees toward greater achievement and satisfaction".

[34] Daft (2001, p.3) cites Monroe (1997), "People want to be about good things. They want to believe that the work they do has meaning , some purpose beyond making a salary".

[35] Evans (1998, p.37) states that her research findings were consistent in "varying



Herzberg's motivation factors. The results of Evans' four qualitative studies (1998, p.47) concerning the attitudes of primary teachers to their work led her to the conclusion that Herzberg's hygiene factors, which he said only led to dissatisfaction when absent, could provide job comfort when present. She accepted entirely that those job comfort factors could not provide job fulfilment. Spear *et al.* (2000, p.53) in reviewing the results of teacher job satisfaction studies found that they "lend considerable support to Herzberg's two factor theory". Moreover if the negative satisfiers (Nias' third factor) are added the "results match the theoretical prediction almost exactly".

## The Research Programme

In the light of Herzberg's theory, the comparative study of the factors influencing the retention of teachers in Ireland and Texas was suggested by Heywood to explore the relationship between restricted professionalism and teacher retention. In order to discover whether such a study was viable, two exploratory surveys were carried out using qualitative research methods, first in Ireland in late 2001 and then replicated in Texas in late 2002.

### *The Study*

In late 2001, Heywood carried out an exploratory survey of management perspectives on teacher retention among Principals in Ireland (with the intention of replicating it in Texas) to seek reasons why experienced teachers remain in school after the age of 50. Swan, who had also participated in this survey of principals, as an acting principal representing one of the schools, was given his data to reanalyse and felt that in some respects Heywood's analysis had not gone far enough. In particular he had not considered other than tangentially the role of the principal and school management in retention. Neither had he perceived that there might be differences in attitude, and therefore perceptions, between male and female principals, that may have a significant effect on retention.

The survey consisted of non-structured interviews with the principals of five post–primary schools in Ireland, one of whom was the acting principal, and two other educationalists who due to their work could give a wider view of the matter. The first of these was the education officer for a religious

degrees" with the motivation theories described in her overview.



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order, the second was a director of an education centre. Details of the schools, principals and managers are set out in Table 1.

Table 1
*The Irish Sample*

| *Interviewees* | *Previous Experience* | *School Type* | *Location* | *Number of Students* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A Principal | Teacher | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| B Acting Principal | Teacher | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| C Principal | | Community | Suburban | 900 |
| D Principal | | Voluntary Secondary | Suburban | 700 |
| E Principal | | Vocational | Rural | 700 |
| F Senior educator | Principal | | | |
| G Senior educator | Principal abroad | | | |

Each interview was taped, analysed immediately following the interview and then re-analysed by Heywood shortly after all the interviews were completed. As a further step in the exploratory research, the tapes were analyzed and re-analyzed in March 2002 by Swan. Data was put into groups for clarity (Table 2). The exploratory survey was developed further in November 2002 when Swan, Heywood and Mayo undertook non-structured interviews in East Texas with the principals of six secondary schools (two high schools and four middle schools), an assistant superintendent of a school district and a university educator responsible for training courses for prospective principals,[36] Both the assistant superintendent and the university educator had had experience as principals in high schools in Texas. Of the eight interviews, five were face to face, and three others were by telephone.

[36] Details of the participants are set out in Table 3.





Table 2
*Analysis of Responses*

| | *Principals* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Topics* | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| Why Teachers Stay On | | | | | | | |
| Good | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Ineffective | | | * | | * | | |
| Teaching Career | | | | | | | |
| Young | * | * | * | | * | | * |
| Middle | * | * | | | * | | |
| Older | * | * | | * | * | | * |
| Retirement | * | | * | * | | | |
| Status | | | * | | * | | |
| Problems | | | | | | | |
| Supervision | * | * | * | * | * | * | |
| Seniority (Voluntary Secondary Schools) | * | * | * | * | * | * | |
| Ineffective Teachers | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Change | | | * | | | | * |
| Solutions | | | | | | | |
| Training | * | * | * | | * | | |
| Induction | | * | | | | | |
| In-Service | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Study (Long-Term) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Dual Degree | | | * | | | | |
| Gender | | * | | | | | * |
| Relationships & Structures | * | * | | | | | |
| Principal | * | * | * | | | | |
| Staff | * | * | * | | | | |
| Students | * | * | * | | | | |
| Board of Management | | | | | | | |
| Parents | * | | | | | | |
| Middle Management Structure | * | | | * | | | |
| Beyond The School Community | | | | | | | |
| Department of Education | | | | | | | |
| Trade Unions | * | | | * | | | |
| Leadership | * | * | | | | | |
| Management | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

Table 3
*Texas Sample*

| *Interviewees* | *Previous experience* | *Interview by telephone* | *School type* | *Location* | *Students* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H principal | Pre-appointment training for principalship | ** | Middle (13-15) | Urban | 1150 |
| J assistant superintendent | | | Junior high schools/ Middle school s/ High schools | Town (District Office) | 6000 |
| K principal | Teacher in another district Pre-appointment training for principalship | | High (14-18) | Town | 1850 |
| L principal | Teacher in high school, junior high Assistant principal Pre-appointment training for principalship | | Junior high (12-14) | Urban | 1300 |
| M Principal | Teacher High School, Middle School Assistant Principal | | Middle (13-15) | Town | 980 |
| N Associate Principal | Teacher At Home (family) Returned to teaching | | Middle (13-15) | Town | 1865 |
| O Senior educator | Principal in another state | | University | | Responsible for teacher training |
| P Principal | Teacher Assistant Principal Principal In 2 High Schools | ** | High (14-18) | Suburban Now Urban | 3000 |



The tapes which included the three telephone interviews were analyzed and re-analyzed by Swan[37] following the same procedures as used for the analysis of the Irish tapes[38] and a summary of the findings are shown in Table 4 below.

It is to be noted that bias existed in this survey for three reasons. Each participant in the Irish study had undertaken post-graduate research in Heywood's University Department and each participant in the Texas survey was selected by a member of the department of education in the local university. Swan participated, as an interviewee, in the Irish survey.

Although the questions put to each group of interviewees in individual interviews, first in Ireland and then in Texas, were similar, based on the opening question in the Irish survey "Why do teachers stay on in teaching?", the answers from members of each group were very different. For the sake of clarity for the interviewers from Ireland, each interviewee in Texas was asked a preliminary question, "Do teachers stay in teaching?" This question, having been answered in the affirmative, was then followed by "Why do teachers stay on in teaching?"

## The Findings: Ireland

### *Why do teachers stay on in schools*

Members of the group, identified as A, B, C, D, E, F, G, were each asked the question "Why do teachers stay on in school after 50 years of age?"

[37] While re-analysing the data, Swan was aware of the possible effects of gender, temperament and attitude on answers apart from the obvious differences between schools noted in earlier qualitative research (Swan, 1996).

[38] The interviews, having been taped, were transcribed immediately after the interview so that any items which required clarification could be followed up in subsequent interviews. A simple method of sorting and coding the data was selected whereby the tapes were transcribed for a second time, each interview being scanned for distinct points which were noted down in order to pair these with similar points in other interviews. The list of points was then examined again to produce a shorter list of main topic headings as set out in Table 2 and Table 4. A similar method is described in Coleman and Briggs (2002, p. 272) who refer to a study described by Arksey and Knight of 178 teachers who were asked if they saw teaching as a profession.

