TEACHING AND COMMITMENT: A STUDY OF NEWFOUNDLAND TEACHERS

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by

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ABSTRACT

The theoretical background for this study centers in two concepts: career and commitment. Our chief concern is occupational careers, with emphasis upon careers in teaching. Career is seen in terms of both objective and subjective components. Commitment, which comprises a major portion of the study, is a contingency of the subjective career. An attempt is made to illustrate the various aspects of the teaching career, such as career stages and career switching and to demonstrate that continuance commitment exists among members of the teaching profession; that is, teachers often remain in the profession because they believe they will be faced with penalties if they attempt to abandon it. Continuance commitment is contrasted with value commitment.

The study is exploratory, and, within the theoretical framework provided, the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis is used in carrying out the research. The study takes place among high school teachers employed in a rural and an urban area. They fall into two groups: those having over twenty years' experience and those having fewer than twenty years' experience. The data are gathered by means of an unstructured interview schedule.

There are a number of revelations from the investigation about the early stages of the teachers' careers. For example, half of the respondents decided to become teachers while in high school. A large proportion of them never considered an alternative to teaching. Most

have engaged in no other occupation. The majority have, at some time, crossed career lines, and most expect to cross in the future.

It is shown that over one-fourth of the teachers hold a continuance commitment orientation toward the profession, that one-half are ambivalent about their positions, and that fewer than one-fourth hold a value commitment orientation toward their teaching role. Considerable data are presented that suggest a lack of positive attraction to the teaching profession.

A total of ten hypotheses are generated from the study. One of these is that many teachers would like to be otherwise employed. The others center in penalties that teachers believe they will encounter should they leave the profession. The thesis concludes with an examination of the implications of the findings, together with suggestions for future research.

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PREFACE

The teaching profession is one of the oldest and most respected occupations in the history of mankind. Moreover, it has held out to those who would enter it and master its demanding requirements the coveted prerogative of moulding the minds of others. Yet these advantages of respect and influence are frequently offset today by low salary, crowded classrooms, unsympathetic parents, poor facilities, protest, and the like. When a social position exhibits such contrasts as these, one is drawn immediately into speculation about their effects upon its incumbents.

One way of discovering what it means to be a teacher, and hence to discover how they adjust to these incompatibilities, is to examine their appraisal of their careers in this occupation. Thus an exploratory study of the subjective careers of a sample of male high school teachers in Newfoundland was carried out with particular emphasis on career contingencies. Special attention was given to the turning point of commitment or the individual's tendency to follow a consistent line of behavior. Owing to the relative absence of theory and data in this area of the sociology of teaching, it was impossible to formulate hypotheses for empirical verification. Rather it became clear at the outset that the first task to be undertaken was the generation of testable propositions, which could then be used to guide future investigation.

To the principals and teachers who assisted me in the carrying out of the research (and who unfortunately must remain nameless), I extend my gratitude. To Professor Robert A. Stebbins, I should like to acknowledge a great debt for his guidance and encouragement throughout the study. Finally, I wish to thank Joyce Pelley for her assistance in typing earlier drafts of the manuscript.

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CHAPTER I

THE IDEA OF CAREER

The volume of scholarly literature about careers is no small testimony to the importance of this idea, not only in sociology, but in everyday life. For example, Gross (1958: Chap. 5), in his general review of the area over ten years ago, listed more than two hundred references at the end of his discussion, most if not all of which can be considered as dealing with some aspect of occupational careers. Barney Glaser's more recent sourcebook (1968) on the specialized area of organizational careers contains better than sixty papers on that subject. Moreover, the utility of the concept has gained widespread recognition in areas beyond that of occupational sociology. It seems, for instance, that avocations as well as vocations can be viewed from this perspective. Everett C. Hughes (1937:411), who has dealt extensively with the field of occupational careers, notes that people also have careers in "patriotic, religious, and civic" organizations, and that the holding together of a family by an individual is a career for that person. More recently Roth (1963: Chap. 4) has shown that careers exist in such diverse fields as hospital treatment, the education system, the prison sentence, and child development. Howard S. Becker (1963: Chap. 2) has pioneered the application of the career process in the study of deviance.

A career has been said to be associated with a particular social identity (Stebbins, 1970b:34). Social identity may be defined as the category to which a person is recognized as belonging by the community or some segment of it. Each individual normally has several identities; he may be recognized, for example, as being a husband, male, neighbor, father, thief, card-player, and armed serviceman.

Certain expectations are associated with each social identity. We expect, for example, that a mother will be kind and loving to her children. In reference to school teachers, Waller (1965:387) says that they are "supposed to be more trustworthy than other mortals, more moral, more learned," and, according to Caplow (1954:129), "Hundreds of communities still allow school teachers less freedom than any other adults, often forbidding them to smoke, to marry, or to choose their own friends."

No attempt will be made here to determine whether each social identity is associated with a career. Instead, the concept of career will be discussed in terms of occupational statuses, with only brief references to careers in other aspects of peoples' lives.

Authors differ in opinion as to what factors should be included under the rubric of occupational career. Some authors tend to include most, if not all, work performed by an individual during his working history. This practice is exemplified by Gross (1958:196) when he says, "We can speak of a career irrespective of the status of an occupation, and even in situations where the person changes occupations. All that is necessary is that there be some recognizable pattern with at least roughly known probability." By this statement he means that we need

to be familiar with the major career contingencies which produce patterns.

Haug and Sussman (1966:1), on the other hand, express the view that a career involves "long-term identification with a specific occupational field" [Italics mine]. This definition allows for job changing, often involving status passage, within the same occupational career. However, the change from, say, school teacher to social worker means taking up a second career. They refer to various short-term pieces of work engaged in before one embarks upon a career as trial jobs. Henceforth, the term "career" is to follow the usage set forth by Haug and Sussman.

Following Friedsam (1964:73), the work history of an individual or group of individuals will be referred to as "career pattern." Career patterns may range from involvement with only one occupational field to engagement for varying periods of time in a wide range of occupations. Miller and Form (1964:577) list six occupational levels of careers, with unskilled workers at the bottom and professionals at the top. They indicate that the career pattern varies according to occupational classification. (They use the last job at which the worker is employed to determine his occupational category.) Professional workers start work at different levels but quickly advance to the professional level without much intervening experience in other occupations, and, once they become professionals, only a few risk trying other jobs. On the other hand, although he experiences many jobs, lack of mobility into a higher category of occupations is characteristic of the unskilled worker (Miller and Form, 1964:576-578).

Careers and career patterns may be examined from two perspectives: the objective (that of an outside observer) and the subjective (that of the participator).

The Objective Career

We are now ready for a more comprehensive definition of career than that of Sussman and Haug which was presented earlier. Hall (1948:327) says that career may be conceived of as "a set of more or less successful adjustments" to the network of institutions and formal organizations and informal organizations within which a particular occupation is practiced. This set of adjustments, as Becker (1952:470) has so skillfully pointed out, is usually thought of in terms of movement up or down a series of positions arranged according to a hierarchy of "prestige, influence, and income."

In addition to the obvious mobility between socioeconomic levels (e.g., unskilled to skilled), vertical mobility may also include mobility within the same socioeconomic level. For example, to advance from class teacher to principal of a school is vertical mobility within the professional level.

Horizontal mobility, or movement from one position to another on the same level of a hierarchy, also occurs. Chinoy (1965:xvi) found that, while vertical mobility was uncommon among a certain group of automobile workers, horizontal movement was common. "Some sought to satisfy idiosyncracies, like the desire to work alone, or outside, or on a big, new machine; most workers simply wanted an easy job, hard to supervise . . ." Becker's Chicago teachers (1952:472) moved among

positions at one level of the school-work hierarchy because they found some schools "more and others less satisfactory places in which to work."

Career Lines

Some occupations are very heterogeneous within themselves in that they offer a number of different activities or specialties in which an individual may become engaged and yet may be associated with the same social identity. Within medicine, for example, he may become an administrator, involve himself almost exclusively in research, practice medicine in any of a large number of specialist fields (urology, pediatrics, psychiatry, obstetrics, and dermatology, to cite just a few), practice only surgery, or he may decide to engage in general practice. These choices present alternative career lines which are variously ranked both within and outside the particular occupational career (Hughes, 1959:456). A career line may be defined as one of possibly several career routes associated with a particular occupation or social identity, and it is distinguished from the idea of career pattern as discussed earlier by the fact that the latter refers to the configuration of occupations (whether one or more) engaged in during the working lifetime of the actor or group of actors. It is generally assumed to have a beginning and an end as well as a number of intervening stages.

The beginnings and ends of careers or career lines are not always easy to determine. For example, it is difficult to ascertain when a person embarks on a deviant career. When did the criminal commit his first deviant act? When did insanity first appear in an

individual? It is again difficult to discover when a large number, if not all, mentally ill persons become cured, if they ever do.

It would appear, however, that both the beginning and the end are fairly clear in occupational careers. If one confines oneself to discussing the occupational phase of career, the beginning is indisputably clear. However, if one discusses career from the beginning of the generating of an ambition as does Hall (1948:327), difficulties are likely to arise when an attempt is made to determine this actual beginning. The ends of occupational careers are usually apparent and occur for a number of easily identifiable reasons, including voluntary career switching, discharge, death, and retirement. (Retirement is sometimes regarded as a phase of career; see Miller and Form, 1964:541.)

Career Stages

Most studies of career, regardless of the career line chosen, indicate the presence of career stages. Hall records four stages of the medical career. He presumes that "one could investigate similar phenomena in the academic field, in law, in the ministry, in engineering . . ." (Hall, 1948:327).

Careers differ in the degree to which they are patterned in advance. In this sense careers may be considered in terms of a continuum, with those highly standardized at one end and those with little standardization at the other. Most careers probably lie somewhere in-between.

The highly standardized type is exemplified by the bureaucratic, rather ideal type career. In the bureaucratic career, the steps are assumed to be clearly set out, and the individual is generally assumed

to move upward in the bureaucratic hierarchy. (This type seems most closely to reflect the original meaning of career--"race-course.") In the words of Mannheim (1952:248), who is usually associated with the concept of bureaucratic career:

> The essence of a career is the rationing or gradual distribution of success through a number of stages . . . the degrees of success and influence which a man or woman following a bureaucratic career will attain are mapped out in advance . . . Possibilities of exerting influence are limited, since jurisdictions are sharply divided among various departments; salary schedules keep economic chances within limits; chances to gain prestige are defined by pre-existent promotion schedules which fix, so to speak, the doses of deference the individual may lay claim to.

The careers of civil servants theoretically represent this type; however, exceptions are found. For example, recruitment to high positions does not always take place from the hierarchies below them. The teaching profession has some characteristics of the bureaucratic career, for as noted by Havighurst and Neugarten (1957:433), "Progress for the majority is measured by small and regular increments attained with age and experience--choicer assignments, more autonomy, more security, more salary, more prestige."

