A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF TEACHING PRINCIPALS IN SMALL SCHOOLS IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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A Descriptive Analysis of Teaching Principals in Small Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador

by

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Abstract

This study focussed on full-time teaching principals in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. For the purpose of this study, a small rural school was considered to be one with an enrolment of less than 100 students and was situated in communities with less than 5000 persons. Specifically, a questionnaire type survey was sent to all principals whose school population included 100 pupils or less. Excluded from this number were 5 principals who were engaged in a qualitative study dealing with a similar topic.

The purpose of this study was to develop a descriptive profile of teaching principals. Included in this profile were: age, gender, academic qualifications, professional experience in teaching and administration, professional responsibilities and professional aspirations. In addition, participants were asked about their perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their dual roles and responsibilities. Enclosed in the appendix is a copy of the instrument further detailing the kinds of data the quantitative study was seeking.

While much of the research on teaching principals has been conducted in the United States and Western Canada, a considerable percentage of the participants in this study both substantiated and refuted the findings in the literature. These include the close school/community relationships, professional camaraderie, and being able to mold (even in a small way) the school's destiny. Participants in this study offered that the prominent reason for accepting the job was because their respective schools required someone who

could perform the duties of both teacher and principal, thus teaching skills were maintained and a level of classroom awareness was ensured. Professional advancement and familiarity with the community were two other noteworthy reasons for taking on the dual role..

Other salient points that arose from the research include unpreparedness for the position in respect to inexperience and a failure of university programs to address multi-grading as well as the responsibilities of teaching principals in their undergraduate and graduate programs. High levels of frustration were also apparent due to the many demands on the individual and insufficient time to perform them.

This descriptive profile provides a mere glimpse into the responsibilities encountered by participants; their sources of frustration, their sources of satisfaction, their daily duties as well as their challenges. Little research has been conducted on teaching principals in the Newfoundland and Labrador context; it therefore remains an area worthy of further study. It is hoped that this research will encourage others to continue studying this vast and relatively unexplored territory.

For Dr. Dennis Mulcahy for his excellent guidance in writing this thesis. I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my wife, Theresa, for her guidance and support in completion of this project. Also I would like to thank her for putting up with a computer room that has been in a state of disarray for the past three years.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The principalship is being studied more closely than ever in its history (Clapp, Chase & Merriman, 1929; Morrison, 1943) yet little has been researched on the duties and responsibilities of the administrator in rural or small schools (Chance & Lingren, 1988). The assumption was that rural and urban principals had the same duties and challenges (Jacobson & Woodworth, 1990), therefore small schools were administered as if they were merely miniatures of larger schools (Cutler 1989). Consequently, rural schools and their programs were rarely studied and too often ignored (Chance and Lingren, 1988). Often reports pass over the characteristics of the rural school administrator and the challenges one endures in fulfilling the role (Chance & Lingren, 1988). Jacobson and Woodworth (1990) reiterate that rural principals have distinctive challenges, situations, and duties largely because they sometimes perform a dual role--that of teacher and principal--and thus should not be ignored in the studies. Rural schools and their administrators have a worth of their own (Mayer & Gardener, 1996).

Researchers, such as Cubberly (1909) and Warren (1965) helped define the principals' role; namely to be able to take any class from any teacher and teach it well (Cubberly, 1919); and to provide "stimulation for the kind of learning that goes on

in the school" (Warren, 1965, cited in Walsh, 1973, p. 2). However, it is the evolution of the principalship from that of the head teacher with minute administrative duties (Pierce, 1935, cited in Grady, 1990) to increased administration duties in addition to a teaching assignment that are instrumental in defining the principal's role of today. Importantly, a rural principal often has a combined role: managing the day to day operation of the school as well as a teaching assignment (Mackler, 1996). Chance and Lingren (1988) in their study of the South Dakota rural principalship reported that 75% of the respondents indicated teaching periodically in a specific area.

Two noteworthy characteristics help define the rural school; specifically geographical isolation and population. In fact, two thirds of all schools in the United States are located in rural areas (Muse and Thomas, 1991). Thus, the teaching principal is more likely to be found in a small rural school. Newfoundland and Labrador, because of its geography and declining population, is primarily a province of rural communities and consequently small schools. Similarly, rural teaching principals are found in rural areas.

Census Canada and the Department of Education for Newfoundland and Labrador use the population figure of 5000 or less to determine whether or not a community will be classified as rural (Department of Education, 1996). Furthermore,

in the United States Lewis (1990) applies the population limit of 2500 to determine the classification of a community or town as rural. As many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador fall below Lewis' population parameter due to the geographical nature and isolation of the province, many educational programs are offered, therefore, in rural areas.

In fact, forty percent of the schools operating in the province are classified as "small schools" and virtually all of these are in rural areas (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 1999). A small school according to government is a school where the average enrolment per grade is 12 or less or a school where any senior high school courses are offered and the average enrolment per grade is 25 or less (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 1999).

The dual role of an administrator in a small rural school encompasses unique characteristics, responsibilities and challenges which differ from their counterparts in larger schools (Jacobson and Woodworth, 1990). Historically, the positions of head teacher and principal teacher preceded the evolution of the role of school principal or administrator (Pierce, 1935, cited in Grady, 1990). Many towns and communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador today continue to deliver education in their regions under the leadership of a teaching principal. The literature on educational administration, however, tends to emphasize the complexities of urban

and suburban principalships (Chance & Lingren, 1988; Cutler 1989; Jacobson & Wordsworth. 1990). This study was designed to appraise and describe the dual role of current teaching principals in small rural schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Interestingly. the rewards of being a teaching principal in a small rural school are numerous. The principal/student and principal/teacher camaraderie is improved because of the close personal setting and small class size thereby reducing some of the tensions the urban school administrators may face (Hutto. 1990). Within small schools as well. teaching principals more than likely enjoy good rapport with parents. colleagues. and students which may be a challenge in schools with large populations. Lewis (1990) professes that an advantage of small rural schools is the smallness itself and the opportunity to work in a close personal environment. Because of the relaxed and close working environment, Hutto (1990) suggests there is more autonomy and freedom in implementing new curricular programs. In addition , the opportunity to maintain teaching skills through the awareness of new pedagogy techniques and classroom activities can enhance personal and professional development (Grady. 1990).