Table 4

*Analysis of Texas Data*

| Topics | Principals | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | H | J | K | L | M | N | O | P |
| Do Teachers Stay On? | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Why Teachers Stay On | | | | | | | | |
| Good | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Ineffective | | * | | | | | | |
| Why Teachers Leave | | | | | | | | |
| Money | * | | | | * | | | * |
| Accountability/Tests | | | | | | | | * |
| Discipline | | | | | * | | * | |
| Incompatibility (Fit) | | | * | | | | | |
| Pension | | | * | | | | | |
| Family | | | | | | * | | |
| Teaching Career | | | | | | | | |
| Stages Of Career | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Status | * | | * | * | * | | * | * |
| Support | | | | | | | | |
| Training | | | | | | | * | * |
| Induction | * | * | | | | * | * | * |
| In-Service | | | | | | * | | |
| Problems | | | | | | | | |
| Ineffective Teachers | * | * | * | | | * | * | * |
| Social Change/Change | | | * | * | * | * | * | |
| Teacher Stress | | | | | * | | | |
| Teacher Mobility | * | * | | | | | | * |
| Solutions | | | | | | | | |
| Instructional Leadership | * | * | * | | * | | | * |
| Seek Options | | | * | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | * | |
| What Principals Do | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Relationships & Structures | * | * | | | | | | |
| Principal | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Staff | | | | | | * | * | |
| Students | | | | | | * | | |
| Parents | | | * | | * | | * | * |
| District | | | | | | | | * |
| Annual Tests | * | | | * | * | * | * | * |





In reply to that question, A, B, C, E, F, G thought that good teachers were likely to stay on. They liked working with children (E), enjoyed their subject (A), were at ease in the classroom (C), had a moral purpose (G), had maintained initial enthusiasm (F), and enjoyed being teachers (B). Some teachers stay on for housekeeping reasons (A and F) which if that is the only reason may mean that the teacher is marking time (C) as s/he awaits retirement. D mentioned that few other jobs were available to teachers – what else could they do? D then referred to two teachers in their 50s who having taken active career breaks had decided to return because they enjoyed teaching. That some teachers on reaching retirement may suffer huge anxiety as to what next to do was seen in D's comments regarding the decision of two other teachers who had planned to retire at 60 to return and job-share. Others may see retirement as a change of direction (B) to pursue interests already commenced (A) or as a period of release from uninspiring work (G). The current frustration of teachers was contrasted with the "very comfortable" 1980s by (C). He noted however that fewer teachers were taking career breaks and probably fewer teachers than envisaged at the commencement of the scheme were taking early retirement.

### *Teaching Career*

In the answers of D and G, the notion of teachers in their '50s "growing old together" was seen. In the case of D, anxiety was expressed as to what would happen when those people retired as younger teachers were not seen as having loyalty or an understanding of ethos. A stated that young teachers had usually had six or seven years experience before achieving a position in A's school which he thought gave those teachers greater realism than their older counterparts. G, in speaking about a number of schools, had already expressed a belief in young people coming into the system as did A and B. G saw young teachers as enthusiastic, their choice of career resulting from a definite decision and worthy of encouragement. G had also commented that teachers over 50 could be divided into 3 categories (a), (b) and (c). Group (a) cannot get out; group (b) were there because of seniority and safety of the comfort zone; group (c) had moral purpose and a burning desire to teach. He thought that group (c) teachers would encourage and share ideas with younger colleagues. The ratio between the groups was unknown. However G saw an obstacle to change in groups (a) and (b) arising from fear of change

and resulting in stagnation in schools.

A and B's teachers were encouraged to use initiative. The question of "outside interests" was addressed by A who referred to the positive effect of extra-mural activities on a teacher close to retirement age. This activity involved working with other people as well as academic research. A had been willing and able to encourage the teacher to pursue those activities which resulted for the school in an enthusiastic teacher who worked well with the students in less popular subject areas. A contrast was seen in another of A's teachers who while marking time in order to achieve maximum pension pursued more solitary outside interests which did not serve to energize his teaching. The importance of the support and encouragement of the principal in assisting teachers at every phase of their careers was mentioned by A, B, and C. B also mentioned the importance of teachers feeling valued in a context where their needs are recognised by the principal. The notion of collaborative learning was apparent in B's comments where the importance of involvement, sharing responsibilities and being part of a vibrant changing organization was emphasized. The opinion of teachers of all ages was valued. There was no reference in that interview to the negative influence of any age group within the school. The school represented by B appeared to benefit from a staff of mixed ages as did the schools represented by A and E. Both A and B referred to the importance of good relationships between members of the school community.

The survey revealed the plight of a missing generation[39] of teachers. A was surprised that these teachers who were not in receipt of posts of responsibility[40] had stayed in teaching as they had useful degrees and experience suitable to human resource areas. He thought that they could have secured higher paid jobs in other areas of employment particularly during the 'Celtic Tiger' period. Therefore A thought that these teachers had made a decision to stay in teaching.

Considering the experience of teachers at different stages of their careers,

[39] Teachers now in their 40s and 50s who had commenced teaching in the 1980s and who had taught for 25 years without posts of responsibility. Teachers now in their late 50s and early 60s who commenced teaching in the 1970s had held posts of responsibility for 30 years.

[40] Posts of responsibility (1969) in voluntary secondary schools provided extra remuneration for teachers above basic scale



some young teachers were able to survive their first year in the school represented by E despite the culture shock of an illiteracy rate of 50% among entrants. Others at the end of the first year preferred to seek teaching posts elsewhere. Teachers aged 50+ in that school suffered from fatigue since they were continually setting standards higher than those in the students' homes. Teachers in C's school were reported as being disenchanted although C described the school as being "a comfort zone" in a middle class suburban area with a very different student population from that in E's school. He thought that fatigue set in where teachers had experienced difficulties previously in terms of discipline, subject and classroom management. C had noted the decline in the status of teachers as did E. C saw the fast pace of social change as a cause of frustration for his teachers. C mentioned the phases in a teacher's life as did A whereby teachers might lose focus at times. C thought factors in a teacher's family life could have a detrimental effect on that teacher's work.

*Problems*

Problems for principals at this time include the question of substitution (A), the question of seniority in secondary schools and weak teachers (A, B, C, D, E, F). Change is occurring however as G noted. Amalgamations between voluntary secondary schools and vocational schools necessitate working out seniority from two points of view. The Education Acts, with an emphasis on accountability, mean that teachers have no place to hide. Managers can no longer ignore such situations as was traditionally the case (A). The manner of selection of candidates for the Higher Diploma teacher training programme was raised by B; the relevance of the course content in those programmes was raised by E. G noted that there was nowhere for teachers, including trainee teachers, to reflect on their work. However, weak teachers, who were reported as frequently unaware of their shortcomings (A and G), needed help from management which, in reality, despite the existence of boards of management, is the principal. Teachers who stayed in school for reasons of inertia or lack of initiative also needed help. The question "How best to deal with weak teachers?" was mentioned by A, C, D and E.