The business career may be considered as lying closer to the other end of the continuum. Here the stages may vary from business to business and from individual to individual. The amount of authority the individual exercises, the speed at which he advances, and the amount of remuneration he receives are dependent more or less on the individual's own initiative, which may either lead him to greater heights or contribute to his failure.

The length of time spent at different career stages varies according to the stage and according to the occupation. In the teaching profession a person may remain in the elementary school teacher stage for from, say, one to thirty-five or forty years--and in the same school at that. On the other hand, in the academic profession, a consensually held view is prevalent that he must not be an instructor or an assistant professor for too long a time (Gross, 1958:201).

Another expectation associated with career stages is that an individual will work his way through the various stages without skipping over any of the steps along the route (Gross, 1958:201). For example, in a university, one would not expect a lecturer to become a full professor without first having been an assistant professor and then an associate professor. Of course, it must be realized that promotion can be accelerated, and probably stages passed over, even in the more bureaucratically organized systems, by virtue of having "connections." A boss's son or a school board chairman's friend certainly may be given a position which could be better occupied by someone else.

Closely allied to this phenomenon is the process of "sponsorship" which Becker (1953:23) and Hall (1948:335-336; 1946:32-33) reveal exists in the careers of dance musicians and members of the medical profession, respectively. Becker and Carper (1956:297) describe this process as a "means by which persons low in an occupational hierarchy are recommended by more highly placed persons for better positions." Within the occupations in which it is practiced, sponsorship appears to be an accepted and legitimate arrangement. In addition to being bene-

ficial to the lower-placed individual, this mechanism aids in securing an adequate supply of qualified aspirants for positions, for continued sponsorship is contingent upon successful performance by the lower-placed individual (or protege).

Another factor which may accelerate promotion is that which Janowitz terms "organizational accident." The military career is highly standardized, but, as Janowitz points out, the chances of promotion for servicemen are enhanced if war breaks out (Janowitz, 1961:125). Thus, being in the right position at the right time is an asset.

Career Switching

In distinguishing between "career" and "career pattern," it has been indicated that the work history of individuals is not always confined to a single occupational or professional career. A considerable amount of job switching takes place. This transferring may occur either from one career line to another or from one occupational career (or career structure) to another.

According to Becker and Strauss (1956:260), there are some periods in all careers when switching to another career is relatively easy and this switching is most frequent prior to the occupational phase of career. The period of training in preparation for a career is one pre-occupational phase. Becker (1953:25-26) found that it was fairly common for prospective dance musicians to give up music as a career at a fairly early age.

Career switching occurs for a variety of reasons, which may be divided into two categories: forced and voluntary. Among the first are:

(a) Dismissal because the individual is unsatisfactory to the employer for any of a number of causes ranging from fraudulence to genuine incapability of performing the required tasks.

(b) Some occupations demanding physical stamina require termination at an early age (e.g., boxing and flying).

(c) Some occupations become obsolete as a result of social change and technological innovation.

(d) Inability to complete courses of training successfully.

The second category may include:

(a) Those who are disillusioned early about what is involved in either the pre-occupational or occupational phases of the career.

(b) Those who, after a period of time, become dissatisfied with salary or working conditions.

(c) Those who believe that certain other occupations would be more rewarding to them.

(d) Those who seek adventure or whose philosophy is to gain experience in a number of occupations.

Recruitment

Rare indeed is the individual whose work history is long enough to fill any position from its inception until its expiration. Positions become vacant and require recruitment of occupants due to reasons such

as death, retirement, dismissal, promotion, demotion, and voluntary switching to other career lines or careers by the former incumbents.

Recruitment may take place:

(a) From within the same career line, either inside or outside the organization.

(b) Across career lines, either inside or outside the organization.

(c) From outside the occupational field among:

(1) Those who have just completed schooling, but with no specific career in mind.

(2) Those engaged in employment of an admittedly temporary nature, such as the college student who drives a taxi in order to finance further education.

(3) Those involved in some stage of another occupation or career.

It is apparent, then, that individuals are recruited into occupations at different stages and from varied sources.

Some individuals decide to enter a particular career long before it is possible for them to do so (e.g., always wanted to be a clergyman), while others enter on short notice. They may find themselves having completed high school and with no work, and so they may take the first job they happen to find.

One factor on which recruitment into an occupation at any stage depends is the visibility of the occupation. Some occupations

are not so well known as others. For example, rare is the individual--whether or not he is qualified at the time--who does not know that the teaching profession is a possible vocational choice. The occupation of physicist, however, may not be known to him until after he has engaged in some other career for a number of years. This is the case in spite of the fact that it would be advisable for an individual to take courses in physics while in high school.

Occupations which have low visibility depend to a large extent for recruits from other careers. This condition is true both of occupations already established and careers and career lines which are newly created by social change and technological innovation.

The Subjective Career

The subjective career may be defined as "the actor's recognition and interpretation of past and future events associated with a particular identity, and especially his interpretation of important contingencies as they were or will be encountered" (Stebbins, 1970b:34). The words "recognition" and "interpretation" indicate the subjectivity of career.

This definition conceives of subjective career as a predisposition in that it guides behavior on the basis of past experience. That is, career as a predisposition is a perspective or view of the world activated in specific situations by certain cues present there. The actor is aware of this viewpoint, and it is through his awareness

that the view helps to direct ongoing behavior.[1] One of the ways in which the subjective career as a predisposition can be activated is by means of contingencies.

According to Solomon (1961:463-464), the concept "career contingency" refers to "conditions of the social system[2] surrounding an occupation which are decisive for the success of the practitioners." Solomon elaborates on this concept by saying that:

> Success in an occupation is contingent on solving the problems, resolving the dilemmas, and passing the hurdles or obstacles which arise from the system of social interaction in which the occupational role is set.

Contingencies may be consensually recognized events or circumstances as, for example, the passing of university entrance examinations, or they may be more special to a particular individual. It is only the latter, more personal view which is to be considered as part of the subjective career and with which we are concerned here.

Examples of contingencies from the subjective point of view may be found in the occupational phase of career as when, after successfully meeting or failing to meet a challenge, an individual may recognize that he is capable of doing more than he ever before believed possible, or that he is unable to do something which he had formerly thought he easily could do. Thus, contingencies viewed as part of the subjective

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[1] A more detailed discussion of predispositions or what Campbell calls "acquired behavioral dispositions" is available in Campbell (1963:97-112). See Stebbins (1970b) for a consideration of how they are related to career.

[2] This view assumes that every occupation is a role in a system of social interaction, which may be either simple or complex.

career may be regarded as turning points--in this case, as a turning point in self-conception.

Of course, how a person recognizes and interprets various contingencies depends on a number of factors such as his self-conception at the time, ethnic background, social class, intelligence, and previous experiences. Hence, what one individual regards as security or achievement may not so be viewed by another. For example, for a former college teacher to switch to high school teaching is likely to be regarded by him as quite a "come-down" or even as a failure. However, for the son of an unskilled workman to climb to the position of high school teacher may be regarded--by the incumbent, at least--as quite a feat.

The career contingency with which we are chiefly concerned here is that of commitment.

Commitment

"Commitment" has been used in several areas of sociology and psychology to refer to the fact that people are forced to follow certain lines of behavior.[3] Here it will be used to explain why individuals do not switch from one occupational career to another when they have the desire to do so.

The concept is included as a contingency in the subjective career because the individual, in interpreting various factors and circumstances in his occupational past, present, and future, recognizes

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[3] See: Abramson, et.al. (1958), Goffman (1961), Kornhauser (1962), and Stebbins (1970a).

that he is committed to a particular work career. Commitment, in this sense, may be defined as "the awareness of the impossibility of choosing a different social identity or rejecting a particular expectation because of the imminence of penalties involved in making the switch" (Stebbins, 1970a: forthcoming). The awareness comes about through the anticipation of or actual experience of penalties encountered when one desires to or tries to break away from a particular social identity and the expectations associated with it.

This type of commitment is discussed by Kanter as "continuance commitment," or more specifically as "cognitive continuance commitment." Kanter claims that for those experiencing it such commitment "involves primarily their cognitive orientations" and that "when profits and costs are considered, participants find that the cost of leaving the system would be greater than the cost of remaining . . ." (Kanter, 1968:500). In other words, what the individual finds profitable to him is contingent upon his remaining in a particular social identity. This contingency tends to close off alternative courses of action.

As Stebbins (1970c: forthcoming) has noted, continuance commitment ought not to be confused with value commitment which arises from the presence of "subjectively defined rewards associated with a particular social position or social identity in which the person finds himself or hopes to find himself." Continuance commitment is concerned with forcing an individual to continue along consistent courses of action, whereas value commitment is not concerned with forcing, but rather involves a certain amount of positive attachment. However, later it will become evident that an individual who is at one time

committed on a value basis to a particular identity may later become forced to remain in that identity and vice-versa.

The costs associated with abandoning a particular identity exist in the form of penalties. These penalties may be formal or informal, externally or internally administered, and range from pangs of guilt to criminal persecution (Abramson, 1958:16).

The penalties occur as a result of some previous action or involvements by the individual. Becker (1960:35-37) discusses such prior actions as "side-bets," which may have been made either deliberately or non-deliberately (as Becker 1960:38 says, by default). To illustrate a deliberately made side-bet, Becker quotes a hypothetical example from Schelling, which in essence is as follows. An individual who is bargaining over a purchase has previously bet a third person a large sum of money that he will pay no more than a set amount. He has thus committed himself not to pay over a certain sum.

More often in the occupational field it appears that the prior actions and involvements are non-deliberate; that is, the individual does not say, "I will do such-and-such so that I will have to remain in my present occupation."

The prior actions and involvements may be divided into two groups:

(a) Those internally related to the individual's particular occupational identity.

(b) Those external to his occupational identity.

The following are included in the first category.

(a) Money. Some occupations require the investment of large sums of money. This condition is especially true of the professions for which financing is required for long periods of training. In order to cash in on this investment the individual must pursue the career for which he was trained.

(b) Time. Time invested in an occupation--whether in the training or occupational phases or both--is irreplaceable. The longer an individual has engaged in a career, the older he becomes. After he has reached a certain age he may find difficulty in securing another position. Friedman (1967:238), in discussing junior college teachers, says, "It is difficult to get a position elsewhere over the age of forty-five." Careers requiring long courses of training result in the individual being even older by the time he reaches the occupational phase.

(c) Income and Seniority. After an individual has been engaged in a career for a number of years he is likely to have climbed both the salary and seniority ladders so far that it is unlikely he will find a comparable position elsewhere without first working his way up again.

(d) Pension Fund. An individual who has contributed to a non-transferrable pension fund for a number of years loses a significant degree of security if he switches careers.

(e) Inability to Readjust. An individual may adjust to the conditions of one career to such an extent that "he unfits himself for other positions he might have access to" (Becker, 1960:37).