Conversely. certain challenges can often lead to frustration in fulfilling the combined role. One obstacle may be the issue of lack of time to accomplish teaching

obligations and administrative duties resulting from this hybrid role. Furthermore, Grady (1990) noted in her 1990 study on rural Nebraska Teaching Principals that compounding frustration resulted from "...frequent interruptions, too many meetings, inadequate time to solve teacher problems, insufficient opportunity to complete teaching evaluations and to handle discipline problems, jobs interfering with each other, pressures of the dual role and teachers feeling ignored." (p. 90.) The primary challenge of the teaching principal was a lack of time as the pressure of the two roles interfered with each other (Grady 1990). Furthermore, the location of these small schools can be detrimental in itself. Teaching principals in isolated areas often cannot attend conferences because of the expense or difficulty involved in attending these gatherings (Chance & Lingren, 1988) resulting in professional isolation (Barnett, 1989 & 1990).

As school systems formally developed, there were two main factors that led to the development of the teaching principal role; increased student enrolment and the introduction of grading in the schools (Pierce, 1935, cited in Grady, 1990). Initially, teaching principals had few if any teachers to direct and relatively minute administrative duties to perform. The converse is true today. Declining enrolments and financial constraints due to government cutbacks have resulted in overall school district reduction in the teaching force as positions became combined (Grady, 1990).

While there are those who advocate the idea that principals should teach (Tursman, 1984, cited in Duke 1987 & 1988), it is these cutbacks and reform that have increased the need for teaching principals in the educational field. It is this need for these specific professionals that will foster new programs, and have in fact fostered this study.

Purpose of this Study

The focus of this study is full-time teaching principals in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. For the purpose of this research, a small rural school will be considered those schools with an enrolment of less than 100 students and situated in rural communities with less than 5000 persons. The purpose of this quantitative study was to develop a comprehensive profile of teaching principals who work in small rural schools in this province. The profile consists of data regarding age, gender, educational background, professional experience in teaching and administration, professional responsibilities, and professional aspirations.

In addition, participants were asked about their perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages for their dual roles and responsibilities. Enclosed in appendix c is a copy of the instrument further detailing the kinds of data the study was seeking.

Significance of the Study

There is perhaps no educational setting in which the quality of administrative leadership is more closely related to the quality of the educational program than in the small rural school (Jacobson, 1988 & 1988B). Although one may argue this is true for all schools, the focus of most research has been on the urban principal and the urban school (Chance and Lingren, 1988). "Rural school leadership and programs are too often ignored in the studies" (Chance and Lingren, 1988, p 23). Consequently, research associated with rural schools is limited and, unlike other areas of research in education, rarely undertaken.

With the emphasis of studies on the principalship being largely in the urban areas, there is a false assumption that many of the duties the urban administrator encounters are similar to that of the rural teaching principal. Jacobson and Woodworth (1990) noted that rural administrators quite often fulfil a dual role: that of teacher and principal. Consequently, they encounter problems and pressures uncharacteristic of administrators in larger schools.

As of this date, there has been only one study of this nature addressed in the Newfoundland and Labrador context entitled **An Ethnographic Study of Five Teaching Principals in Newfoundland and Labrador (Gale ,1998)**. Studies have been conducted with rural principals primarily in South Dakota, rural Nebraska, and

other areas in the United States where rural schools are abundant. In Newfoundland and Labrador, where 28% of schools have a student enrolment of less than 100 students, no study of a quantitative nature has ever been addressed (Department of Education 1996). With the study being employed in the Newfoundland and Labrador setting, it is anticipated the findings will contribute to the scarce knowledge base on the international, national, and provincial levels. Although studies have dealt with the duties of the teaching principal (Grady, 1990, Chance and Lingren, 1988), few if any have dealt directly with pressures involved with the dual role. The findings of this study should be similar yet unique to the findings in comparable studies. In addition, they contribute to rural educational research.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation evident in a study of this nature is the issue of non-response. The difficulty here is that there is a possibility that the data collected may be biased and not a true reflection of the target population. Furthermore, under no circumstances can it be assumed that the respondents are a random sample from the population. Non-response can attribute to data gaps that markedly distort the real situation. As Weirsma (1995) believes "non-response can bias the results and failure to consider the source of non-response may lead to unwarranted generalizations" (p. 177).

The successful completion of a survey is not a simple task. Subjects may have provided information that was extraneous to the study on items in the instrument that requested open ended responses. This may have, in some instances, made the data difficult to analyse and synthesize. Furthermore, subjects may not have provided pertinent data for purposes unknown to the researcher.

In the analysis of the data collected, the researcher must be aware that their own value system can contaminate the analysis. One must be careful to ensure that being impartial through-out the data collection and analysis is of the upmost importance. If not, the study would have limited validity and reliability with its findings.

Variables to be studied/Operational Definitions

Teaching Principal: an administrator who has inherited or performs any amount of teaching responsibilities as a result of fulfilling the position.

Small School: any school with a population under 100 students for total enrolment for the following grade categories; kindergarten to grade six, seven to nine, level I to level III, kindergarten to grade twelve, or otherwise (ie. k to 8, k to 9 etc.)

Teaching Experience: the number of years teaching in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Administrative Experience: the number of years of experience in the position of principal, vice principal or as a teaching principal in Newfoundland and Labrador

School size: total student enrolment in the school

Age: the age of the subject in years

Dual Role Acceptance: reasons the subjects provided for accepting the position of teaching principal

Instructional Day: the length of total teaching time in one school day

Teaching Duties: the amount of time spent teaching in the instructional day

Role Conflicts: problems, situations and/or difficulties that arise which prevent the subject from fulfilling the duties of a teacher and or principal

Role Benefits: the benefits of being in a dual role in a small school

Role Detriments: the disadvantages of being in a dual role in a small school

Rural Community: (not urban) population less than 5000 people

Previous Administrative Experience: Experience one possesses as an administrator in the Newfoundland and Labrador Education system prior to taking on the responsibilities of a teaching principal.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into 5 main sections. Chapter one contains the introduction to the thesis and presents background information to the study. Furthermore, this chapter presents the research problem in the study and defines the nature of inquiry. As well, related categories of inquiry have been devised and provided here. A list of concepts together with definitions used through-out the

thesis are defined in this section.