*Solutions*

Some solutions to the above problems were suggested by the participants in the survey. Solutions to teacher attrition and turnover were seen to lie in improvements in teacher training by A, B, C, E and G. C suggested mandatory retraining every three years. E advised a reduction of class contact hours where possible or transfer to another area of responsibility such as home-school liaison. Value was seen by all participants in in-service training within schools. Teachers in E's school in the age 50+ bracket were disinterested in long-term in-service but were happy with day seminars on relevant themes. Long-term study was seen as energizing and rejuvenating by all participants in the survey. G spoke of the enthusiasm witnessed in those taking elective diploma courses for teachers. Since such study is not economically viable for all, E suggested one year's paid study every ten years, A suggested teachers should be paid for courses, C suggested paid leave should be given of perhaps a year's duration. An alternative proposal was saving through deductions from pay for course fees G. The energising effect of making a career decision was also noted by G. Since teaching can lead to a restricted view of the world, a year in business or industry was suggested as a means of giving a glimpse of the 'real world' by C and E. Dual degree courses, as in Kiel (Germany)[41], were suggested by C for more flexibility in choice of career. The identification of general skills required by participants in these courses was also noted by C. The training of more teachers was suggested by only one person (F) as a solution to current problems. F quoted Government miscalculations in the provision of staffing for the primary sector. Other suggestions included planned career-long training (B, E and G), mandatory renewal in training (E), swapping teachers between schools (E and C) and exchange programmes with industry (E). Recognising that teachers experience high points and low points during their careers, sometimes for reasons beyond the school's control, principals require resources to assist these teachers through bad times (E). C considered that a means of identification of teachers at risk was also required as well as supports for such teachers.

[41] Kiel courses: *International Journal of Technology and Design Education* 1990-1993.





*Gender*

The female principal (Swan) tended towards a more inclusive view of teachers in school. Further to this was the description by G of applicants for jobs related to education where female teachers of 40+ were seeking opportunities to share serious post-graduate experience with other teachers. The male teachers of 50+ were more inclined to be "doing their own things" once family responsibilities were finished.

*Relationships and structures*

The participants made some other comments relating to the lives of teachers. B mentioned that student needs were paramount in any school. C spoke of his students' hopes of teachers which had been identified in a recent internal survey: good warm relations between teachers and students were required throughout school days by students with greater emphasis on subject expertise at senior levels. D referred to the year head structure which he considered was essential in the good running of his school. However he noted that some year heads had experienced verbal abuse from parents. A saw middle-management structures as outmoded in 2002. B, who advocated delegation of responsibility as a means to encourage professionalism in teachers, wanted school organisation to be structured to allow for this. Parents were seen by A to be a great support for the school community but he feared that teachers might see them as a destructive force in the current climate.

*Beyond the school community*

Outside influences were mentioned. The influence of the teacher Trade Unions was perceived to be very great in post-primary schools. It was felt by D that in the last analysis the Trade Union, not recognising the positive input of the principal, would back a teacher on any issue. The membership of a union was a powerful unifying factor for teachers who might be critical of a colleague's teaching but oppose the principal when s/he tried to solve problem (A).

*Summary of major points in Irish interviews*

The Irish interviewees stated that there were many teachers who had

taught for many years in the same school, due largely to the seniority system. Not every teacher in a school was an enthusiastic teacher. Staff rooms were peopled by teachers who loved their jobs as well as teachers who would have preferred to work elsewhere, either in a different school or a different area of work. The seniority system in secondary schools had created a generation of teachers who had no prospect of achieving a post of responsibility. The interviewees recognised the difficulties of some teachers at different stages of their careers but did not offer a package of solutions agreed by all. Ineffective teachers, although creating real difficulties for principals, could continue to work without any remedial action. There was a hint that male and female principals might exercise authority differently. Although the work of trade unions was recognised, the relationship between principal and trade union could be difficult. The involvement of parents where mentioned was seen as beneficial but not necessarily so.

## Findings: Texas

### *Why do teachers stay on in schools*

Members of the Texas group, identified as H, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, were each asked the question "Do teachers stay on in your schools until retirement?", followed by the first question asked of the Irish principals "Why do they stay on until retirement?" (The first question was necessary as clarification for the interviewers from Ireland of the situation in Texas). The answer was in the affirmative to question one in all cases. The reasons given were that teachers were passionate about kids (H, L, P), passionate about the job (H, J, L, O) ("I love it too much to retire" — J), receive internal rewards for helping students (H), wish to make a difference in the lives of their students (H, N, O), have a sense of mission (J), are involved in school (M, N) and the local environment (M) which gives a sense of ownership (M, N), like and need the challenge of the job (K) which was described as tough by M, are willing to "go the extra mile for the kids". P and J did mention that some teachers might stay for family reasons or that they were in a rut.

Money was not seen as a reason for most teachers leaving the profession (H, M, P). P thought fear of accountability was a cause The new strategies required by the annual tests were also mentioned by P although M disagreed. She thought the tests were not the real cause for teachers to leave although they might be given as a reason for departure. She cited discipline problems



and classroom management difficulties, which were both mentioned by O. Some teachers choosing to remain in teaching moved to other schools or districts for various reasons. N mentioned traffic congestion and family situations. Some teachers would move to districts where there was less emphasis on accountability. Veteran teachers who had worked for many years in a school could in the three years preceding retirement choose to move elsewhere in order to get better salaries and thus better retirement deals, since pension benefits depended on a teacher's salary in the last three years. K spoke of a teacher who moved to the high school for that reason, since she could get more days there. Other teachers might move to schools in the city, having sold their large houses in the rural areas, rent small apartments and save for travel after retirement from their higher city salaries (K).

### *Teaching Career*

The initial questions led on to general comments on teaching as a lifelong career and profession. The principals referred to their dealings with beginning teachers and teachers new to the school, some of whom could be veteran teachers with 20 years service who had moved from another school or district within Texas (P). The beginning year was seen as critical by J in terms of teacher retention. H outlined the programme for new teachers in her school which included a buddy and mentor system; the mentors met the new teachers on a monthly basis. J also had a mentoring system in her school but commented that this would not be the case in every school. N referred to her district's mentoring system, a one-to-one approach for struggling teachers with support from both in-school mentors and district advisors.

### *Problems and Solutions*

When the interviewees were asked to identify the problems relating to teacher supply, they mentioned teacher mobility (H, J, P) and loss of good teachers "whom you have trained" (L). However, J thought mobility was not necessarily the norm in Texas. H mentioned the at-risk population and the need to get teachers who were skilled in those areas. Teacher shortage was not a major problem in these schools except in certain subject areas such as math and science, mentioned by H and J. However vacancies for such teachers were not the norm in their schools. Qualified teachers could be

engaged in most subject areas although L referred to travelling to Mexico City to get ESL/bilingual teachers. P referred to the positive experience of engaging teachers for his district which was pleasant and sort after. Although J's school reflected the socio-economic make-up of the town with 45% upper middle class and 55% lower class, her school was doing very well. In K's school, where 60% students were economically disadvantaged, teachers who left the school to seek work elsewhere frequently returned as 'the far off hills' were less green than had been hoped. N did mention that there were fewer candidates for teacher vacancies now.