(f) Appearance. Becker (1960:37) has suggested that Goffman's analysis of face-to-face interaction is relevant here. An individual may have presented an image of himself to others. In order to live up

to this image, it may be necessary to continue in some consistent course of action. The image of a "devoted" and "dedicated" clergyman is a suitable example.

Among actions and involvements that are external to the occupational identity may be included such factors as home-ownership, marriage and family considerations, friendship ties, and emotional attachment to the community.

Being in an occupation for a certain length of time gives one a sense of security. This eventuality is illustrated by an automobile worker who said, "I can't afford to leave now. I can be pretty sure of working if the plant is working" (Chinoy, 1965:92). Having once assumed the responsibilities accompanying marriage, child rearing, and home-ownership, the individual may be more reluctant to take the risk of career switching, or he may be unable financially to do without a large income while engaged in training for or while becoming established in another career.

To change careers may also require a change of locality. For example, a school teacher working in a rural area is likely to have to relocate himself if he decides to become a lawyer. It may be a temporary move in order to secure training or a permanent move if the area cannot supply him with sufficient clients, or if, after having removed himself from the area, he does not desire to return. Besides the possible reluctance of a person's family members to move, the expense of relocating a large family and the difficulty of and possible financial loss incurred in selling a house may be regarded as penalizing. In addition, he may be emotionally attached to the community and also may be reluctant

to break friendship ties which have been established over a number of years.

It is apparent, then, that the longer a person has been engaged in a career and the more outside connections and responsibilities in which he has become involved, the more difficult it is for him to abandon that career for another one.

As has been noted (p. 14), the recognition and interpretation of various contingencies depend on a number of factors. An individual's awareness of commitment rests to a large extent on the values he possesses which, in turn, are derived from the previously mentioned factors, e.g., ethnic background and social class. In cultures where there is not the expectation that one will be established in a career by a certain age, one would not be likely to view the loss of an investment of time as a penalty. Even within the same culture, the same circumstances are not considered as penalizing by everybody. For a wealthy person to have spent $50,000 (including expenses and lost wages) to train to become a doctor may hardly be noticed when, if just before completing his training, he decides that medicine is not for him. On the other hand, for the son of a poor laborer who had to save and half-starve himself and his family to get, say, $500 to embark on a teaching career, his education may be viewed by him as a big investment, and he is likely to feel that he must teach in order to redeem his investment.

The individual's commitment to continuing in a particular career may be based on only one or on a combination of factors. For example, an individual may deem it penalizing when, as he switches

careers, his income and seniority are reduced for however long, or he may consider it penalizing only if his new career will necessitate his relocating himself and his family, or he may consider all these factors as penalizing.

Penalties which commit one to a particular identity may be divided into three groups, not all of which are necessarily associated with occupational identities. They were originally presented by Stebbins (1970a: forthcoming) in his discussion of deviance.

The penalties are:

(a) Social--This type of penalty originates in the actions of other people. These may range from, say, the situation in which one's former friends no longer associate with him to one in which others have reduced his monetary rewards.

(b) Psychological--This type deals with mental strain involved in trying to abandon an identity.

(c) Biological--These penalties stem from the physical and physiological condition of a person.

As with the actions and involvements which produce penalties, the types of penalties can occur either singly or in combination. For example, as well as experiencing psychological penalties, the individual may also suffer social penalties, such as those which result when his former friends snub him because he withdrew from a prestigious position.

Commitment may have either a self-enhancing or a self-degrading component attached to it (Stebbins, 1970a: forthcoming). Commitment which is self-enhancing is likely to last as long as this component is present since it is based on positive attachment to an identity.

The self-degrading aspect tends to be more characteristic of continuance of forced commitment. One's self-image is not enhanced and little of one's positive self-conception is lost if one abandons the identity. This fact may not be as characteristic of legitimate occupational careers as of deviant careers because most occupational careers are socially acceptable. Such occupations as janitor and garbage collector, however, may provide exceptions.

The self-degrading aspect of his current position is one force motivating the individual to leave an identity and it combines with other forces which together lead to a desire to renounce the identity, such as dissatisfaction with working conditions. However, even when the self-degrading component is present, the penalties involved in switching from one's career are often viewed by the incumbent as being more severe than the self-degrading component itself, along with all the other undesirable qualities of his current position. Thus, the person in question is said to be committed.

According to Stebbins (1970c: forthcoming), an identity may have both self-degrading and self-enhancing components when "the actor is ambivalent about his attachment to a given position." However, under some circumstances the components are exclusive of each other as when strong attachment (value commitment) leads one to remain in a position, while its absence does not encourage this strategy.

Some identities are more all-embracing than others and do not allow as much time for interaction with outside factions. This phenomenon seems to be the case with the radical activists of whom Kornhauser (1962:326) writes, "Party members are so busy with party activities that they are effectively insulated from outside influence."

When an individual is committed, an opportunity is presented for his superiors to work him extra hard. If the superiors are aware that he is nearing retirement, they can be reasonably sure that he will do almost anything to remain in his present position. This treatment, in turn, may serve to reinforce the employee's awareness of his state of commitment.

Continuance commitment to a career may end in at least two principal ways:

(a) The individual may redefine the penalties so that they appear less penalizing, thus enabling him to abandon the identity. He may, for example, decide that a small reduction in salary will be more than compensated for by better working conditions.

(b) The individual may develop an attachment to the career or some part of it, thus changing his commitment to the occupation from continuance to value commitment. For instance, he may come to appreciate the security which his present job offers.

Having reviewed a major portion of the theory underlying the present study of teachers, we are now in a position to embark on a

consideration of research methods and techniques employed in the investigation.

CHAPTER II

THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY OF COMMITMENT AMONG TEACHERS

The recapitulation of the theory of commitment that was presented in the preceding chapter suggested how it is possible for men to commit themselves to various types of careers as a result of their awareness of the penalties they would experience if they were to abandon their particular lines of activity. The penalties, it was pointed out, occur as a result of previous actions and involvements by these actors. The present study will be guided by these ideas with respect to its focus on occupational commitment as it is manifested in the lives of those in the teaching profession.[1]

Obviously, not everyone who enters this profession becomes committed to it, for some do leave. Also, many of those who remain in

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[1]Teaching shall be referred to as a profession although it is generally assumed to rank low in the scale of professions. Teachers seem to realize this fact. As one remarked, "Teaching is probably at the bottom of professions." Another subject referred to teaching as a "semi-profession." Peter C. Pineo and John Porter (1967), in a Canadian national survey of occupational prestige, found that, of twenty-one occupations listed in the professional category, high school teachers and public grade school teachers were rated seventeenth and twentieth, respectively. The three professions receiving the highest ratings were physician, university professor, and county court judge.

teaching are not there because they believe they will experience penalties should they decide to leave. Some undoubtedly continue in the profession because they enjoy it. One experienced teacher, in referring to his teaching profession, said he enjoys "every day, every moment of it" and that "nothing else I could do would be as rewarding [as teaching]." He was, of course, expressing value commitment.

Several questions follow from these observations and those of the preceding chapter: Which teachers are committed on a continuance basis? Were those teachers who are now experiencing continuance commitment originally committed to this profession on a value basis? What sorts of career patterns have these individuals experienced? What is the nature of the penalties associated with continuance commitment to the social identity of teacher? Questions such as these are the research problems that guided the investigation to be reported here.

Design and Procedure

Methodologically, the aim of the study is to generate substantive theory from field data gathered by means of unstructured interviews with teachers.[2] One specific goal of this more general research strategy is the production of testable hypotheses about commitment among the respondents. Such propositions, however, are a result of the study. There will be no hypotheses to direct inquiry whose verification we seek. Instead the research will be oriented by the ideas contained in

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[2]Theory arrived at by empirical induction from data is discussed as "grounded theory" by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

the theory of commitment and the framework of career. In sum, this investigation can be classified as exploratory in its scope, which has its own peculiar place in the research process: "Although for the most part we are discussing the exploratory study as an entity, it is appropriate to consider it also as an initial step in a continuous research process" (Selltiz, et. al., 1959:52). The concepts of career and commitment were used to orient the collection of data for the study. However, within this framework the "constant comparative method of qualitative analysis" as set forth by Glaser and Strauss (1967: Chap. 5) was used in the carrying out of the research.

The subjects from whom data were gathered were limited to males on the assumption that differences exist in career patterns and ambitions according to sex. It is the case, for example, that for many women work is a secondary interest compared with marriage and family raising. This fact does not deny that there are exceptions, that some women do aim for and achieve administrative positions. In fact, a vice-principal of one of the schools in which the study was carried out was female.

It was originally intended that an equal number of subjects from urban and rural schools would be selected, and that each of these groups would contain an equal number of teachers with more than twenty years' teaching experience and fewer than twenty years' experience. It was further intended that all rural teachers would be recruited from a single school and that the urban teachers also would be members of the same school staff.

In the end, the condition of an equal number of urban and rural schoolteachers was the only one that was fulfilled. In the rural and

first school in which data were collected, a far greater proportion of "less experienced" than "more experienced" teachers was apparent. Of all teachers on the staff, only four had been teaching for twenty years or more. Consequently the researcher thought it would be wise to attempt to interview additional experienced subjects at other rural schools. Only one subject with the appropriate qualifications could be found, a former teacher of that school who presently teaches elsewhere but who continues to reside in the community. This addition boosted the number of rural "experienced" teachers to five. Incidentally, all teachers with less than twenty years' experience had actually less than fifteen years' teaching experience, making an even greater contrast than was intended.

The urban part of the study involved two schools. The first[3] was selected in accordance with the usual controls of the investigation: all were high school teachers, all were males, and no substitute teachers were included. Use of the second urban school was made because of the scarcity of "experienced" teachers in the first school. Unfortunately, the only regular class teacher at the first urban school who appeared to have accumulated at least twenty years' experience was also the only refusal encountered during the entire study. No attempt was made among the urban respondents to acquire an equal number of experienced and less

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[3]There are no public schools in Newfoundland communities, only those run by the various religious denominations. Until this academic year both the rural school and the first urban school were administered by the same denominational branch of the Department of Education of the provincial government. However, starting with this year, all three schools are administered by the same branch of the Department.

experienced teachers; rather the aim was to approximate the relative proportions achieved in the rural setting.

The Sample

Thirty-five teachers were interviewed during the course of the study. However, only the responses from thirty-two were analyzed since the remaining three subjects were used in a pretest which resulted in some minor revisions in the instrument.

Since the study was not conceived in hypothetical-statistical terms, no formal sampling procedure was adopted. That is, the interviewees were not selected randomly. Instead, what Glaser and Strauss (1967:45-77) refer to as the method of "theoretical sampling" was employed. When using theoretical sampling, the researcher collects, codes, and analyzes the data simultaneously. He decides where to locate additional respondents (or informants) as his study progresses, depending upon the nature of the sample, up to a given point.