Chapter 2 contains the methodology employed in conducting the study. The design and how the instrument was devised, sample calculation, pre-testing, data analysis, and limitations of the study are provided in these chapters as well.

Chapter 3 contains the literature review on principals and teaching principals which is divided into four main categories; namely, the principalship, the typical teaching principal in small rural schools, small schools/rural communities and challenges facing the teaching principal.

Chapter 4 describes and provides the findings of this study in detail while Chapter 5 includes a brief summary of the findings together with recommendations to improve and enhance the teaching principal's role. As well Chapter 5 explores new areas worthy of research with teaching principals.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This was a quantitative study into the duties and responsibilities of 45 teaching principals in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The participants were selected for their geographical location as well as their student enrolment: schools whose student populations are less than 100 as of the fall of 1997. Forty-five subjects out of 73 responded to the questionnaire and from these responses a descriptive profile of teaching principals was developed.

This section elaborates on the aspects of descriptive research including the population sample, preventing sample bias, the instrument itself (questionnaire survey), validity and reliability, non-response and data analysis.

Design of the Study

The study was a descriptive research which involved collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subjects of study: teaching principals in small rural schools. Typically descriptive studies are concerned with assessment, opinions, demographic information, conditions and procedures subjects are involved with (Gay, 1987). Descriptive data is usually collected through the use of questionnaire surveys, interviews, or observations (Gay, 1987). The primary method that was employed in this study was questionnaire survey research.

Kerlinger (1986, cited in Weirsma, 1995) identified two basic purposes of research design: to provide answers to research questions and to control variance. The design of the questionnaire provides results which are usable. That is, it renders answers to the research areas previously posed in chapter 1 in order to develop the descriptive profile of the teaching administrator.

Weirsma (1995) believes "...all research is conducted for the purpose of explaining variance--the fact that not all individuals are the same or have the same score or measurement"(p. 92). Variance can be evident in a number of ways. For this study, variance amongst teaching principals was evident in minute areas including age, teaching experience, level of education, background, amount of teaching duties, to other more significant areas such as reasons for accepting or leaving the position, stress or pressure levels involved with the position. Procedures in quantitative research must be taken to control variance; that is, being able to explain what is causing it (Weirsma, 1995).

The research commenced with letters of permission being sent to all new chairpersons and district directors of the school boards as of September 30, 1996, requesting their permission to undertake the study with their respective teaching principals. These letters also sought letters of endorsement for the study to ensure a high return rate of the questionnaires. As well, the letter informed the board's

director and chairperson of the purpose and scope of the study (Appendix A). Once permission had been received from the school boards, letters along with the endorsement letters from each board and the survey questions were forwarded to all the potential participants of the target population in the study (Appendix B).

Population Sample

Survey research is an attempt to accumulate information from members of a population in order to determine the perceptions, current status, and beliefs of the populations as a whole (Gay, 1987). The target population for the study are current teaching principals in the Newfoundland and Labrador education system in small schools with a student enrolment under 100. As of 1996 there were 89 small schools in the province with student enrolments of less than 100 pupils (Department of Education, 1996). A sample of 89 subjects were selected from all the schools in Newfoundland and Labrador using a school directory provided by the Department of Education for the school year ending 1996. Each of the recently formed ten school districts were labelled as a strata and individual stratas were contributed to the total sample size according to the proportion the strata represented in the total population. The newly formed Labrador School District, for example, currently has 13 small schools in isolated and rural areas. This represents 13/89ths of the total target population. Hence, 14.6% of the sample or 13 schools from the Labrador District

were selected and placed into the sample of 89. Five schools from the target population were intentionally omitted from the sample as a fellow graduate student had undertaken a qualitative study with similar areas of inquiry, one of which was in the Labrador District thereby reducing the number for the Labrador school district to 12. Figure 2-1 depicts how many subjects were selected from each school district.

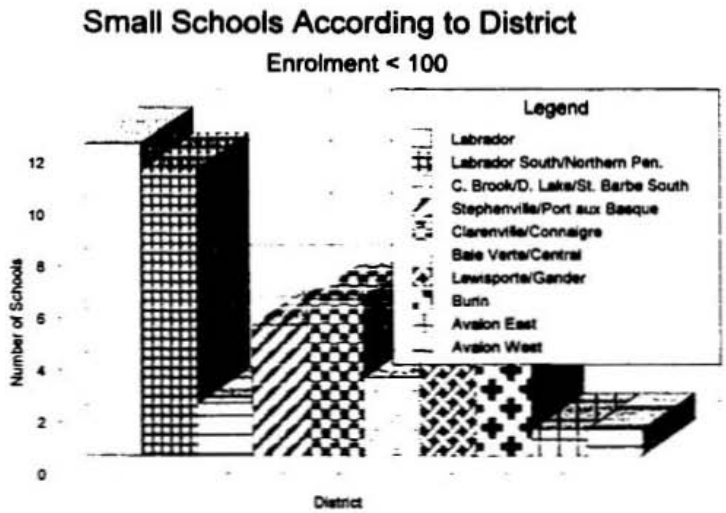


Figure 2-1

Each principal of the schools that were selected received a letter of permission and endorsement from their respective school boards and the survey instrument as well. The letter also informed the prospective participants that their identity would remain anonymous, their participation was totally voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time.