When asked about status, H thought that teacher shortage had raised the status of teachers, P agreed that teachers were respected in the community as did M, who thought they were recognised for doing a hard job. But she felt teachers themselves might not recognise such public support. K, who believed that teacher shortage had raised the status of the profession, commented that since all people had experience of being in school and education was no longer a privilege, teachers were blamed when things went wrong. L thought status had risen with more emphasis on the learning community in which all teachers were seen to be involved. There was no choice for teachers but to become involved fully in their schools although some might not wish to be so. O thought teachers had always been respected in Texas, which was possibly a contrast with other parts of the USA where teachers had suffered demoralisation as in the UK. Now there was a positive respect for teachers throughout the USA and particularly so in the cities.

Ineffective teachers were seen as a problem to be dealt with by H, J, K, N, O and P. Such teachers were met by the principal, counselled and in some cases put on the Growth Plan. Their difficulties had been identified by 'walk-thrus' and observation as described by J. Neither O nor P found flaws in teacher training but the lack of an induction programme in every school was regretted by both. O stated that beginning teachers in some schools could still be left to 'sink or swim' frequently having been given the most difficult classes to teach. The difficulties of weak teachers were enumerated by N as the inability to deal with safety issues and severe classroom management difficulties, so that kids were seen to be in control on frequent 'walk-thrus'. Non-attendance at faculty meetings, without due reason, was also a sign of a teacher experiencing difficulties (N). Where teachers consistently showed weakness without improvement, despite remedial





measures by their principals, the latter could go for non-renewal of contracts (J, K, N, O and P) but the interviewees all stated that this was best done in the early probationary period. O stated that non-renewal of either a probationary or term contract was "awfully difficult but necessary on occasion". None of the teachers had tenure beyond the terms of the contract.

Apart from the measures in these schools to support the beginning and new teachers outlined by the interviewees, in-service education was valued as a support for teachers throughout their careers. An aspect of staff development was annual appraisal undertaken by in-house appraisers trained within the school. The principal and assistant principals were retrained by the district every two years in the use of appraisal instruments. Staff development was considered important for teachers as 'lifelong learners' and professional educators (N). She also mentioned particularly a new program, *Capturing Kids' Hearts* which was designed to change teachers' approach to the students, emphasising the importance of good teacher/student relationships[42].

Delegation was the means by which N ran her very large school. Staff development was overseen by a Dean of Instruction. Similar roles were undertaken by teachers in the other schools. N wished to involve as many teachers as possible in the instructional and curricula area of the school. The task of identifying students at risk of failing the annual tests was one such duty. M mentioned involvement as a means of ensuring teachers had ownership of what was done in their schools. Her school had been created by an amalgamation of nine other schools within the previous five years, so much effort had gone into the building of good staff relations. She described the part played by the teachers in the interview process during the summer

[42] In her school—a high school—the largest in the sample with over three thousand students (18% of whom were on free lunch), a video of the community had been prepared to show incoming teachers. The principals of three other schools mentioned their student intake: in J's school, also a high school, 55% of the students were from the lower socio-economic strata with 45% of the students from the upper middle class bracket. The presence of two hospitals and a university in the area created such a large upper group. There was no identifiable middle group in the school. In K's school, a middle school in the same area, 60% of the students were economically disadvantaged creating two polarised groups. Although there was no open conflict in the school K thought tensions did exist between the two groups in terms of esteem and expectations. The teachers, as tradition dictates, were drawn from the higher social group.

holidays when they would, without pay, come to the school to assist in the interviewing the candidates. Their recommendations were heeded in the final decision-making which meant that they were very keen to help their new colleagues fit into the school and its ethos. She also spoke from experience of the divisive effect on a community where the two neighbouring high schools had different philosophies and different ways of doing things.

*What Principals do*

The Texas interviewees spoke about their responsibilities as principals as did the superintendent and the university lecturer who themselves had both been principals[43]. H referred to the importance of building commitment among staff members. K referred to the importance of being able to work with teachers of different temperaments; N mentioned that the ability of a principal to help a weak teacher depended very much on the teacher's temperament and willingness to accept help. K also spoke about the memories of the "good old days" held by some teachers which were frequently enhanced by the passage of time. Teachers had a loyalty to the principal who had appointed them according to K who had some teachers on her staff from the previous principal's time. That principal, with whom she was friendly, had said "I should have dealt with those teachers with problems rather than leaving them for you to deal with". L thought a principal, while providing vision for the school, must ask the questions pertinent to the aims of the school: "Where are we coming from?", "Is the grade the be-all or end-all of student's time in the school?", "Can we help students do the things they haven't been able to do before?" M, like K, thought principals must know their teachers well, must involve all staff members in school decision making and must show them that they are valued. She also stated that she would give teachers time-off to attend their own children's meetings. She thought her teachers appreciated this whereas other principals might think their teachers would take advantage of such freedom. Social events such as barbecues were very important in her school as a means of bringing teachers together. She thought plenty of laughter was

[43] The career experience of these people is listed in Table 3. A number of the principals had had responsibility as principal in other schools. N had been principal of 3 middle schools before becoming principal of a high school.



a good stress remover each day. N dealt more concisely with the duties of principalship, mentioning the overall importance of giving support to teachers in their efforts to promote students' learning. She made the point that the more satisfied the teacher was, the longer s/he would stay in the school. O, who taught classes for principals, mentioned instructional leadership and the essential aspect of ensuring staff recognise their accountability.

*Instructional Leadership*

The question of instructional leadership took on greater significance as the interviews proceeded. The principals referred to themselves as instructional leaders and were questioned closely on this topic. H spoke of instructional leaders applying theory to practice, J saw them as ensuring balance in the classroom, success for all and introducing new methodology when appro-priate. K said instructional leaders were the key to success. She described working in a classroom dealing with curricular issues. M linked instructional leadership with working towards positive relationships between principal and teachers, teachers and students in a close family atmosphere. All the interviewees would as principals who were instructional leaders have acknowledged their previous work as teachers. They continued to see themselves as teachers and lifelong learners. Their comments were in line with P's definition who saw instructional leaders as curriculum leaders with a full understanding of curricular/instructional strategies in the classroom, acting as curricular/instructional/campus leaders and observing teachers in the classroom. The queries on instructional leadership led on to a discussion on the distinction between instructional leadership and educational leadership. P said that educational leaders, who were required at district level, would have a background in instructional leadership in school as well as an ability to see the 'big picture' at national level.

*Annual Tests*

The annual tests were welcomed by all the principals although H did say that the new tests would put pressure on students since a higher level of thinking was to be tested. N said the tests drive "what we are doing" and therefore "we are better" as teachers. In terms of Bloom's taxonomy the new tests were aimed at levels 3 and 4 (problem solving) rather than levels 1 and

2 (rote learning) which the previous tests had examined. O spoke of the fear in many teachers of the unknown. L saw them as a measure of teacher effectiveness and a guide for staff development. M referred to the need for teachers to learn how to write assessments. She thought it was a duty of the school through its principal to ensure teachers had the correct training in order that they would know how to assess students and evaluate their work as teachers. The ability to ask and answer the questions 'How will I assess the learning of my students in this class?' and 'What will I do if students don't know what I have taught them in this class?' was vital. In M's school, benchmark tests were being given every nine weeks to prepare both students and teachers for the annual tests. In N's school where teachers had had training over a period of 3 to 4 years to cope with the challenge of the tests, the English teachers had taken the tests in order to see the quality of questions, and to arrange benchmark tests for the following February. The change in teacher approach and thinking required for the forthcoming tests was tough on some teachers (M) and it was hard work getting students to work at the higher levels of thought (N).