The sample is not necessarily representative of teachers in the province or even of the schools in which they teach. Therefore, the ability to generalize from the interview data is limited. This result is an unavoidable characteristic of exploratory research. However, there is no reason to suspect that, taken as a whole, any sample secured in the same manner from any other three schools would be more representative. The urban teachers were selected from the largest city in the province. The rural school, while located in a relatively large community, is like most rural high schools in that it provides high school educational opportunities for pupils from a number

of localities of various sizes within a specific area. The research was carried out during September and October, 1969.

Subjects

Description of the Respondents

In addition to the main part of the interview, a number of face-sheet type questions were asked which were designed to give an overall description of the subjects. In the first school the researcher asked the questions and wrote the answers. In the two urban schools, it was more usual for the subjects to fill in the answers on a typed form. It is highly likely that their responses were accurate, as the respondents were undoubtedly aware that it is relatively easy for the researcher to check, either formally or informally, most if not all of the answers. As we shall see in a later section, some of these questions were also found to generate data relating to commitment-enforcing arrangements.

The status variables characterizing the respondents are presented in the following pages, which include Tables 1 through 5. While the teachers' ages cover a wide range, the category into which more than half the subjects fall is that of the 26-35 age group.

TABLE 1

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Age	Rural Teachers	Urban Teachers
Under 25	2	0
26 - 35	8	9
36 - 45	2	1
46 - 55	3	5
Over 55	1	1
Total	16	16

All but three teachers possess at least a grade five teaching certificate.[4] Of the three having lower than a grade five certificate,

[4]The grade system in Newfoundland ranges from grades one to seven. Generally, for each grade attained, an additional year's training is required. However, there is variation in what is acceptable. For example, the requirements for a grade one teaching certificate present four choices. One of these is the successful completion of the first year of an approved teacher-training program at Memorial University of Newfoundland or a recognized training institution. Another is the successful completion of three years of university training and no professional courses. A grade seven teaching certificate may be attained with seven approved years of training and (a) a doctor's degree or (b) two master's degrees or (c) a master's degree and two bachelor's degrees or (d) a master's degree, a bachelor's degree and an approved diploma in Education or its equivalent and, in addition, either credit in five education courses or one year's normal school training or an education degree.

two are experienced teachers who were physically handicapped earlier in their careers.

TABLE 2

TEACHING GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS

Teaching Grade	Rural Teachers	Urban Teachers
Less than Grade 3	0	0
Grade 3	1	0
Grade 4	1	1
Grade 5	3	8
Grade 6	11	6
Grade 7	0	1
Total	16	16

Thirty-one of the thirty-two teachers are married, the remaining one being single. No teachers reported themselves as being separated, divorced, or widowed. However, a small number during the course of the main interview noted that they are now married for the second time, their first spouse having passed away.

The fifteen married rural teachers have a total of thirty-three children or an average of 2.2 children per respondent. The urban

teachers have a total of twenty-one children or 1.3 children per respondent. Thus, as a whole, the urban teachers have smaller families than their rural colleagues. Three times as many urban as rural married teachers have no children at all. Only three urban teachers have more than two children while seven rural teachers have three or more. No teacher reported having more than five children.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF TEACHERS' CHILDREN BY LOCALITY

Number of Children	Number of Rural Teachers	Number of Urban Teachers
0	2	6
1	3	2
2	3	5
3	5	3
4	1	0
5	1	0
Total	15*	16

*This is the number of married teachers.

As previously noted, two rural and six urban married teachers have no dependent or other children. Twelve teachers, seven in the

rural area and five in the city, have at least one child under school age.[5] The children of four teachers (three rural and one urban) are all of school age. Four other teachers have no children who could be classed as school-aged.

An equal number of urban and rural teachers presently reside in homes which they themselves own. Conversely, an equal number of rural and urban subjects are tenants of one form or another. (At least one is a boarder and two others live in their parents' homes.) The number who occupy their own homes is slightly greater than those who occupy dwellings as tenants.

TABLE 4

TYPE OF DWELLING

	Rural Teachers	Urban Teachers
Owned	9	9
Rented	7	7

Some teachers, at one time, have owned homes elsewhere. However, as the following table indicates, these are in the minority. All but one who has owned a home in another locality are experienced teachers.

[5] For our purposes, individuals from five to seventeen years of age, inclusive, will be classed as "school-aged."

TABLE 5

FORMER HOME OWNERSHIP

	Rural Teachers	Urban Teachers
Owned home formerly	1	4
Did not own home formerly	15	12

In naming their home community or community of origin, it was revealed that the rural teachers, with two exceptions, were raised within twelve miles of the school in which they now teach. Most were able if they desired--and many did--to commute to the school. In contrast, only three of the urban teachers named their present community as their community of origin. The remainder come from many different areas of the province.

In general, the respondents teach in either grade nine, ten, or eleven. However, the picture is complicated by the fact that some teach several subjects in more than one of these grades. The rural school served pupils from grades nine through eleven, while the two urban schools served only grades ten and eleven students.

The Settings

With the exception of one interview which took place at the subject's home, all others took place within the school at which the interviewees were employed. The settings for the administration of the interviews varied with each school. The most convenient situation for the interviewer and that which provided most privacy for interviewing was an office which was provided in one of the schools by the principal. The least satisfactory setting for interviewing was in a school where the principal did not assist in finding a permanent place. Here each subject was obliged to find a location in which he could be interviewed. In all but one instance these interviews took place either in a staff room or cafeteria where interruptions were neither infrequent nor unexpected. The availability of or lack of a convenient setting for interviewing illustrates the feasibility of securing the full cooperation of those having administrative powers.

Securing Subjects

In securing subjects for interviewing, the researcher worked through the administrative staff. In the first two schools, contact originally was made with the principals while in the third the assistance of the vice-principal was obtained. To secure subjects in two of the schools, the researcher went first to the school in person to explain to the principal or vice-principal the purpose of her visit--that she was conducting a social scientific study and that she wished to interview some members of his staff. In the other school contact was made initially by means of the telephone.

This latter procedure, in the opinion of the researcher, proved to be less rewarding than the former method. This view is based on later experiences in the three schools. In the two schools in which personal face-to-face contact was achieved, the administrative personnel were extremely cooperative in assisting the researcher in contacting interviewees. On the other hand, in the school in which the original contact was made by telephone, it appears that the minimum amount of assistance was supplied by the administrative staff. Whether it was coincidental or whether they sensed indifference on the part of their superiors, those teachers interviewed in this school, though cooperating themselves, seemed to make little, if any, effort to locate other respondents for the researcher. In the other schools, however, it is certain that teachers provided invaluable assistance in this respect. In short, in schools where face-to-face contact was made, the greatest cooperation was received both from the administrative and teaching staffs, thus making the task of the researcher much easier.

Data-Gathering Techniques

The main data-gathering instrument used was the unstructured interview schedule or guide. This method consisted of eleven questions, each of which was designed to inquire into various commitment-producing arrangements. The interview schedule together with the face-sheet type questions discussed earlier are reproduced in the Appendix.

Administration of the Interview Schedule

Besides the regular interview questions, the researcher, in view of the exploratory nature of the study, sought additional information by interjecting such questions as, "Why?" "What were your reasons?" "Why didn't you?" The researcher also refrained, when not absolutely necessary, from suggesting responses. Sometimes, however, suggestions were unavoidable. For example, one question read, "If you had a son starting out, what factors would you stress in the selection of an occupation?" For a few of the interviewees, help was required to get them to begin to respond. The researcher might say, for example, "Would you encourage him to look for a high-paying job?" With this approach, the respondent usually considered the suggestion carefully before replying; he did not seem to grasp at it as the only possible answer. The subjects appeared to answer these questions conscientiously. When a proffered answer did not fit the respondent's view, after consideration, he tended to reject that answer.

The respondents were encouraged to talk extensively about each question, but when they strayed from the subject they were subtly guided back to it by the interviewer.

Most subjects responded freely to the interview items. Only a very few were hesitant to offer personal reasons for taking particular actions. One interviewee, for instance, appeared to be reluctant to admit that he was teaching in the area so that his wife could attend university.

The researcher attempted to record the interview as close to verbatim as possible for several reasons:

(1) In order that the interview could be reviewed as a whole for its consistency of point of view.

(2) So that revealing quotations would be available to illustrate more abstract interview data.

(3) To stimulate new insights.

(4) So that the researcher would be less likely to misinterpret the responses.

At no time did the teachers object to the verbatim recording. They seemed to understand that it was a necessary part of the procedure.

On a few occasions--usually at the end of the interview--a teacher would make a statement that he did not wish to have recorded. One subject, for instance, said, "If I were to say my opinions on the teaching profession, I'd be banished to the Funks."[6] After raging for several minutes, he observed, "Of course, I only told you the bare facts. One of these days I might write a few things." Any outbursts of this nature were recorded at the first opportunity in case they should provide assistance in the analysis of the interview as a whole.

In every instance the interviewer attempted to establish and maintain a sympathetic, friendly, and trustworthy orientation toward the subjects. Moreover, subjects were encouraged to express themselves

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[6]The "Funks" refers to Funk Island, a tiny, uninhabited island approximately forty miles off the northeast coast of Newfoundland. It is common to express expulsion in terms of banishment to this island.

through the researcher's efforts to appear interested and alert--even when fatigued.

At the end of the day, the researcher read each interview, making any necessary insertions. Sometimes it was possible to perform this function between interviews. In addition, when possible the interviewer typed the full interview on the day it was conducted to insure that poor writing and any abbreviated words would not be misinterpreted at a later date.

One factor of concern is the validity of the responses. As Zetterberg (1965:121) has pointed out, ". . . we know that some data used in sociological studies are probably inaccurate." Can we believe what the individual tells us? Is he telling us what he feels or has felt? Can he remember past events accurately, or are they distorted by more recent happenings? Is he saying what he believes a person in his position should say? Is he saying what he believes the researcher would like to hear? Is the respondent's answer affected by his mood at the time of the interview? If he has recently experienced a particularly trying period at work, would his mood be more hostile than usual? One teacher in the present study volunteered that his "answers to questions might vary on different days," thus indicating that one's present emotional state does influence one's responses.

The researcher found, too, that on two occasions the number of years teachers reported they had taught school did not equal the total number they enumerated when tracing their occupational careers. These discrepancies, undoubtedly, were not an attempt at deception but rather a lapse of memory for both respondents. However, in no instance was

the variation great enough to cause doubt as to whether to place a teacher in the over-twenty-years' or under-twenty-years' experience category.

In every case, the completed interview was studied for inconsistencies before the relationship was terminated. Some did exist and they were subtly pointed out to the subject. For example, one teacher in recounting his occupational career noted that he, in the midst of his teaching experience, had spent a period in the armed forces. In response to a later question, he said that he had never considered leaving the teaching profession. When asked why he left to join the armed forces his reply was, "It's what people were doing during the war." This response was a reasonable explanation if he meant that the change was only a temporary one. He apparently continued to think of himself as a teacher.