In survey research Gay (1987) believes that ten percent of the research population is the minimum sample size that can be used on extremely large samples. Weirsma (1995) purports when surveying professional populations that seventy percent is considered a minimum response rate. Of the 84 schools with a population of less than 100 pupils, 16 principals responded that because their schools would close as of September 1997 and with extra duties required with closing a school, they felt unable to partake in this study. Thus the number of potential participants was reduced from 84 to 68. This study hoped to attain one hundred percent response from the total sample selected but realistically, 66% (45/68) was garnered and thus deemed sufficient. Sixty-one of 84 questionaries were returned, including the 16 who felt unable to participate in the study, thereby increasing the response rate to 72.6% (61/84). Procedures for non-response is described later in this chapter.

Preventing of Sample Bias

In a sample survey, the researcher infers information about the population of interest based on responses drawn from the sample (Weirsma, 1995). The overall number of respondents (45) who returned the questionnaire determined the actual sample size used to obtain information about the target population size (68). From these responses, data was drawn and analysed in the following chapters. Hence, the researcher did not influence in anyway which subjects of the original 84 potential

members were used in the actual sample.

The Instrument

The questionnaire survey contained five sections (Appendix C). The items were developed from the review of the literature and designed to answer a study objective or to solicit data in a related issue or sub-topic mentioned earlier. The items were selected-response or forced-choice items for which the respondent selected from two or more options and open-ended items for which the respondent constructed a response.

Section A contained thirteen items which elicited demographic information such as sex, age range, years of teaching experience, years of principal experience, level of education achieved, school enrolment, grades and subjects taught, type of school, location of school as urban or rural and whether or not the school had professional support services such as a secretary or guidance counsellor.

Section B contained 6 items of direct questions relating to the subject's teaching responsibilities. Issues of multi-grading, grade levels taught, as well as the courses taught and duration of teaching throughout the instructional day were included in this section.

Furthermore, this section inquired directly if the participant was a teaching principal. If the answer was no then this member was excluded from the sample and

any information collected was not used in the analysis of the data and findings. The researcher believed this was essential primarily because it is possible for a school with a student enrolment under 100 to have a principal that does not have any teaching duties. Nevertheless, all respondents did indicate that they are teaching in some capacity in their respective schools.

Section C elicited information as to why the subjects accepted the position. In this section, subjects were requested to rank the primary reasons for accepting the position. The reasons include the following: increased income, wanting to have direct ties with the classroom, the opportunity of an entry level administrative position to increase chances of obtaining an administrative position (board or school level) elsewhere, the challenge and intrigue of the dual role, the school needed a principal that required the dual role, enjoyment of both positions, no choice, job description was being re-defined as the result of losing teaching unit(s) and board/government financial restraints, to be current on classroom strategies and pedagogy techniques, enjoyment of small schools, and the teaching principal position was an inevitable result. If the participant's reason was not one of those stated, the subjects had a space provided to identify primarily why they accepted the position.

Section D investigated the advantages and disadvantages of the position. As well, this section elicited information about role conflicts. Here, subjects were asked

to rank both the main advantages and disadvantages of being a teaching principal. The ability to maintain teaching skills, the ability in a small school to maintain good rapport with parents, camaraderie with the staff, credibility with the staff, too many duties involved with the dual role, inadequate time to resolve teacher problems, inadequate time to resolve student/discipline problems, and a lack of time to accomplish duties associated with either role are some of the advantages and disadvantages included in the instrument. This particular section of the instrument was ranked from 1 to 5 whereby 1 was the least applicable to their situation, and 5 was the greatest.

Furthermore, this section also requested subjects to rank reasons for leaving teaching duties to deal with an administrative duty. Some of these reasons include: answering telephone calls; handling discipline problems within the school; responding to parental inquiries or needs over the phone or in person; responding to teacher needs; handling budgetary or financial issues; visits from central office personnel; student or school emergency; student scheduling; and advising students on course/school/life matters.

Section E sought data in preparing for a teaching principal position as well as the origin and future of the position. Candidates were questioned whether their university training prepared them for their current position. Furthermore, this section

questioned participants how the position was created. Subjects were requested to select one answer only or to provide another reason not supplied. Some of the available options were: it was always a teaching principal position for as long as the participant knew; the combination of the positions was due to a direct reduction in the teaching staff; it had developed because of declining enrolments; financial conditions of the employer; and the principal role was added to teaching responsibilities as a result of the lost of the previous principal or to meet accreditation requirements.

In this section of the instrument candidates were also requested to provide. with concise responses, recommendations which they felt were necessary for individuals to enjoy success in the position. Lastly, candidates were asked to select what they felt was the future of the teaching principal position in their school. Subjects were asked to select one option only. The options available for selection included: the position will become two independent positions filled by two completely different people; declining enrolments and costs will eventually lead to closure of the school within the next five years consequently there will be no position; the position will become solely administrative in the future; the position will more than likely stay the same; or the position will encompass more teaching duties in the future.

Validity

The questionnaire was field tested first with two principals currently teaching for the 97/98 school year. Gay (1987) feels that two or three subjects are adequate for such a task which would ensure validation of the questionnaire: that is, to determine if the questionnaire measured what it was developed to measure. Furthermore, pre-testing would yield deficiencies and descriptions with respect to study objectives and data collected and as well provide an opportunity for suggestions to improve the instrument with respect to clarity of directions and questions asked. Both fielded tested subjects helped improve the instrument. One subject in particular suggested that level of education obtained should be part of section A under demographic profile. The other subject recommended that some section of the instrument should deal with interruptions a teaching principal encounters throughout the school day.

Reliability of the instrument was determined by administering the questionnaire to the same subjects two weeks after the initial returns were received. Responses were analysed to see if they were consistent with their original responses.

Dealing with Non-Response

Each questionnaire was identified with a number and the location was recorded as to where the questionnaire was sent. After three weeks if no response was received

from the individual subjects, a second letter together with another survey was forwarded to those of who had not replied, encouraging them to complete the questionnaire. This ensured a higher response rate and thus more conclusive data which was truly representative of the target population.