The introduction of the annual tests and their subsequent development had had other effects. O thought many more women had chosen to become principals now that instructional leaders were required. He commented that men were now interested in taking courses in curricula. (Traditionally male principals had a sports coaching background). He also mentioned pressure on parents when their child was held back having failed an annual test. However the criterion referenced tests appeared to test minimum competencies and teachers were teaching the middle group within a class rather than the students at the extreme ends of the normal curve. The existence of tracks in the high schools did allow more academically gifted students to achieve higher levels of success. N was concerned about the students who had recently arrived in her school as immigrants. As an example she described the situation of a seventeen year old student who previously had had three years formal education in a small schoolroom in Central America. Arriving in Texas that girl was expected, with English as a second language, to pass the annual tests. N said that whereas the students coming from poor families could be helped through one-to-one teaching to pass the tests, it was impossible and 'unrealistic' to expect similar success with the children of immigrant families in only one year.





*Change*

These principals and senior educators with their varied experience had been teachers for 20 years or more. In that time they had seen a much change. K commented that some teachers, despite living through change, saw no need to change their own classroom strategies. She felt school mirrored society and supported this by comments on discipline, past and present. Whereas twenty years ago misdemeanours would have been talking out of turn, chewing gum and passing notes, now problems relating to safety issues, drugs and alcohol abuse and dysfunctional families had to be dealt with in the schools. For some kids the best parenting was to be found in the school. L also found antipathy to change among some older teachers. The new requirements for teachers to be proficient and pass a test in Information Technology had led to two teacher retirements in her school. Increased paper work was noted by M as well as the increased accountability which for some teachers gave rise to stress. She mentioned that there was no time for reflection on what one was doing. N's school had at one time been in the country. Now following the encroachment of the city, it faced the problems of urban areas: gangs, criminal activity and poverty. Teachers had had to be re-educated to deal with such problems. However whereas children from backgrounds of poverty would have been overlooked in previous years, now accountability ensured that due time was given to their learning. N's school at a time of rapid transition now had one long-term substitute whereas previously there were ten applicants for each job. O noted the increase of single parent families as a major change.

*Parents*

The interviewees felt that parents should be involved in their children's lives in terms of making time for them apart from showing interest in their schooling (P). But changes in society, such as the increase in single parent families (O) and the increased pace of life (M), meant that, for some children, the best parenting took place in school (K). However K thought that some teachers did not like taking on such responsibilities as they did not come within the area of traditional teacher duties. The number of those involved in their child's school was decreasing (K). Some parents were too busy with coaching and youth clubs; some were too busy at work to be

involved in their child's activities (K). M, having referred to change and its effect on parent-school relationships, commented that, in the past, a note home with the child would have brought the parents to school. Now teachers had to go out to families to make contact. O spoke of the Texas Education Code's guidelines for parent/school involvement. Most schools would like parents to visit classrooms but would need to direct parental energies for the good of the school. He thought that whereas teachers would see their schools as welcoming institutions, parents' perceptions of schools would be less positive.

*Summary of major points in Texan Interviews*

The Texan interviewees suggested that many teachers were exhilarated by the job of teaching. Where teachers did leave the profession or a particular school or school district, there were many reasons for their departure, apart from financial considerations. The interviewees stressed the importance of support at every stage of a teacher's career. Teachers were seen as lifelong learners who would benefit from professional appraisal by their principals and deputy principals. Problems did exist for the interviewees in the workplace but solutions could be found and should be sought, as in the case of ineffective teachers for whom non-renewal of contracts had to be a last resort. Teacher shortage had raised the status of teachers in the eyes of the general public. Despite the size of the schools, principals used various means, including delegation, to achieve their goals. and good relationships with teachers were seen as crucial to the well-being of the school community. These principals and educators claimed to be instructional leaders in their schools and referred frequently to their experience in the classroom. The annual tests which were generally welcomed by the interviewees, provided challenge and the need for training for teachers and students. Social change was acknowledged to be huge over the preceding thirty years. Schools had been affected by these developments to the point where teachers were required to adopt new strategies and some found difficulties in change in the general sense. The participation of parents in the education of their children was seen to be essential although in reality this did not occur for all children due to the current social climate.



## Discussion

*Herzberg's theory and teacher retention*

The comparative survey was originally designed, in the light of Herzberg's theory, to explore the relationship between restricted professionalism and teacher retention. In the Irish survey the writer noted the comments on the "missing generation" by A. Those teachers remained in school despite little opportunity of getting a post of responsibility and an accompanying rise in pay. A thought that opportunities for alternative employment existed in the area of human resources for such teachers. Can it be assumed that those teachers enjoyed teaching, as A had suggested, and were influenced by Herzberg's satisfiers? Neither did they want to leave the classroom nor did they want to seek management positions as principals. C had expressed concern at the small number seeking promotion and also at the number of principals anxious to leave. The question arises as to whether promotion to principalship is the best reward for a person who loves working in the classroom with young people. C had also emphasized the lack of proper levels of salary, citing this as a reason why so many of his younger staff had left teaching with few returning. Was this evidence of Herzberg's hygiene factors at work? However those few who did return due to a love of teaching had experience of the outside world which was seen to be enriching and beneficial to the school.

In the survey in Texas the participants spoke of many enthusiastic teachers who saw teaching as a lifelong career, remaining in the profession until retirement. The reasons given included some of Herzberg's satisfiers: achievement, challenge, involvement, recognition and responsibility. Some of those teachers had remained in the same school, teaching the same subject area for many years; some had chosen to move to other schools or school districts; some had become principals and superintendents. More women were seeking principalships as they were happy to take on the role of instructional leader, using their curricular knowledge and teaching strategies in the classrooms to help both their teacher colleagues and students to improve and "do things they hadn't done before" (H). Although the teachers in Texas did not have tenure or the 'comfort zone of seniority', so frequently referred to in the Irish interviews, they appeared to have the choice of taking different paths, as circumstances dictated, within teaching. K loved challenge in her life and thus enjoyed being a principal. J loved being in

school. P had commented on principalship being "a great job". However it was understood by these principals that not every teacher would remain in teaching, despite their best efforts, since some beginning teachers did not settle into the career. There were other career opportunities for such people whose skills were marketable.

In Ireland the situation was different for teachers who wished to leave the profession. A difference of opinion was seen in the answers of A and D with regard to opportunities for teachers looking for other employment. Whereas A thought his teachers were well equipped to work in the general workplace, including the area of human resources, D thought there was no such place for teachers. G also noted that the skills associated with good teachers were sought by other professions. Swan noted, from the comments of the interviewees, that differences between schools in terms of management and opportunity to get involved, might limit a teacher's development not only in becoming a good teacher and extended professional but also in gaining human relation skills which would equip that teacher for other work.