Another teacher stated that he wouldn't leave teaching "for anything" and expressed a very positive attachment to it. Yet in response to one question he admitted the possibility of leaving when he said, "It would have to be quite a boost in salary." It appears that, instead of being truly positive about his attachment to his position, he was afraid that he could not adapt to a different job. "After all these years at one job I might not be able to make a success of it. A younger person could adapt. I don't think you can uproot yourself after a long period of time ."

On the other hand, the respondent may fear that the researcher will report his responses to his superiors. The researcher suspected that this was the case with one of the most inexperienced teachers who

appeared to be too convinced about the advantages and enjoyment of teaching. He "never even thought" of giving up teaching. This conviction was discounted, however, when he pointed out that, "Maybe the novelty of teaching has not worn off yet."

Having presented the methodology employed in the study, together with some of the difficulties encountered in its use, we shall now proceed to the next chapter where the findings of the research are presented.

CHAPTER III

CAREER AND COMMITMENT IN TEACHING

In Chapter I, we reviewed the relevant theory and data concerning career and commitment in general and what in particular is known about teachers in this regard. Chapter II dealt with the methodological problems confronting the sociologist who wishes to examine the career contingency of commitment in the field. Having justified the use of an exploratory research design as a means of generating inductively based or grounded theory about commitment among teachers, we are now ready to launch into a presentation of the study's findings.

The data gathered relate to various points of the teaching career. The results, therefore, will be discussed in the rough chronological order of the teacher's advances through his work history. We shall begin with a consideration of some of the issues centering in the initial stages of the career: decisions to enter teaching, factors influencing these decisions, alternative occupations, training, career lines, and early contingencies. The chapter concludes with a detailed look at one turning point that arises later in careers, namely, that of continuance commitment.

The Early Stages of the Teaching Career

Exactly half (sixteen) of the teachers decided, while still in high school, to enter the teaching profession. Ten others made this decision after they had completed high school but before taking up another form of employment or further training. The remaining six decided that they would like to teach either after working for a period of time at another occupation or after some university training (often as much as five years) or after both of these experiences.

The factors which influenced the subjects to take up teaching vary, to a large extent, according to the length of teaching experience of the individuals. The three which most influenced those having fewer than twenty years' experience were other teachers (including their own school teachers; teachers in their families; and, for those studying at the time in pursuit of other careers, teachers who were furthering their training at university) the provincial government teacher-training grant, and the desire to work with people. For those having more than twenty years' experience, the view that there was "not much else to do" was more frequently offered as a reason for entering the profession than any other one. Obtaining an education and avoiding less desirable occupations (typically, ministry and banking) were also often expressed as reasons.

Finances were a major factor affecting the choice of teaching as an occupation for both groups of respondents. For those with better than twenty years' experience, that there was nothing else to do implied a widespread economic low. For those who had spent less time teaching,

more money was available both in the form of assistance for training and higher salaries. Thus a difference, rather, an improvement, in the economic conditions of the society are indicated. It might be noted here that Newfoundland has been a province of Canada for just over twenty years (since April 1, 1949), and it is generally accepted that, on the whole, the province prospered from this union. That the experienced teachers did not go into teaching with hopes of a high salary is demonstrated by the following comments from a teacher who was asked what factors influenced his choice: "Not money . . . Nothing to go after . . . Twenty-seven dollars a month and pay nineteen dollars for board. It was something to do rather than loaf around."

Eleven subjects claimed that they did not consider any alternative occupations before entering the teaching profession. Various reasons were expressed, and the following comments are typical:

> I knew little about anything else. Guidance wasn't offered as such and, as a child, I didn't understand.
>
> There was not much else offered unless one had lots of money. There were many chances with more money.
>
> There weren't any alternatives then. It was more or less teaching or nothing.

Twenty-one subjects considered, in varying degrees of seriousness, other specific alternatives. Among these teachers were the ones who had been employed in other occupations prior to teaching. The following statements exemplify the reasons given for rejecting other occupations:

> Finances--six-hundred-dollar grant. In engineering I could only get a loan in addition to a scholarship.
>
> It is the type of profession you could depend on for employment.

> At the time wages were going up for teachers. It was a job where I could remain at home--not travel like in engineering.
>
> Economic conditions of the time. I was probably looking at my father and seeing the conditions under which he made his living.

In all, fifteen other occupations were considered. The most frequently mentioned alternative was the Christian ministry. Others cited by more than one teacher included forestry, geology, biology, banking, engineering, a career in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and business. None of the respondents claimed to have considered unskilled or semi-skilled labor.

Out of the thirty-two subjects, nineteen had attended university or college (including normal school) at some time prior to their entrance into the teaching profession. The remaining thirteen had either attended a six-week summer school training program for prospective teachers or had gone into teaching immediately upon graduation from high school. This latter sequence, however, occurred in only one or two instances. The following table indicates that there are no significant rural-urban differences in this respect.

TABLE 6

TRAINING PRIOR TO TEACHING ACCORDING TO REGION

	Rural	Urban
University	10	9
Summer school	6	7

However, differences are evident between those who attended university and those who attended only a summer school when compared to the amount of teaching experience. Table 7 indicates that the trend today is toward more university training before engaging in classroom teaching.

TABLE 7

TYPE OF PREJOB TRAINING BY AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE

	Over 20 Years	Under 20 Years
University	6	13
Summer school	5	8

Most teachers did not obtain their university education (excluding evening and summer school courses) in consecutive years. Instead, attending classes was usually interspersed with periods of teaching. This situation ordinarily resulted from a lack of financial support to attend university regularly.

Insufficient funds may also explain why some of the subjects went only to summer school before teaching instead of to university. After teaching for one or two years, however, most managed to accumulate sufficient resources to attend university for at least one year. One subject, after attending summer school and teaching for one year on a

salary of approximately $100 per month, managed to save $400. This sum together with the $600 government grant enabled him to obtain some additional university training.

Career Patterns, Career Lines, and Career Contingencies

The career pattern of most of the teachers involved only the occupational field of teaching, but seven of the teachers were engaged in more than one occupational field. Four of them were employed in other areas prior to entering the teaching profession. Two of these teachers had apparently planned to take up careers in fisheries work and forestry, since they both had spent several years in the university preparing for these occupations. Both, however, became disenchanted with their respective fields. The other two, after completing grade eleven, went to work as a truck driver in one case and (after two very short stints at other jobs) as a carpenter's helper in the case of the other. Each retained his job for approximately one year.

Three teachers interrupted their teaching careers to work in other occupational fields. One of these tried office work which, at the time, provided a higher salary than teaching. Another joined the armed forces because it was "what people were doing during the war." Prior to these breaks in their careers, two of them had held posts for several years as teaching principals of one- to three-room schools. None of the three, however, had more than seven years of teaching up to that time.

While only a small number of respondents have changed careers, a much larger proportion have crossed career lines[1] within the career of teaching. The most common way of crossing career lines for the teachers studied here was movement into the position of principal or vice-principal--usually in addition to classroom teaching--at one or more points in their work history.

More than two-thirds of the respondents have crossed career lines. All nine who have not crossed are from the less-experienced category. There is very little rural-urban difference in this respect, however, 75 per cent of the rural teachers and approximately 70 per cent of the urban teachers having crossed career lines. Nineteen respondents expect to cross. It is significant that this figure represents 81.2 per cent of the rural teachers but only 37.5 per cent of the urban teachers. Another significant difference in this respect exists between the experienced and less-experienced teachers. While over 80 per cent of the less-experienced expect to cross career lines, this expectation exists among less than 20 per cent of the more-experienced teachers.

Why this difference exists in the expectations of rural and urban teachers with respect to occupational advancement is difficult to determine. However, it is conceivable that it is partly due to possible variations in the attitudes and behavior of rural and urban students. One urban teacher stated, "I wouldn't recommend that anyone go teaching today except in university--not teaching a crowd of youngsters."

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[1] In the discussion of career presented in Chapter I, a career line was defined as "one of possibly several career routes associated with a particular occupation or social identity."

The following remarks demonstrate that experienced teachers definitely do not want to cross career lines, and the reasons why they feel so strongly are also expressed:

> I was never too happy as principal--too much responsibility. I never liked bossing others.
>
> After experience as principal, never again. All it means is ulcers. Too many nights awake. Saturday and Sundays working. More money, but more headaches and ulcers. The main thing is to be happy and healthy and try to have a good time. That's my philosophy.

Only one teacher expressed regret at relinquishing a job as principal of another school and joining the staff of his present school.

The clarity of the aims of those who expect to cross career lines varies considerably. Some simply say, "Yes, administration." Others are more specific and name particular types of positions for which they are aiming, such as principal of an elementary system, or supervisor. At least two subjects claimed that they will not be able to stay in the profession if they cannot achieve an administrative post, one specifying that he wants a position where at least he will not have to spend most of the day in the classroom. One respondent believes that he will not be able to reach the children in the classroom when he is fifty years of age and that it would be better for both himself and the pupils if he were not there when he grows older. He feels that, with experience, he would excel at administration.

Three subjects, while having no desire to abandon classroom teaching, may switch to administration if it becomes necessary. In answer to the question, "Do you expect to advance beyond your present teaching position?" one replied:

> It depends. If the classroom should become unbearable, e.g., teach every period of the day, I'd probably swallow my pride and morals and go into administration although maybe the classroom is the best place for me.

Another said:

> The only reason I'm in school is because of teaching. I wouldn't change teaching for administration but I may sometime be forced financial-wise. I wouldn't unless forced to. In the meantime, I will make myself prepared.

In addition to continuance commitment, which comprises the major focus of this chapter, the number of contingencies that teachers experience as parts of their subjective careers are numerous. No attempt will be made here to enumerate all of them or to discuss any of them in detail. Many have already been referred to in other contexts as factors which individuals believe to have influenced them to take up teaching without first training for or working in any other occupation. A few of the most prominent contingencies occurring later in the teaching career will be considered briefly.

For at least two teachers, a general increase in teachers' salaries was regarded as a career contingency. One respondent, after having almost completed three years in other training, changed his mind and decided to go into teaching. He said, "One of the things that influenced me is that around 1958 there was a big raise in salary." Another who had spent over three years in other employment stated, "Teachers' salaries came more in line with reality. I went back to Memorial University and studied two years in the Faculty of Education."

Satisfying experiences of various types were also seen as contingencies for at least four teachers. One teacher, for example,

claimed that "being exposed to a good school system" in a certain community had a particular influence upon the direction of his career. "Prior to that," he said, "I was not happy." Another claimed that his experience in one school was "a big factor," that there was a "good group on the staff."

One further turning point mentioned by two of the subjects was dislike for their previous employment. One had suffered a considerable reduction in salary when he changed to teaching.