Data Analysis

Since survey research deals with the incidence, distribution and relationships of educational, psychological, and sociological variables, experimental variables tend not to be manipulated by the researcher (Weirsma, 1995). Therefore, the variables under study were in the naturalistic setting. The responses given through the instrument provided a picture of teaching principal practices. From their responses, the researcher describes the characteristics of relative importance (as perceived by the subjects) and the frequency of the practices. Analysis was accomplished through calculations of central tendency where items warrant it and as well through the use of frequency distributions, histograms, and percentage tables which are included in the analysis of the data in the following chapters. Furthermore, data gathered for some items were synthesized through description. With this, the researcher explains the relationships and possible effects among the variables previously identified and provides answers to the research questions previously posed.

Conclusion

This chapter focussed to a large degree on the instrument used in this study. It detailed the types of questions to which candidates were asked to respond. Participants were asked to elaborate on some of the responses selected. The response rate of 45 out of 68 potential participants was deemed to be adequate considering changes and reforms being implemented in most of the districts at that time. The instrument provided a wide range of considerations pertaining to the teaching principalship that helped focus and direct the findings of this study.

Chapter 3

The Review of the literature

Pertinent to any study is the literature review. The purpose of this chapter is to determine what other researchers have learned about rural teaching principals in addition to gathering information relevant to this research problem. Little research has been published on the teaching principal, nevertheless the information garnered has been beneficial. This chapter is divided into four sections specifically:

A) The Principalship

B) The Typical Teaching Principal

C) Small Schools/Rural Communities

D) Challenges Facing the Teaching Principal

In understanding the whole concept of the rural teaching principal, the above aspects were explored to help clarify this relatively un-researched area.

The Principalship

The literature on educational administration focuses to a large degree on the complexities and problems faced by urban and suburban principals. Little literature is available on the duties and responsibilities of the rural teaching principal where the quality of administrative leadership and the quality of educational programming within the school is closely linked (Jacobson, 1988 & 1988B).

Cutler (1989) surmised that small schools were administered as if they were miniature larger schools. It was mistakenly assumed that rural and urban principals had the same duties and responsibilities thus "rural school leadership and programs are too often ignored in the studies..." (Chance & Lingren, 1988, p. 23.). However, because of their unique situation, rural principals quite often have a dual role, that of teacher and principal, and therefore have distinctive challenges and duties (Jacobson & Woodworth, 1990).

Researchers such as Hutto (1990), Grady (1990) and Lewis (1990) noted the strengths and weaknesses of rural schools. Few researchers, however, have focussed on the increasing pressures and responsibilities the rural principal encounters. Researchers such as Cross, Bandy and Gleadow (1980) concluded that "...principals and teachers in rural schools perceived isolation, lack of privacy, inadequate support services and lack of professional contacts to be the major disadvantages with working in a rural setting" (cited in Haughey & Murphy, 1983, p. 2.).

Duke (1988) stated that fatigue is a considerable challenge with the small town principalship, especially when dealing with "hundreds of human interactions, evenings filled with meeting and paper work, the pressures to meet impossible deadlines and the burdens of handling other people's problems" (p. 310.).

Chance and Lingren in their 1988 study of rural principals in rural South

Dakota concluded that geographical isolation is directly linked with professional isolation as rural administrators are often prevented from attending conferences and workshops because of their location. Good programs were also difficult to obtain because of this isolation and because of limited resources (Jacobson, 1988).

Grady in her 1990 study of rural Nebraska, concluded that the primary challenge with the teaching principalship was a lack of time because pressures of the dual role conflicted with each other. "Frequent interruptions, too many meetings, inadequate time to solve teacher problems, insufficient opportunities to complete teaching evaluations and to handle discipline problems, jobs interfering with each other, pressures of the dual role and teachers feeling ignored..." (Grady, 1990, p. 90.) were some of the demands placed on the teaching principal's time.

Schmuck and Schmuck (1990) performed a study of 25 different school districts in 21 Western states determined that teaching principals, even in apparently ideal settings, did meet pressing day to day challenges. According to Schmuck and Schmuck (1990), small town principals "...must balance academic deficits and emotional needs of children from broken families against a public outcry for student achievement" (p. 32.).

Notwithstanding, Duke(1988) illustrates the major inconvenience with the principalship or the teaching principalship is:

> The principalship is the kind of job where you're expected to be all things to all people. Early on if you're successful, you have gotten feedback that you are able to be all things to all people. And then you feel an obligation to continue doing that which in your own mind you know you're not capable of doing. And that causes some guilt (p. 310.)

The above statement outlines the root of some problems involved with the principalship. The four significant issues for principals are essentially the definition of their role, the power and authority to perform their job, relationships with colleagues and the respect, rewards and recognition associated with the job (Mackler, 1996).

Most people who seek the position of principal usually do so because they wish to lead the school in the direction they feel schools in general should aim (Sackney, 1980 &1981). Principals want their schools to reflect their vision. They seek to be influential, however, in doing so they encounter barriers which hinder or challenge their vision of the perfect school. Sackney (1980 &1981) classified these obstacles as dilemmas involved with the principalship:

1. Socialization Dilemma
2. Dilemma with Organizational Members
3. School-Community Relations Dilemma
4. The Trust Dilemma
5. Conflict Resolution Dilemma

6. Evaluation-Professional Growth Dilemma

7. Decision Making Dilemma

After accepting the principalship position, Bridges (1977) concludes, "...his powers are more often limited than s/he anticipates" (p. 206.). Sackney (1980) reaffirms Bridges' assumption which he defines as the socialization dilemma because principals realize, after they have accepted the position, that they actually have less power than they anticipated. Many principals lack the opportunity to veto the appointment of new teachers. Although principals have some influence, they do not have the unlimited right to transfer or dismissal of incompetent subordinates nor can they veto the appointment of new teachers.

> In many instances the power to make work assignments has been restricted by collective agreements. Furthermore, increased teacher professionalism and militancy together with declining enrolments and decreasing resources have contributed to an increased likelihood of disappointment for principals (Sackney, 1980, p. 1.).

Problems encountered with organizational members or subordinates usually arise (McPherson,1979, cited in Sackney,1980). MacPherson (1985) believes teachers, as members of an organization, view principals as a source of restriction. Principals, however, "...view teachers generally as uncontrollable and wanting to exercise power in areas which they do not have to do with and in things they should not be doing" (Sackney, 1980 p. 2.). Waller (1965) and Lortie (1975) claim that

outside the classroom, teachers want the principal to make their job less frustrating by dealing with difficult parents and students which becomes a challenge as each member has his/her own personal needs.