*Teacher staffing: problems and solutions*

An examination of the solutions offered by the survey participants in both Ireland and Texas to their problems of staffing suggests that teacher training[44] and its career-long application is a necessity. Linked to this would be strategies to identify and assist teachers at risk at particular stages of their career. The principals in Ireland seemed keen to see their teachers benefit as they had done from post-graduate studies. The difficulty of assisting weak teachers was identified as a major problem which D felt was almost incurable. The other Irish interviewees put forward strategies to raise levels of motivation in line with Herzberg's satisfiers. Some teachers appeared from the comments of their principals to cope better than others at all stages of career. To know whether this were more than a perception on the part of the principals, it would be necessary to put the questions, relating to these matters, to their teachers as Cohn and Kottkamp (1993) would advise.

[44] The Texas interviewees spoke about alternative certification for teachers in Texas. They voiced a preference for teachers coming into the profession by the traditional route.





The decreasing status of teachers in Ireland was a cause of concern for C who spoke about the disenchantment experienced by his teachers. Since that school was situated in a 'comfort zone', he thought a lack of appreciation of the 'real world' was at the root of the problem. However the fatigue experienced by teachers in E's school had its roots in the real world since the teachers had to set standards beyond those found in the students' homes. It seemed such fatigue would affect a good teacher as much as a weaker colleague.

The status of teachers in Texas was stated to be rising. Despite the lack of parental involvement in schools, the public at large seemed to acknowledge that teachers had a tough job. This was partly due to teacher shortage (H) but also to the public's perception of the importance of the annual tests and the essential part played by teachers in getting their students through the tests (L). According to O, parents would experience a sense of failure if their children were not promoted but K thought that teachers would be blamed if the students failed.

Swan, in reanalyzing the tapes and reviewing this paper, has noted a distinction between teachers who really want to teach, whatever the circumstances (as in E's school) and those who see teaching as a 'job'.

From A's comments about two retirees, it appears that one was very involved in teaching despite extra-curricular interests whereas the other was not involved in teaching. Within group (c) as identified by G were teachers with a "burning desire" to teach. D referred to two teachers returning from career break because they enjoyed teaching, as did C.

Linked to this idea is the question as to whether teachers who do not enjoy teaching stay in schools due to inertia and lack of initiative, as F suggested. Their fear of change in a school environment may be linked to fear of change in a personal context, i.e. seeking other employment with self confidence. Such fears may also account for the lack of interest in the early retirement scheme[45] mentioned by C. Fear of change among teachers in Texas was mentioned by the Texan interviewees. Fear of accountability, fear of technology, fear of social change were all identified as negative factors for some teachers. However, their principals accepted that part of their professional duties would be to put in place support for these teachers.

[45] Early retirement scheme introduced in Ireland 1997/1998

Referring to their work with ineffective teachers, they found annual appraisal useful as well as classroom observation and 'walk-thrus' as these helped to identify teachers in difficulty. Since the principals are themselves subject to appraisal they took it as a matter of course that they would appraise their colleagues in order to give support. Such remedial measures did result in improved performance and happier teachers in many cases. However a principal did have the option of 'non-renewal' if matters did not improve.

*Stages in Teachers' Careers*

According to B, the school's organizational structure seemed to have some bearing on teacher morale, as did the age of the teachers (A, B and E). Where there was a mixed age profile, relationships seemed better.

This was also reflected in the comments of the majority of principals who had confidence in the younger teachers. Only one principal (D) dissented, who expressed concern about the survival of ethos in the school when the teachers aged now 50+ left. The principals in Texas, who were in charge of schools larger than those in Ireland, stated that the age profile of their teachers in years of experience was mixed. Each school had some beginning teachers, some of five to ten years' experience, some of eleven to twenty years' experience and some veterans. Confidence in the young teachers was expressed, although a preference was stated for certified teachers (teacher training institutions) rather than for those who had come through alternative certification programmes. It was accepted that older people might make a career change and enter the profession, bringing good experience with them.

The Texas interviewees did not refer to teachers growing old together as mentioned by an Irish principal (D). Instead they referred to teamwork and co-operation among all teachers. However teachers did have the opportunity of moving from school to school or from district to district. Thus a distinction must be made between the teachers who left teaching completely and those who sought teaching positions elsewhere.

The replies of some principals suggested that they recognized that some work environments might be more attractive than others to a particular teacher and that a teacher's attitude and commitment might develop better in one school rather than another. The importance of fit between teacher and workplace mentioned by Evans (2001) is hinted at here.



That some retired teachers would return to the classroom part-time or in substitute positions suggested that they had enjoyed their work but saw such work as a means of financing other retirement projects.

*Instructional leadership and teacher retention*

In the Texas interviews, the principals said that they were instructional leaders rather than managers. Moreover they saw their roles, as instructional leaders, to be highly significant in the retention of teachers. Effort was put into helping their teacher colleagues become lifelong learners (N). Although they regretted the lack of induction programmes in some other schools, they spoke enthusiastically about their own initiatives to assist teachers new to their schools (H, J).

Teachers and students expected to see the principal in the classrooms working 'hands on' and giving advice on curricular issues (L). Moreover teachers were expected to participate in in-service training throughout their careers. A lot of practical work was being done in preparation for the new tests, which although creating some apprehension (O), and unrealistic with regard to newly arrived immigrant students (N) were generally welcomed as beneficial to both students and teachers. Staff development which includes appraisal of teachers (J) was seen as a key to teacher retention (K). In that school a large amount of the funds provided by the district went to staff development. Part of the principal's job was to get teachers involved in designing these programmes (L) in order that those teachers who had become cynical about change, as K stated, might see things differently. N reported that the *Capturing Kids' Hearts* Program had received acclaim from her teachers and thought it would make a difference in classroom relationships. Although the annual tests were seen to drive the curriculum, the principals in their answers suggested that there was more to schooling than tests. Relationships were very important: some of the students would receive their best parenting in the school (O); some struggling teachers would accept help from the principal and become good teachers; the best work was done where "there was plenty of laughter" (M).

## Conclusion

This enquiry was an exploratory study conducted among a selected and biased sample of principals and educators in both Ireland and Texas.

Therefore it was not possible to generalise a conclusion. However the comparative study threw up a number of important questions[46] that would merit substantial research in both Ireland and Texas. The contrast between the role of principal as manager in Ireland and the role of principal as instructional leader in Texas is immensely important in its influence on teacher retention. This contrast was identified in the course of the survey in Texas and would require further investigation.

The findings suggested that Herzberg's theory, despite its subsequent re-appraisal noted above (Evans 1998), can be a useful starting point when considering matters of teacher retention. The hygiene factors which include salary, working conditions, job security, company policy, relations with colleagues and supervisors are *essentially* different from the satisfier or motivator factors which include achievement, independence, recognition, responsibility, challenge and creativity. When the author applied the Herzberg factors to the comments of the Irish Principals and educationalists she found that there appears to be some evidence in these answers that good teachers stay on because they are enthused by the work they do. The answers of A, B, C, D, E, F and G to the question "Why do teachers stay on after 50 years of age?" in relation to good teachers concentrated on Herzberg's satisfiers. The replies did not refer to pay as a satisfier for such teachers. Pension prospects were referred to when the participants spoke of other teachers marking time before retirement. Good teachers in the group which A referred to as the "missing generation" also chose to stay in the classroom although A thought they had the skills required for other careers. Such teachers had not sought promotion to deputy principalships or principalships from which he deduced an enjoyment of teaching and a decision to continue that work. The re-analysis of the interviews suggested a distinction between teachers who are highly motivated and satisfied in their jobs as "extended professionals" and teachers who have undertaken the work without achieving high levels of satisfaction or involvement.