Commitment Orientations

In Chapter I, two types of commitment were discussed: value commitment and continuance or forced commitment. Each interview was analyzed to determine the current orientation of the subject. Positive attachment to teaching or some aspect of it was used as an indicator of value commitment. A lack of positive attachment was taken to mean that the individual is for one or more reasons "forced" to continue in the role of teacher.

One experienced, value-committed teacher expressed his feelings in the following manner:

Interviewer: Have you ever considered leaving teaching?

Respondent: I wouldn't leave for anything. For comparable salary or even more, I wouldn't quit.

Interviewer: Why do you think you haven't considered it?

Respondent: I enjoy what I'm doing and I never regret it. I enjoy every day, every moment of it. There is so much enjoyment working with students, I don't think I'd get it anywhere else.

Interviewer: Do you expect to remain in the teaching profession until your retirement?

Respondent: Yes, I certainly do. I wouldn't leave it.

The following comments are excerpts from an interview with an experienced teacher who is obviously committed on a forced basis:

Interviewer: Have you ever considered leaving teaching?

Respondent: Many times. In fact, I'm going to be quite frank and say if I weren't such a coward I would have left one hundred times.

Interviewer: Why didn't you leave?

Respondent: Because it enforces a certain degree of security, and I am unwilling to throw it aside although I know I could do as well or better at something else. Dedication is for the birds. Damn dedication. Take away five thousand dollars and who's going teaching? I have had offers and offers. I suppose when one gets in fifteen or twenty years' teaching, he either feels himself too old to begin anew or has family responsibilities and feels he would be doing them harm by moving. I still consider myself a square peg in a round hole.

Interviewer: Do you expect to remain in the teaching profession until your retirement?

Respondent: Yes, I do now that it is so near. I'm going to get out the first hour--not when sixty--when combined ages are ninety-two.[2] Every year [teaching] after that takes five years off your life.

In addition to teachers who are committed on a value or forced basis, some simultaneously give evidence of both these types of com-

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[2]The respondent is referring to a provincial government regulation which states that a teacher may retire at any time after the number of his years of pensionable service added to the number of years of his age equals ninety-two.

mitment. They were classified as being ambivalent about their orientation. Some, for example, claimed to like teaching but admitted that they have remained at the profession only because they have invested too much time, money, and training in it and that, if they could begin again, they would select another career.

The remarks below illustrate ambivalence on the part of one teacher:

> Interviewer: Can you think of any events that had a particular influence on the direction of your career?
>
> Respondent: After I am so far involved it is hard to backtrack. To start with another job I would have to start at the bottom. I like teaching but not the after-hours work. The day is a pleasure.
>
> Interviewer: Have you ever considered leaving teaching?
>
> Respondent: There are a couple of things I would do if the pay were as good. For most things I would have to take a cut in pay.
>
> Interviewer: If you could start all over again, which occupation would you choose?
>
> Respondent: I don't know. That's a question that would alter at any given time. I'm fairly well satisfied with teaching, fairly contented.

Out of the thirty-two teachers, seven were judged to have a value-commitment orientation to their work; nine were judged to have a continuance-commitment orientation; and sixteen, exactly half, were seen to be in an ambivalent state.

Additional data support these judgments about the nature of each respondent's commitment to teaching. Of the twenty-five subjects who were not categorized as holding a value-commitment orientation to the teaching profession, eighteen do not expect to leave the profession.

This figure includes three-fourths of those judged to be ambivalent and more than two-thirds of those considered to have a forced-commitment orientation. As expected, all of those committed on a value basis hope to remain in the profession in some capacity. Three of the thirty-two subjects are planning to quit teaching while another four are uncertain as to what they will do.

TABLE 8

SUBJECTS' CAREER EXPECTATIONS ACCORDING TO CURRENT COMMITMENT ORIENTATIONS

Subjects' Career Expectations	Subjects' Present Orientation					
	Value Commitment		Ambivalence		Continuance Commitment	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Expect to remain in teaching profession	7	100	12	75.00	6	66.7
Expect to leave teaching profession	-	-	1	6.25	2	22.2
Do not know	-	-	3	18.75	1	11.1
Total	7	100	16	100	9	100

However, when these individuals joined the profession, they were not necessarily committed in the same manner as they are at the present

time. Only eight could be said to be value committed, while the remaining twenty-four entered the profession for reasons other than positive attraction to teaching. Some of the latter number were to some degree forced to enter teaching:

> It was an opportunity for further education. I wanted to go to university and this was the only medium through which I could do it. (Subject is alluding to the assistance provided by a teacher-training grant supplied by the provincial government.)
>
> I was a victim of circumstances of depression. There was nothing else to do.

When pressure was not a factor leading toward the teaching profession, a variety of additional reasons beyond positive attraction were cited:

> I finished grade eleven. There were only three pupils in grade eleven. The other two were going to summer school [for a six-week teacher-training period]. One fellow said, "Let's go to summer school--good time, lots of girls, and a sixty-dollar grant." I had no intention of going teaching. At the end of summer school all the others were going down to the Department of Education looking for schools. So I figured I would have to go too.
>
> It was more or less a trend. A lot went at it. Eighty to 90 per cent went teaching. It was more or less a try-out.

Let us compare the present orientation of teachers in terms of whether they were or were not positively attracted to teaching when they embarked upon their teaching careers.

Of the eight who initially were positively attracted to teaching, only three can be considered to be committed in this manner today. An equal number are presently ambivalent about their roles. The remaining two teachers now feel that they are forced to remain in the profession.

The majority (thirteen subjects) of the twenty-four who entered the profession for reasons other than positive attraction to the occupation of teaching eventually became ambivalent toward it. Another seven still have little attachment to this profession and today can be considered as being forced to remain in it. For the remaining four, teaching has grown to be more attractive over the years, so that now their orientation toward it can be described as being value commitment (see Table 9).

TABLE 9

SUBJECTS' CURRENT COMMITMENT ORIENTATION COMPARED WITH THAT AT ENTRY TO TEACHING

Present Orientation of Teachers	Orientation at Entry to Teaching			
	Positively Attracted to Teaching		Not Positively Attracted to Teaching	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Value commitment	3	37.5	4	16.6
Continuance commitment	2	25.0	7	29.2
Ambivalence	3	37.5	13	54.2
Total	8	100.0	24	100.0

The change from one orientation to another often took place over a period of years. One teacher reported:

> More or less because of external urging I tried teaching. I liked it but was still not committed. After a year I thought it seemed good enough and went to Memorial University. Another year of teaching consolidated it more. It's a slowly evolving process.

At times, however, the change was traced to one particular experience. For example:

> I got a phone call and came here. Whatever doubts I had about teaching were gotten rid of. Maybe if I hadn't come here I may not have taught again.

Unpleasant experiences were also reported, which occasionally fostered the rapid emergence of a negative outlook toward teaching.

The data were examined to determine whether the types of commitment vary by rural-urban location and by longevity of teaching experience. Exactly half of the rural and half of the urban subjects could be classed as being ambivalent in their orientations toward their roles. One-quarter of the rural respondents are positively attached to teaching while the remaining 25 per cent are forced to stay in it. The distribution of urban teachers was almost exactly identical. These results are presented in Table 10. This finding may be at least partly accounted for by the fact that twenty-nine of the subjects were raised in a rural area. In addition, all of the subjects, except the three city-bred teachers, have spent part of their teaching careers outside the city.

TABLE 10

SUBJECTS' COMMITMENT ORIENTATION
ACCORDING TO PRESENT TEACHING LOCALITY

	Area where Subjects now Teach			
	Rural		Urban	
Orientation	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Value commitment	4	25.0	3	18.8
Continuance commitment	4	25.0	5	31.2
Ambivalence	8	50.0	8	50.0
Total	16	100.0	16	100.0

With respect to the longevity of the teaching record, the largest proportion of both experience groups (over twenty years and under twenty years) could be characterized to be ambivalent about their commitment to teaching. The number of ambivalent subjects in the less-experienced group was greater than the combination of the other two categories of commitment.

Another interesting finding appears in the more-experienced group, where twice as many subjects feel themselves to be forced to stay in teaching as compared with the number of experienced teachers who are positively attached to it. This result, as we shall see when we examine the various penalties associated with commitment, can be explained

partly by the fact that experienced teachers encounter penalties which the less-experienced escape. For example, within a given teaching grade, the greater the teacher's experience, the higher his salary and prestige. Additionally, he has contributed more to the pension fund and is closer to reaping its benefits than is true for those with less experience. Finally, he may believe that he is too old to start another career. Ten of the eleven experienced teachers in the study were over forty-five years of age, and most of them mentioned that their age would be against them if they were to attempt to leave teaching. The results concerning length of experience and commitment are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11

SUBJECTS' COMMITMENT ORIENTATION BY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

	Experience			
	Under 20 Years		Over 20 Years	
Orientation	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Value commitment	5	23.8	2	18.2
Continuance commitment	5	23.8	4	36.4
Ambivalence	11	52.4	5	45.4
Total	21	100.0	11	100.0

Further Evidence of Continuance Commitment

Evidence of ambivalence and continuance commitment is shown by numerous unsolicited expressions of dissatisfaction. Teachers express discontent with most aspects of the profession including the teachers themselves, their school board, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association (N.T.A.), the Faculty of Education in the provincial university, and the provincial government Department of Education. Several teachers held views similar to the following: "There are too many in it [the profession] for what they get out of it. Teachers are getting masters and doctorates and getting administrative posts." The subject then elaborated by explaining that these individuals sit in offices where the ones with least education do the work. One teacher suggested that "teachers are fed up with the N.T.A.," and a second one believes that the association "is not effective enough to make a teacher feel secure." Another respondent claimed to have left the province to teach for a period because he was "sick and tired of the shit going on in the Department of Education and crap in the education department of the university." He said he did not have "much respect for most of the faculty members," that they "seemed out of touch--ivory tower--strutting around like big changes were taking place, but doing nothing."

An examination of the interview protocols reveals that nine different penalties were mentioned by more than one teacher. Some teachers cited several penalties, others none. The four penalties cited most frequently were financial loss, family considerations, loss of security, and loss of lengthy holidays. The first three often were interrelated. Other penalties mentioned were age, loss of pension,

loss of investment of time, the belief that one would have to move from one's present locality, and loss of attractive working hours. Table 12 presents the penalties, the frequency with which each penalty was cited, and an illustrative comment by one of the respondents.

TABLE 12

PENALTIES ANTICIPATED BY TEACHERS

Penalty	Number of Times Cited	Illustration
Financial loss	9	I would leave if I could find another job and start off with the same money.
Holiday reduction	8	Two weeks' Christmas and the summer holidays are worth a lot to me. If I didn't want long holidays I could go at something else.
Loss of security	7	I am in it chiefly for financial security--hold what you have. It's a "bird-in-the-hand-is-worth-two-in-the bush" kind of philosophy.
Family considerations	6	I'm unlikely to leave teaching as settled here. Education facilities for my children are good.
Loss of pension	4	I stuck with it too long to give up pension. If I could get the same pension at something else, I would quit now if I could get a job.
Age	3	I'm too old to quit now. I don't think I could adapt to another job.