Furthermore,

> ...teachers want their principals to keep things on an even keel, to cater to the individual needs of staff members, to advocate the staff's point of view to administration (Central Office) and to seek suggestions from teachers before making decisions (Sackney, 1980, p. 2.).

While the principal is the one often sought for support, he/she must learn that "...they can't do everything" (Pigford, 1988, p. 118.).

Leithwood, Cousins and Smith (1990a) in a study on the nature of problems typically encountered by principals over the course of the school year, documented that one obvious area was with subordinates. They found that two thirds of the problems the typical principal encountered "...revolved around internal workings of the school, its staff and clients" (Leithwood, Cousins and Smith 1990b, p. 12.). Problems from external sources can be documented as well, especially from senior administrators. In the Leithwood et al. study, 73 of 907 respondents felt superordinate or senior administrators were sources of problems for principals.

> Senior administrators... place accountability demands on principals, visit their schools, provide approval or non-approval of principals' initiatives, request attendance by principals at board meetings for a variety of purposes, and insist on adherence to system procedures. (Leithwood et al. 1990c).

Furthermore, Barth, (1980) suggests that

> ...there is a huge discrepancy between what principals would like to do and what they really do. Most say they want to be instructional leaders who work closely with teachers, children, and curriculum. Instead...principals spend the bulk of their fragmented time in an elaborate juggling act. Principals rarely control their tasks, their time, or their location...few are able to shape the job as much as it shapes them (p. 6.).

Problematic for the school principal as well is school-community relations because he or she is caught in a dual accountability to staff and parents. Cooperation of all parties is essential in working in the school environment as "some degree of interaction between schools and their surrounding communities is inescapable" (Quarshie & Bergen, 1989). The principal here is caught in the middle as they are accountable to staff and to parents. Parental involvement is currently en vogue. Government has taken the initiative to ensure that each school have school councils with a large proportion of the representation being from the community and parents.

Some teachers generally feel that parent participation is currently sufficient. However, this latest push by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador is not new and some provinces, such as Saskatchewan, have taken the initiative to make parental involvement in schools mandatory through legislation. Principals "...shall establish mutually acceptable and beneficial channels for communication between the school and parents of pupils" (Renihan, 1983, Saskatchewan Education Act, 1978).

Through recent and future changes, the government of Newfoundland and

Labrador is commandeering this partnership of school principals with local community groups and parents via new school councils. The potential dilemma facing today's principal, however, is evident as Pigford contends:

> ...to build such relationships I served on local boards, regularly attended community functions, and participated in community activities. It was not uncommon for me to be involved in community events at least three weekends each month. While I found this role very rewarding, it was also very time-consuming (Pigford, 1988, p. 118.).

Trust is largely built on the ability of individuals to view situations or problems in the same way (Leithwood, Cousins, & Smith, 1990a). Cooperative action on both parties is essential in working in the school environment. The problem for the principal is magnified when the individuals concerned, such as staff and students in particular, do not view situations or problems in the same way (Leithwood, Cousins, & Smith, 1990b).

The prevalent theme throughout all the difficulties endured by principals can largely be attributed to time or a lack of it (Jacobson, 1988, Grady, 1990, Engelking, 1990, Sackney, 1980, Bates, 1993, Duke, 1988, Williamson and Campbell, 1987, Housego, 1993). Williamson and Campbell (1987) attributed four main factors to principal stress and consequently to burnout which include management of time, relations with supervisors and subordinates, and matters of finance. The demands on principals' time--not being able to manage it, not having enough of it, as well as the

demands put on it--was the factor of interest that caused the most stress. Subjects felt.

> ...my work was frequently interrupted by staff members who wanted to talk...I had to participate in school activities outside normal working hours at risk of sacrificing my personal family life...I have too heavy of a work load. one that I cannot possibly finish in the normal work day (Williamson and Campbell, 1987, p. 110.).

Today principals brave a multitude of predicaments which attribute to increased occupational stress and undoubtedly lead to an adverse effect on the principals' job performance. Consequently, the overall result could very well be a negative impact on the delivery of educational services in schools.

The Typical Teaching Principal in Small Schools

> ...teaching and administering small schools is different from teaching and and administering metropolitan schools. Isolation, limited resources, limited services, and staff limitations increase the responsibilities of rural teachers and administrators (Gardener and Edington, 1982, p. 18).

Gleaning the literature, a demographic profile of the teaching principal is not readily available. However, a ten year study conducted by Doud (1989) in the United States determined that the typical teaching principal is a "white, married male in his 40s" with the average age being 47 years (Doud, 1989). A ratio of male to female principals was determined to be four to one in a study performed by Doud (1989) at

the elementary level. A ratio of twenty-four to one at the secondary level was noted in the study performed by Pellicier, Anderson, Keefe, Kelly and McCleary (1988).

Schmuck and Schmuck in 1990, shadowed 38 small town principals over a two day period and observed them in meetings. They found that the mean ages of these principals were 48 for the male and 43 for the female principals. The female principals served in that capacity on average for about six years while their male counterparts served for ten years. It is duly noted in studies that women and minorities are far from equally represented in the administrative role in comparison to their male counterparts. "While women comprise 69% of the overall teaching positions in the nation, they hold only a fraction of the administrative positions" (Feistritzer, 1988, cited in Chance and Neuhauser, 1991, p. 5.). Fauth (1984) asserted that only 20% of elementary principals currently in the United States were female and at the secondary level less than 4% were female. Projects such as The Equal Educational Opportunities Office of the South Dakota Division of Education was designed for women and minorities. However, Chance and Neuhauser (1991) recommend that "unless programs are developed to address the issue of under representation of women and minorities as administrators, the gap will continue to widen" (p. 5.).