[46] Much information was given by the principals not immediately related to the question of teacher retention but of immense interest for any research relating to post-primary principalships and post-primary education planning It appears from this survey that the teaching profession in Ireland might benefit from research into the impact of career breaks, reasons why the early retirement scheme has not been taken up by more teachers, and how teachers prepare for retirement.





There was some evidence that Herzberg's satisfiers could be developed in the teachers by principals who were sensitive to their needs. There were similarities between the answers of A and B who stressed enjoyment in teaching as a reason why teachers stay on in school whereas C mentioned levels of pay. Herzberg's satisfiers were apparent in the comments of A and B; Herzberg's hygiene factors were apparent in the comments of C. Teachers had left C's school due to low levels of pay although he referred, as D did, to teachers returning from career break because they liked teaching. Despite the shortcomings in training identified by E, some beginning teachers survived in his school beyond the first year. They seemed to rely on something other than training suggesting that Herzberg's satisfiers were at work.

It was thought by A that teacher trade unions, universities and the Department of Education should have interest in any work which cast light on teacher retention issues. The role of the principal and management appeared crucial in the retention of teachers. E mentioned the need to find out what teachers want to do; B spoke of the need to involve teachers in school life. All were concerned about the plight of weak teachers not only from the point of view of the students but also for the well-being of those teachers. It appeared that hours were spent working out solutions to the immediate problems. There was in all the interviews a desire for greater resources in order that teachers could be given opportunities to become better at their craft and extended professionals. A group of teachers were identified in the survey who neither enjoyed teaching nor had the courage to move. They became therefore an obstacle to change and a problem for principals in regards to the students' rightful expectations of good teachers.

Other areas were identified in the re-analysis which, seeming to have particular bearing on teacher retention, would need further investigation. While re-analysing the data, Swan was aware of the effects of gender[47], temperament and attitude on the answers of the interviewees apart from the obvious differences between schools also noted in earlier research (1996). Similarly the relationship between new models of schools[48], teacher

[47] The response of male and female principals to teacher retention; the differences in teacher retention rates between male and female teachers

[48] Frequently inspired by a desire to ensure high quality education, relevant to the needs of the 21st century.

professionalism and teacher retention requires further investigation.. Evans (1998, p.182) has argued that "a professional culture that is intended to foster high levels of morale, motivation and job satisfaction as widely as possible will be one that accommodates teacher diversity. Such a culture is one that reflects a stratified profession". Murray (2000, p.45) in his work on school autonomy in Ireland refers to Hoyle's (1976) restricted and extended professionality before putting forward the ideal of schools as "self-directing learning organizations" (*ibid.*, p.48). Cohn and Kottkamp (1993, p.262) suggested that teacher retention requires more than "the recruitment and retention of enthusiastic individuals" They would argue that system and teachers must "undergo substantial change" (*ibid.*, p. 262).

When the Herzberg factors were applied to the comments of the American principals and senior educators Swan found some evidence that teachers stayed on in schools due to motivators and satisfiers. There was no suggestion that teacher attrition was greater in areas of economic disadvantage. Although neither recruitment nor retention was stated by the principals to be a problem in the schools within the study, they all spoke of the enthusiasm, both for their subject and for the well being of the children, of teachers who stayed on until retirement. Other reasons given were retirement prospects and family circumstances. Since the retirees were expected to return to teach part-time there was no suggestion that they were marking time until retirement. Family circumstances were mentioned alongside the love of teaching as a reason for staying in a district and an impression of the importance of community roots was given. principals also referred to the importance of ownership and involvement in decision-making. What was apparent from the interviews was the importance of choice for teachers in the sample schools. They did not have to remain in subject areas or schools which were incompatible; a change of subject area within the school, a change to another level school or to another district were all possibilities and measures which these principals had undertaken for their teachers. In each school within the sample, provision was made for new teachers, in terms of induction and staff development. These measures appeared to be beneficial in so far as their principals could claim they did not have problems in terms of teacher retention. The principals were also able to describe how they dealt with struggling teachers. Help was offered, following identification of a problem by classroom observations and



'walkthrus', in terms of one-to-one consultation and the Growth Plan. If these measures failed, the principals would go for non-renewal of contracts providing all procedures had been fair and documented. Thus both teachers and their principals, between whom a close bond often existed, had choice. This contrasts with the comments of the Irish principals who seemed to suggest little could be done for ineffective and weak teachers. The role of instructional leader as described by the Texas principals was linked to their ability to take remedial action in the case of struggling teachers. Generally they worked with their teachers and students in the classrooms. Where the size of the school prevented daily contact, these duties were delegated to their assistant principals and/or directors of instruction.

To advance research into teacher retention it is suggested that there would be a more structured survey in Ireland and Texas with principals and senior educators selected on a random basis. The information gained from this study would be used to draw up relevant questions. Another step in this research would be to ask teachers of 50+ their reasons for staying in school as A suggested in the interviews.

A comparative study of the two systems would be beneficial to educators in both areas. Just as value is found in "looking beyond the confines of the education sector" to learn from others (Wicker, 1999, p.2) so is value found in looking at other education systems and seeing how they cope with mutual problems. Texas, a state of 20 million people, subject to both federal and state law, contrasts with Ireland, a sovereign state of 4.5 million people, which is subject to both European and national law. Contrasts are sufficiently great to allow comparison of opposites as in the two examination systems: annual criterion-based tests in Texas and two public examinations taken after three and six years secondary schooling in Ireland. Whereas Texas historically has had a mixed ethnic population (in 2000, 52% white, 32% Hispanic and 11% African-American), Ireland is only now facing the challenge of a large number of immigrants (66,900 in 2001-2002).

The aims of education in both areas requires research particularly in terms of the relationship between its philosophy and implementation. The role of the principal as instructional leader in Texas and manager in Ireland also requires more investigation. The contrast between women teachers in Ireland who are reluctant to apply for principalships and the current situation in Texas where women teachers are keen to have such responsibility and as

principals are very enthusiastic about their work also deserves attention. Related to this would be an investigation into whether gender has any effect on the way principals do their work as the writer thought might be the case from the Irish interviews. Since Texas does not have teacher unions and Ireland has two strong unions at secondary level, information might be gained on the role of unions and teacher development.

In terms of teacher recruitment and retention, the function of induction (which is neither universal nor state-funded in either area) and the function of pre-service and in-service professional development courses, which appear to be more available in Texas, need further examination. The organization of schools, their size, structure and approach to curricula are other areas to be considered in the light of the initial exploration. That teacher shortage, recruitment and retention has received attention not only at national level in the USA but also in Texas at state and local level, may have significance for education planning in Ireland.