TABLE 12--Continued

Penalty	Number of Times Cited	Illustration
Investment of time	3	Each year with more invested it's too late. I have made investments with years in university and teaching.
Move from locality	2	Teaching allows one to stay in the area.
Hours of work	2	I can't see another job with the same hours.

The subjects were also asked to express which points they would stress to their sons if called upon to give advice on the selection of an occupation. It was believed that, where different from their own achievements, the aspirations which the teachers held for their sons would indicate dissatisfaction with their present work and hence some degree of pressure to abandon it--a precondition of continuance commitment. One teacher, who had said that he would like to see his son with a job in which he would be well rewarded, continued to say that he would also like to see him with security for the future so he could have "things I wanted and couldn't get [and] I had to spend half a lifetime working for them." If a teacher would or actually did encourage his son to become a schoolteacher, this encouragement was taken as evidence that he is satisfied with his occupation--a sign of value commitment.

Thirty of the subjects did not suggest a particular occupation for their sons to follow. They would "leave it up to him." A number felt it should be a job that he would be happy doing, while three believed that it should be work in which he could make a contribution to society. Along these same lines, another respondent thought that his son should engage in an occupation which "would give him a feeling of doing something worthwhile . . . If you can help somebody, you're doing something worthwhile."

Five subjects, all in the continuance-commitment category, although not specifying an alternative, preferred that their sons should not go into teaching. The responses varied in intensity, and most were qualified. For example, one respondent would not advise his son to teach "unless he had a yen for it." Another would have suggested that his son avoid teaching in Newfoundland because "you're not paid at what you're doing." Two teachers, both fathers of adult sons, admitted that they had attempted to discourage their sons from entering teaching. In one case, the advice was ignored.

Only two subjects suggested particular occupational fields. One, if given the opportunity, would suggest either electronics or teaching, the other some branch of science. The first of these had an ambivalent orientation toward teaching, the second was committed on a continuance basis.

That only three of the teachers had at one time left the profession (see page 47) does not mean that others have not considered doing so. Some, in fact, have made attempts to leave. Only seven teachers claimed never to have considered abandoning the profession.

Six others were not serious enough about quitting to have selected a particular alternative occupation. Nineteen had at some time entertained thoughts of specific occupations. However, only eleven of these teachers actually made attempts to leave the profession. (This figure includes the three mentioned previously who left for short periods.)

Outside of the three persons who left teaching briefly, those who considered this choice made applications for and, in some cases, were interviewed for other jobs. Six of them applied for government jobs. Some of these applicants reported successful passing of employment tests and acceptance for the desired position. One respondent placed second out of nearly 250 on a civil service examination. Others withdrew their applications before receiving notice of acceptance or rejection. Still others appeared to have failed in their endeavors to find more satisfactory employment.

It may be presumed that at least some of those teachers who ultimately refused offers for employment in another line of work and those who withdrew their applications while there was little or no reason to doubt that they would be offered jobs decided to remain in the teaching profession as a response to continuance commitment. The following comments illustrate some of the sentiments behind the final refusal of the respondents to leave the teaching profession although they had seriously considered doing so:

> Probably it was easier to get a better position in education.

> I never had a chance to make any moves.

> I haven't bothered because I would have to start at much too low a salary.
>
> I got married and couldn't afford [to go into engineering].

Some of these remarks demonstrate awareness that it would be costly to renounce their teaching positions.

Five of the seven subjects who had never considered leaving their work expressed a liking for the profession. The other two gave different reasons for their attachments, both of which contain hints of forced commitment:

> I'm not able to do anything else. That's all teachers are good for.
>
> When at a certain salary level, I can't think of anything else to bring it up to that level and I don't even consider it.

There is other evidence to support tentatively an hypothesis that has been emerging from this study: that many teachers would rather be employed in some other occupation. For instance, fewer than half would enter the profession if they could start over again. This number includes the seven respondents committed on a value basis and seven of those who are ambivalent about their positions. Ten subjects named specific occupational fields which they would enter. Eight subjects did not know what they would do, although two of these stated that they definitely would not go into teaching. These data are presented in Table 13.

TABLE 13

SUBJECTS' CAREER PREFERENCES IF THEY COULD START OVER AGAIN BY PRESENT COMMITMENT ORIENTATION

Career Choice if Subjects Could Start Over Again	Subjects' Present Orientation					
	Value Commitment		Ambivalence		Continuance Commitment	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Teaching	7	100	7	43.8	-	-
Other specific job	-	-	4	25.0	6	66.7
Do not know	-	-	5	31.2	3	33.3
Total	7	100	16	100.0	9	100.0

Having presented the findings of the study, we shall proceed to the final chapter where a summary and concluding remarks will be offered along with some consideration of the implications of the data.

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY IN REVIEW: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will summarize what has been said in the preceding pages, so that the reader can better organize his impressions about the project and leave it with as much of a sense of confirmation as is possible in an exploratory study. Any piece of research that has as its aim the generation of hypotheses perforce concludes with more questions unanswered than when it began. They are different questions, however, ones that have emerged from an empirical design. Indeed, this is one mark of success in such an undertaking--we now know enough about the field of investigation to pose intelligent questions, and this achievement is noteworthy in itself.

In view of the fact that summaries have heretofore been unavailable, a large portion of this chapter will be devoted to presenting a precis of the theory, methodology, and findings. The chapter concludes with a brief consideration of implications, together with suggestions for further research.

The Theory

The theory presented in Chapter I is built around two concepts: career and commitment. A career is associated with a particular social

identity and its accompanying expectations. Although there are many types, the main focus of this study has been on occupational career or the individual's long-term progress within a particular occupational field. "Career pattern" refers to the work history of an individual, which may involve either one or several occupational fields. In the earlier discussion, it was pointed out that career patterns vary according to occupational classification. It was noted that professionals, while they may start work at different levels, advance to professional status with little intervening experience in other occupations and that, once they achieve this position, only a few risk the uncertainties connected with moving to other jobs.

Both career and career pattern have an objective and subjective component. The objective aspect of career was described, in part, as the general set of adjustments to the institutions and organizations within which members of a particular occupation function. Thus, in addition to vertical mobility, which takes place both within the same and between different socioeconomic levels (e.g., skilled and unskilled), horizontal mobility is also common among the incumbents of at least some occupations. Moreover some occupations have a number of career lines or different career routes associated with the same occupation. The beginnings and ends of careers and career lines are fairly clear in occupations in comparison with those found in some other types of careers (e.g., deviant careers).

Career stages were noted to be a feature of many, if not all, occupational careers. However, careers differ in the degree to which they are patterned in advance. The degree of patterning ranges from

the highly standardized bureaucratic career in which, ideally, the steps are clearly set out, to the patterning of careers such as those in some areas of business where advancement is to a large extent dependent upon the individual's own initiative to move up a vaguely defined ladder. School teaching is closer to the bureaucratic end of the continuum.

The length of time spent at each step varies according to occupation and, although it is generally expected that the individuals will work their way through each stage, exceptions do occur. "Organizational accident" and the arrangement of "sponsorship" both tend to accelerate promotion.

Job switching from one career line to another and from one occupational career to another are common occurrences and are more frequent at some stages than at others. Switching may be either forced or voluntary.

Recruitment to fill vacancies comes from three main sources: (1) within the same career line, (2) across career lines, and (3) from outside the particular occupational field. Visibility of an occupation is a factor in recruitment from sources outside the occupation.

The subjective aspect of career refers to the actor's recognition and interpretation of events and especially his interpretation of important contingencies. The subjective career is a predisposition that guides behavior in the ongoing situation.

Career contingencies may be recognized consensually by many individuals or may be peculiar to a particular individual. From the

subjective point of view, they may be thought of as events or circumstances that function as turning points in a person's work history. After a particular experience, for example, an individual may recognize a quality about himself that previously he did not realize, and henceforth his behavior will be governed according to this new conception. Such factors as social class, intelligence, and previous experience affect one's recognition and interpretation of contingencies.

Commitment is a career contingency in the sense that the individual interprets various events and circumstances and, in so doing, comes to recognize that he is committed or forced to carry out a particular consistent line of behavior. He is aware that if he attempts to leave a particular role or rejects particular expectations he will be confronted with penalties. This type of commitment has been referred to as cognitive continuance commitment. In this paper, it is more frequently referred to as continuance or forced commitment. Continuance commitment must be distinguished from value commitment; the former is concerned with forcing an individual to remain in a role while the latter is based on positive attraction or attachment to the role.

Penalties associated with abandoning a particular identity occur as a result of certain previous actions or involvements by the individual. They may be either deliberately or nondeliberately made. They can be divided into two groups: (1) those internally related to the individual's occupational identity, such as investments of time and money, and (2) those external to his occupational identity, such as family considerations.

Penalties that commit one to a role may be divided into three groups: (1) social, which originate in the actions of others, (2) psychological, which refer to the mental strain involved in attempting to abandon an identity, and (3) biological, which stem from the physical and physiological condition of the individual. These types may occur either singly or in combination.

Commitment may have either a self-enhancing or a self-degrading component attached to it. Self-degradation is more characteristic of continuance or forced commitment than of value commitment. It is not a significant feature of many occupational careers. Any identity may have both self-enhancing and self-degrading components, which means that the actor is ambivalent in his orientation toward his role.

Continuance commitment may end in two principal ways: (1) the individual may redefine his penalties so that they appear less penalizing, or (2) he may develop an attachment to the career or some aspect of it, thereby developing a value-commitment orientation toward it.

Methodology

The study was carried out by means of interviews among male high school teachers. The total number of subjects was thirty-five. However, since three subjects were used in a pretest, after which the data-gathering instruments were modified, only the data from thirty-two were used in the analysis. Within the theoretical framework provided in Chapter I, the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis was used in implementing the research. The sample consisted

of an equal number of rural and urban teachers. They were all members of the staffs of two urban schools and one rural school, except one person who was a former teacher of the rural school. Although it was intended that the subjects should also be divided equally among more-experienced and less-experienced teachers, it was possible to obtain only eleven more-experienced as compared with twenty-one less-experienced teachers.

The subjects were not chosen by statistical means. Instead, theoretical sampling, in which subjects are selected as they are needed in the course of the research, was used.

An overall description of the respondents' backgrounds was the first acquisition in terms of the interviews. A face-sheet type of questionnaire was the means employed. The questionnaire provided information on each respondent's age, teaching certificate, and the grades and subjects taught. It also determined his marital status, number of children and their ages, whether he resides in his own home, whether he has owned a home elsewhere, and his community of origin. All but one interview took place within some school setting. The researcher worked through the school administrations to locate respondents within the schools.