In addition to being white, male and relatively young, the typical rural teaching

principal generally possesses five administrative years of experience or less in their respective principalships (Muse & Thomas, 1989). In their 1989 study, Muse and Thomas found that 52% of the subjects in seven Western United States indicated they had five years or less experience in total. The rural principalship is frequently used as "proving grounds" or as "stepping stones" to other administrative positions often in larger urban areas in the same or other school districts, according to many researchers such as Muse & Thomas (1989). In fact, administrative experience is seen as an acquired asset prior to seeking urban positions (Jacobson, 1988, cited in Hurley, 1992). Muse and Thomas (1989) maintain that rural schools provide experience for the novice administrator who eventually wants to secure a position in an urban school resulting in principalship turn over every two or three years. Regrettably the turn over rate for teachers and administrators in small rural schools is high (Muse and Thomas, 1991).

Administrators who had grown up in rural or small towns were inclined to apply for administrative positions in these towns and do so after having taught a number of years in the same school or another school in the district (Muse & Thomas, 1989). Administrators are employed after having "proven himself" (Muse and Thomas, 1991, p. 10.). Nonetheless, the trend is still to "seek candidates from outside the district who fit the community's image of a principal..."(Muse & Thomas,

1991, p. 10.). Muse and Thomas (1991) propose that the terms "fit" and "image" are rather ambiguous as the typical administrator is indisputably "young, white, and unquestionably male" (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983).

Important changes are presently occurring in the field of education in this province which will undoubtedly alter dramatically the configuration and future governance of schools. Teachers are seeking greater empowerment (Jacobson, 1988) and thus more input into decision making. Administration is becoming more decentralized in some areas. As Lamitie argues,

> ...bigger is no longer considered to be necessarily better when it comes to determining the optimum size for educational governance. Smaller, site based units of school governance may offer students and communities significant educational benefits that outweigh many of the advantages previously thought to be gained only through increased centralization (Lamitie, 1989, p 38).

Furthermore, Swanson and Jacobson (1989) (cited in Jacobson & Woodworth, 1990) contend that as a result of recent advancements in technology intended learning outcomes will be independent of school or district size. Hence, in order to improve school effectiveness, small schools do not necessarily need to consolidate.

Small Schools/Rural Communities

The small school primarily is viewed as a miniature self contained unit of

larger schools (Cutler, 1989) designed to serve "...the varied needs and interests of small groups of students" (Nachtigal, 1982, p. 19). The large school is built with specialization in mind whereas the design of the small school should, according to Nachtigal (1982), encompass distinct yet connected characteristics which distinguish small and urban schools such as basic human relations, flexible operations, versatile personnel, and "facilities must serve multiple purposes and pupils (who) participate in policy and planning" (Nachtigal, 1982, p. 19.).

Miller (1995) believes that the role of the school has to be reviewed. Spears et al. (1990) suggest, in fact, that a community school can be developed by building and sustaining strong ties between the community and school. Furthermore,

> Rural communities may have a head start...because schools have traditionally played a central role in the life of communities. In addition to providing basic education, they often serve as a cultural center in the community where athletics, drama programs, music, and other social activities play a vital part in community life and identity (Miller, 1995, p. 164).

Cross, Leahy and Murphy (1989) affirm that the school is an essential and priceless asset to any rural community because it enhances its worth and prosperity in addition to providing a variety of social, cultural, civic, and educational services. "The school stands at centre stage, providing the community with a sense of identity, a source of employment, and a common meeting place" (Miller, 1995, p.93.).

Nora Hutto (1990) suggests that there is often a high graduation rate, as high

as 100%, in small rural schools because the atmosphere is more relaxed. There is more "freedom to add courses which may not be a part of the normal curriculum "(p. 8). Special courses can be easily implemented often due to the relatively short bureaucratic chain of command.

Challenges Facing the Teaching Rural Principal

The advantages of the rural principalship are noteworthy (Hutto, 1990, Grady, 1990). It can be seen as the epitome of the principalship. A cosy school in a quiet neighbourhood with a small competent staff that operates as a close knit family, a realistic number of students per class and a supportive superintendent who is always commenting on a great job being done is undoubtedly the ideal. The rapport and support between the school and students and parents is an objective many urban principals seek to achieve. Gleaning the literature, however, it should be noted that some problems faced by rural administrators are definitely similar to those faced by their urban counterparts. Yet other challenges in the rural principalship differ distinctly from urban administrators.

In November 1990, Schmuck and Schmuck did a study on 21 western states in 25 different school districts and found that teaching principals did brave significant day to day challenges, even in settings that appeared to be the ideal. "Even though principals of small town schools do not encounter some of the social

problems posed by their urban counterparts, such as drugs or crime on the school grounds, they do face a multitude of common administrative problems." (Schmuck and Schmuck, 1990, p 32.).

Grady, in her 1990 study of rural Nebraska, noted the primary disadvantage involved with the teaching principalship was the issue of lack of time as pressures of the dual role interfered with each other. Frequent interruptions, numerous meetings, insufficient time to deal with teacher problems, teacher evaluations, and discipline problems demanded equal time.

Duke (1988) purports that fatigue is largely a problem with the small town principalship. The position involves "...the long days filled with hundreds of human interactions, the evenings filled with meetings and paperwork, the pressure to meet impossible deadlines and the burden of handling other people's problems" (Duke, 1988, p. 310.)

One problem that is evident in the literature stems from the principal's dual responsibility and divided loyalty between teachers and parents (Goldring, 1986). "The principal (teaching) must support the teacher's authority but must also respond to the interest of the parents..." (Goldring, 1986, p. 116) which is particularly challenging when the demands of both are in conflict.

Chance and Lingren (1988) suggest geographical isolation often prevents rural

administrators from attending workshops and conferences resulting in professional isolation. Furthermore, Stammen (1991) contends that if computers are seldom used by experienced rural administrators then professional isolation may be further magnified. Jacobson (1988) believes rural administrators often experience hardships in obtaining access to good programs due to their isolation and limited district resources. Barnett (1989) and Kidder (1989) both maintain that administrators and teachers are isolated from other professionals. Furthermore, a report by Cross, Bandy, and Gleadow (1980) noted that "...principals and teachers in rural schools perceived isolation, lack of privacy, inadequate support services and lack of professional contacts to be the major disadvantages with working in a rural setting" (cited Haughey and Murphy, 1983, p. 2.).