It will be seen that the exploratory studies were wide ranging, raising many issues, each of which can be the subject of further research. The following questions arose from the analysis and discussion of the data which was gained during the exploratory interviews with principals and educators in Ireland and Texas as to why teachers stay in school until the age of retirement:

- What response would teachers (practising or retired) give to the question as to why teachers stay in school until the age of retirement?
- Do all teachers whether they have high or low levels of achievement in their work share the same reasons for staying in the profession until the age of retirement?
- Do all teachers regardless of gender share the same reasons for staying in the profession until the age of retirement?
- In what way do different types of school leadership effect teacher retention?
- In what way do different models of schools effect teacher retention?
- In what way does school culture and ethos effect teacher retention?
- In what way does national culture effect teacher retention?





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## Acknowledgements

The authors wish to acknowledge the helpful suggestions made by the referees; the School of Education, Stephen F. Austin University Nacogdoches; and the participants in the exploratory surveys both in Ireland and Texas who for reasons of confidentiality cannot be named.

## *Appendix C*

## *Leadership Definitions*

**Leadership types**

1.The types of leadership which were named in the illuminative study are listed below.

a. General, unresearched term.

A general term is used within the text initially, to denote leadership, management and administrative duties (these terms are used interchangeably in US) before emerging data allows definitions of those specific terms as discussed in chapter 6:

| | |
|---|---|
| school leadership | concerns the organisation of schools |

b. For leadership types which have been the subject of this investigation and for which definitions have emerged from the data (ie: educational, curriculum, instructional and teacher leadership) a simple definition is given below. Definitions which have emerged from this study are found within the text (chapters 6 and 7).

| | |
|---|---|
| educational leadership | concerns the organisation of schools |
| curriculum leadership | concerns what is taught in schools |
| instructional leadership | concerns how curriculum is taught |
| principal leadership | concerns responsibility of organisation of school activities |
| teacher leadership | concerns responsibility of organisation of classroom activities |

c. Types of leadership which have been mentioned in the text and for which there are already specific definitions (ie. distributed leadership) are given their full, referenced definitions here:

- Distributed Leadership

  Distributed leadership in itself is not a recipe for effective leadership practice. Instead, it offers a productive way to think about leadership for both diagnostic and design purposes. A distributed leadership is a means, through reflection and diagnosis, to more effective leadership practice. It also offers scholars a conceptual basis for studying leadership. A distributed perspective also urges us to define the leadership preparation and development challenge as involving more than just programs for school principals. Education policymakers who view leadership from a distributed perspective must acknowledge that the work of leading schools involves more than the leadership of the school principal.
  (Spillane, 2006, p.103)

- Invitational Leadership

  Leadership which implements the theory of invitational education. "Educators and schools must be intentionally inviting" (Cunningham and Cordeiro 2006 citing Purkey and Novak, 1984).

- Inspirational Leadership

  "*inspirational motivation* means that followers identify with and want to emulate the leader"(Daft, 2001, p.405)

- Learning-centred leadership – re-branded term for "instructional leadership" (Davies and Davies in Davies, Ellison and Bowring-Carr, 2005 p.15)

- Systems Leadership
  Principals share their expertise with other schools
  (OECD 2008)

- Teacher Leadership

Our study of teacher leadership imbues us with hope; it helps us to envision a future in which teachers lead toward more democratic and enlightened schooling. The teacher leaders we have come to know are committed for the long term; they do not intend to give upon their students or one another. They plan to continue to assume responsibility for the deepening of their own practice and that of their colleagues. They are determined to become the architects of vibrant professional communities in which teachers take the lead in inventing new possibilities for their students and themselves
(Lieberman, A. and Miller, L. 2004, p. 92)

- Transformational Leadership
  Leadership which, in educational settings, motivates "people to do more than they are originally expected to do"
  (Davies and Davies 2005 p. 11. citing Bass, 1985)

- Vision-centred Leadership
  "Offers a strong energising vision for general direction, along with great personal commitment. (The overall vision provides a broad whither as well as an inspiring why.)"
  (Perkins, 2003)

*Appendix D*

*Interview schedules for 2006/2007 interviews*

*NAPD member*

*Principals of "best-practice' post-primary schools*

*Educator*

*Professor Heywood*

**Aim**

*To find out how they lead their schools (not only aspirations, but current practice) seek to identify qualities and actions in their leadership which could be incorporated into final blueprint of leadership for Irish Post -Primary Principals*

*To find out what they mean or understand by the phrase; how they respond to the notion of instructional leadership as stated in NAPD submission; how they respond to notion of instructional leadership as depicted by Texan Principals; how they respond to definition of instructional leadership by Heywood; how they respond to practice of such leadership as described in Heywood's book*

**Initial Comment**

As you are aware NAPD has made a submission to the Department of Education stating that all Principals should be instructional leaders

The use of the phrase 'instructional leadership' intrigued me as I had come across that phrase when interviewing school Principals in Texas in earlier research on teacher retention

**Questions**

A.

Relating to leadership terms:

1) Your understanding of the phrase 'instructional leadership'

2) Your understanding of the phrase 'curricular leadership'

3) What term (not necessarily above) would you use to describe your leadership

B.

NAPD (following 1998 Education Act) states that the core activity of the school is learning and teaching (p.60)

Relating to teaching and learning then

1) What do you do to ensure good teaching and learning in the school?

2) With whom do you work to ensure good teaching and learning in the school?

3) Does your work in the area of teaching and learning take you into classrooms?

4) Do your teachers expect you to involve yourself in teaching and learning?

5) To what extent?

6) How much time is given to matters of teaching and learning at staff meetings?

Leadership – general questions

1) Would you tell me about your work as Principal (leader of the school)?

2) What are your priorities as Principal?

3) What constraints do you face in your work as Principal?

4) What do you think is the role of the Principal?

Training

1) What training did you receive before becoming Principal?

2) How much time in that training was given to matters of teaching and learning?

3) How much time in that training was given to matters of 'discipline'?

4) Looking back what was the main emphasis in that training for Principals?

Miscellaneous

1) Would you comment on the relationship between teaching, learning and discipline ?

2) How does your leadership create a best-practice school in teaching and learning?

As the Principal of a 'best practice school' what do you think are your key tasks?

Please speak about aspects of your leadership that have not been covered in the interview

Questions based on Heywood's work

According to Heywood a 'best practice' school in teaching and learning should show evidence of the following:

*Extended professionalism among teachers*
*Recognition of relationship between discipline and teaching and learning*
*Homework policy*
*Lesson planning*
*Discovery learning*
*Information on incoming students – learning styles*
*Mission statement – clearly set out and acted on*
*Curricular design to prepare students for future life*

*Moving forward in teaching and learning through more school improvements*

How do you encourage extended professionalism among teachers?

What is your discipline policy in relation to teaching and learning?

What is your homework policy?

What is your policy re. lesson planning by teachers? Is that checked ? By whom?

In what areas of learning do you find discovery learning?

Does the information on incoming students include information on learning styles?

In the mission statement of your school what reference is made to teaching and learning?

What areas of learning prepare the students for future life?

How do you ensure that there is development (moving forward ) in teaching and learning?

To conclude:
The 'Texas Scenario' - explained

Texas Principals- all female- large schools by Irish standards

They stated that they were 'instructional leaders', stated that they worked with teachers in class rooms on a regular basis to improve teaching and learning, frequently undertook 'walk thrus'

Do you do this?