The main data-gathering instrument employed was an unstructured interview schedule or guide. This technique was supplemented by additional probes which were prompted by the subjects' responses to the guide questions. These, of course, varied from respondent to respondent. The subjects were encouraged to talk freely when replying to all questions, and most responded in this manner. As a result, many

valuable data were gathered. The interviews were recorded as close to verbatim as possible by the interviewer.

The Findings

Although we have by no means made a thorough investigation of commitment to the teaching profession, it is apparent that such commitment does exist in various forms among schoolteachers. A number of aspects of commitment among teachers were revealed in the study; the more significant of them are presented in the following pages.

Before discussing commitment, let us examine some of the findings pertaining to the early stages of the teachers' careers. Half of the teachers decided to enter the teaching profession while they were still in high school. Depending upon the amount of experience, different reasons were given for entering this occupation. Financial considerations were a major factor for both the more-experienced and less-experienced groups, although in different ways. Furthermore, one-third of the respondents never considered any alternative before they entered the teaching profession. Altogether, only fifteen other occupations were considered by them. Nearly two-thirds of the subjects had attended university at some time prior to their entrance into teaching. No significant rural-urban differences were found in this respect. However, there are differences, according to experience, between those who first attended university full-time and those who attended only a summer school. The trend today is more toward university training before classroom teaching. Still, because of a lack of financial resources, most respondents interspersed their training with periods of teaching.

The career pattern for most of the subjects involved only the occupational field of teaching. Only seven had engaged in other forms of employment. This figure includes four who entered the profession after being employed at other jobs and three who left for short periods to engage in employment in other fields.

More than two-thirds of the subjects have at some time crossed career lines--mostly to principal or vice-principal. This number includes all who have over twenty years' experience, whether they are teaching in an urban or rural setting. However, when expectations for the future are considered, over 80 per cent of the rural teachers as compared with less than 40 per cent of the urban respondents expect to cross career lines. When these expectations are considered in relation to length of teaching experience, 80 per cent of the less-experienced expect to cross whereas less than 20 per cent of the more-experienced hold such expectations. Teachers are also aware of many career contingencies, such as salary increases and successful and unsuccessful experiences, that have affected their careers.

Concerning the career contingency of commitment, it was found that fewer than one-fourth of the respondents were positively attached to, that is, held a value-commitment orientation toward, the teaching profession. Slightly more than one-fourth were found to hold a continuance-commitment orientation toward the profession. The largest number (exactly half of the subjects) were ambivalent about their positions in that they showed signs of both value and continuance commitment. One of the hypotheses to emerge from the findings of this study is that many teachers would prefer to be employed in some other

occupation. Yet none of the value-committed teachers expect to leave the profession, and nearly two-thirds of those who are not value committed expect to remain in teaching as well.

When the respondents entered the profession, not all, of course, were committed in the same manner as they are at present. Only one-fourth were value committed. However, only three of the eight who originally held a value-commitment orientation now hold this orientation. The change from one orientation to another was sometimes slow, sometimes abrupt. No significant rural-urban differences were found in the teachers' present orientation to teaching. Exactly half of the subjects from each area are ambivalent in their orientation. Two-thirds of the more-experienced teachers feel that they are forced to remain in teaching.

Further evidence of ambivalence and continuance commitment is apparent in the expressions of dissatisfaction with various aspects of the profession made by a number of teachers, e.g., their professional association.

Teachers feel that if they abandon their profession they will encounter various subjectively defined penalties. Since penalties are prerequisites to continuance commitment, those cited by the teachers in the study are presented here as additional hypotheses generated from the data.

Hypothesis 2: A teacher with a relatively high occupational grade and salary will have difficulty finding comparable employment.

Hypothesis 3: The schoolteacher accustomed to long Easter, Christmas, and summer vacations finds other forms of employment, which lack this prerequisite, to be confining.

Hypothesis 4: A teacher who is financially secure and safe from arbitrary dismissal is reluctant to risk the loss of this security by leaving to take up other employment.

Hypothesis 5: To leave teaching to take up other employment may oblige the teacher to disturb family relationships and thereby force him to confront the family's reluctance to modify certain habits that are adversely affected by the occupational change.

Hypothesis 6: In leaving the profession a teacher believes that, in most instances, he will be unable to transfer his accrued pension benefits.

Hypothesis 7: When a teacher has had several years of teaching experience, he believes that his age is a hindrance in adapting to other types of work.

Hypothesis 8: In abandoning the teaching profession, a schoolteacher feels that he is forfeiting an irreplaceable investment of time, energy, and money in terms of training and work experience.

Hypothesis 9: To accept another job that involves moving from his present locality usually means that the

teacher must break off long-time friendship ties, relinquish his established and cherished position in the community, and dispose of a home.

Hypothesis 10: The teacher perceives that to change to another form of employment will involve longer formal working hours.

Only two teachers suggested other specific occupations for their sons. Five, however, all having a continuance-commitment orientation, said they preferred that their sons should not go into teaching.

Most respondents have at some time considered leaving teaching, but only one-third actually made any attempts to do so. Besides the three who left the profession for short periods, others were successful in obtaining nonteaching jobs but decided to reject the new positions at the last moment. Even some who claimed that they never considered leaving the profession showed signs of forced commitment. Fewer than half said that they would enter the profession if they could begin their careers again.

Implications

We are now ready to consider the implications of the findings and to make suggestions for further research. To begin, the sample used in this study was small and non-random. As a result, the value of generalizing from the findings is limited. Since the present research was exploratory, its chief aim was to generate propositions

that could be investigated under more controlled conditions in future research rather than to verify previously conceived hypotheses or to make statistical descriptions. Hence, the implications of this research can only be proffered on a tentative basis and must be hedged with qualifications.

A large number of implications for future research did emerge as new problems were discovered at most points to which the research extended. One hypothesis mentioned earlier, "that many teachers would prefer to be employed at some other occupation," suggests a number of issues.

(a) It is important to know how far this hypothesis may be generalized throughout the Province of Newfoundland. This generality can be determined by research constructed on the basis of a random sample selected from diverse areas of the province, which would also reveal differences by area.

(b) The present research was conducted among male high school teachers. It would be instructive to test this hypothesis on male elementary teachers.

(c) This hypothesis should be tested on an equal number of male and self-supporting single female teachers in order to compare the results of these two groups.

(d) It was revealed that a number of subjects entered the profession in order to take advantage of financial assistance offered to those who would be willing to take university training in the field of education. Without such support many would have been unable to attend university. It would be profitable to compare the degree of

continuance commitment between (1) schoolteachers and workers in other occupations in which financial assistance for training is unavailable and (2) schoolteachers and persons engaged in other occupations in which financial assistance is provided for instruction in their line of work.

(e) It is shown (Table 9) that teachers who are positively attracted to teaching upon their entry into the profession are much more likely to remain value committed than teachers who are weakly attracted are likely to acquire such a commitment. If this condition could be more solidly demonstrated through controlled study, it could prove to be of considerable practical value to policy makers.

Without doubt it is possible for administrators to identify their "better" or more effective teachers. In some school systems teachers receive promotions and salary raises on this basis. This recognition of merit does not occur in Newfoundland, however, although it was mentioned as a feasible procedure by several of the respondents.

Research could determine whether or not teachers having a continuance-commitment orientation toward the profession are less effective in their teaching than those having a value-commitment orientation. If this proposition were confirmed, it would be wise for those involved in teacher-training to operate a screening process in an attempt to secure persons for teaching who are positively attracted to the profession since they would be the ones most likely to remain value committed throughout their career.

Further study of the attractions of teaching may make the screening process even more effective. For example, it might be dis-

covered that those who are positively drawn to teaching, because they like working with people or helping others, turn out to be better teachers than those who are attracted to it by high salary.

(f) With reference to the penalties encountered upon leaving teaching (expressed earlier in this chapter as hypotheses), it is essential that these postulations should be tested on a wider range of teachers. The practical implications of these results vary, of course, from one penalty to another. If teachers who are not as effective have a continuance-commitment (forced-commitment) orientation toward the profession, it might benefit the profession as a whole if some of the penalties for quitting were removed. For example, if it were conclusively demonstrated that a nontransferrable pension keeps teachers who wish to leave teaching from doing so, it would be desirable for an arrangement to be made whereby teachers' pensions are transferrable to a wide range of other careers. Obviously, some penalties are difficult, if not impossible, to remove, being universal consequences that are likely to appear with the rejection of any occupation, e.g., penalties involving family considerations.

(g) Over 80 per cent of the less-experienced teachers expect to cross career lines into administration. That so many wish to abandon the classroom indicates that they are dissatisfied with its activities for some reason--whether that reason is the teaching itself or the rewards associated with teaching when they are compared with those received in other areas of the profession. Without a doubt teachers are aware of the added responsibilities involved when one moves into an administrative position. An investigation of the motives

behind this anticipated mobility may be of considerable value to the profession. Surely, if it is simply that they want administrative positions, they can be found in other fields.

(h) It has been observed that a number of teachers voluntarily expressed their dissatisfaction with many aspects of the profession. It would be useful to secure, by means of a more controlled, large-scale study, a consensus of opinion on these various aspects. Perhaps some action could be taken by those in authority to help alleviate the apparent discontent of teachers.

(i) Those found to be ambivalent in their orientation should be studied further to ascertain whether or not this orientation is actually a disguised form of continuance commitment; that is, their overt expressions of a positive attachment to teaching are really attempts to convince themselves, as well as the investigator, that they are pleased with their present position, while their true feelings are exposed more or less unconsciously because they are so strong that they cannot be restrained completely.

No doubt still other suggestions could be made. However, the ones mentioned will suffice to show the range of possibilities.

APPENDIX

Personal Data Form

1. Age: (Please check appropriate category.)

Under 25 _____ 46-55 _____

26-35 _____ Over 55 _____

36-45 _____

2. Teaching certificate: _____

3. Grades and subjects you are presently teaching: _____

4. Marital status: _____

5. Number of children: _____

6. Ages of your youngest and eldest children: _____ and _____

7. Do you reside in your own home? _____

8. Have you ever owned a home elsewhere? _____

9. Home community: _____

Interview Guide

1. At what period did you decide to become a schoolteacher?
2. What alternatives, if any, did you consider?
3. What factors influenced your choice?
4. Please outline your occupational career.
5. Can you think of any events that had a particular influence on the direction of your career?
6. Have you ever considered leaving teaching?
7. Either: Why do you think you have not considered leaving?
   Or: (a) What other occupations have you considered taking up?
   (b) At what point(s) in your career have you considered leaving?
   (c) Why did you not leave?
8. If you had a son starting out, what factors would you stress in the selection of an occupation?
9. Do you expect to remain in the teaching profession until your retirement?
10. Do you expect to advance beyond your present teaching position?
11. If you could start over again, which occupation would you choose?

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