Interestingly, Muse and Thomas (1991) offer that inexperience with the principalship in small rural schools is largely responsible for the majority of problems these administrators experience. Rural principalships are often used as "stepping stones" to other administrative positions often in larger urban areas in the same or other school districts. Muse and Thomas (1991) in their study of rural principals in seven Western States reported that 52% of the principals studied at the time possessed five years or less administrative experience.

Further, Muse and Thomas add,

> Because large school districts often require prior experience of the candidates for principalships, rural schools provide that experience for the novice administrator who eventually wants an urban position. Therefore, rural superintendents and school boards who seek non-rural candidates often learn that these candidates are only looking for a temporary job in order to gain experience. Then the rural principalship begins to turn over every two or three years, creating unsettled conditions for the rural school and community (Muse and Thomas, 1991, p.10.).

The teacher/administrator turnover rate in small rural schools is high when compared to urban and suburban areas. The ability of the principal to retain his or her teachers without losing them to the larger towns where services and living arrangements are likely to be much more attractive is increasingly a challenge. In fact Schmuck and Schmuck (1990) found most teachers in rural areas were drawn to the suburbs and larger cities where they could have reasonable salaries and desirable living arrangements. "Only people who had grown up in small towns--and who wanted to live in them -- would apply for openings, and many of them would leave for greener pastures after only a year or two." (Schmuck and Schmuck, 1990, p. 33.). Being a successful teaching principal in any setting requires a precarious juggling act. Small town principals like other administrators "...must balance the academic deficits and emotional needs of children from broken families against a public outcry for higher student achievement" (Schmuck and Schmuck, 1990, p. 32). This objective has been one of the more recent objectives proposed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in addition to the institution of educational reforms.

With recent demands for change in the Newfoundland setting

> ...they (Principals) must strive to upgrade the quality of classroom teaching while soothing the battered egos of teachers beleaguered by mandates for change, inadequate resources, and parents' accusations. They must manage their meagre budgets efficiently while calming the frustrations of staff members who have not received a significant pay raise in years. (Schmuck and Schmuck, 1990, p. 33.).

The majority of communities in Newfoundland and Labrador were, and to a large extent still are, directly or indirectly, tied to the fishery. The moratorium on the cod fishery has been the catalyst for the downward spiralling economy in many rural areas and consequently families are unable to adapt. Similarly, Schmuck and Schmuck (1990) noted that families in the Western United States, because of failing economies, were not encouraging their children to be more productive in respect to education or to teachers' expectations. Characteristically, low motivation and achievement intensified.

Notwithstanding, many of the problems currently faced by our rural schools may be more the result of under-administration than poor administration. As Nachtigal believes,

> Since small rural districts often confront severe fiscal constraints, their electorates sometimes attempt to restrict the growth of their school budgets by capping the size of their districts' administration. In order to "make do", the rural administrator is often forced to assume more responsibilities than can be adequately managed in the time allowed. Unfortunately, if not performed well, any one of these disparate roles can affect negatively the quality of the educational program (Nachtigal, 1982, p. 33.).

In some small rural schools it would not be surprising for the principal to be a full time teacher, part time counsellor (in an unofficial capacity), and an athletic coach in addition to his/her administrative duties. Few individuals have the ability or time to address as many diverse responsibilities which are involved with such a position.

The primary objective of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, in addition to cost cutting initiatives to reorganize the education system, have been education reforms for higher achievement. However, with these current directives for change in Newfoundland and Labrador

> ...they (principals) must strive to upgrade the quality of classroom teaching while soothing the battered egos of teachers beleaguered by mandates for change, inadequate resources, and parents' accusations. They must manage their meagre budgets efficiently while calming the frustrations of staff members who have not received a significant pay raise in years (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1990, p. 33.).

Further to this, graduate university training programs have ambiguously ignored the rural principalship specifically (Jacobson et al., 1990, Chance et al. 1988, Grady, 1990). As Jacobson and Woodworth (1990) reiterate,

> ...it was professors and their theory based approach to preparation that were most singled out for criticism by rural respondents. The comments concerning administrative preparation made by the total group of respondents indicated a clear call for experienced-based training (p. 6.)

Negative perceptions about university-based preparation may also explain why rural administrators in the above studies felt their university programs were too

often theoretical and needed to improve or to emphasize the more practical aspects of the rural principalship.

While the findings of the quantitative study did support some of the assumptions discussed in the literature review, other salient points also surfaced. The respondents did concur with Williamson and Campbell (1987) regarding the considerable workload. Seventy-one percent of the participants lend support to Doud's theory that the typical teaching principal is male and in his forties while 36 % reiterate Muse and Thomas' theory that the typical rural principal is young and inexperienced, often with five years or less in administration. Interestingly, 31% of the respondents were female in this study..

One significant piece of information garnered from this study , which was not readily available or provided in other studies, was the educational background of the participants. It can be assumed that all administrators have at least an education degree, however, 24 % of the respondents have completed their Masters' degree: 38% are in the process of obtaining a Masters' degree; 38% have completed at least a Bachelor of Education and are pursuing or have completed some courses at the Graduate level.

Undoubtedly, the literature review is as relevant as the questionnaire survey in providing guidance and focus for this study. The literature, in particular, helped

raise additional ideas and recommendations which are explored in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

Findings of the Study

Important to any new study are its findings. They may support the literature previously undertaken on this topic or they may refute some prior conclusions. Occasionally, a researcher may be fortunate to find additional relevant information which augments the area of study under research.

This study and its findings were significant in that there has been only one other study of this kind undertaken in the Newfoundland and Labrador context (Gale, 1998). With so little research conducted on Newfoundland and Labrador teaching administrators, this study and consequently its findings contribute in a significant way to the scarce knowledge base on this interesting topic.

Survey data can be analysed using many appropriate procedures. In many survey descriptive studies, the majority of the results can be reported in a descriptive manner. Results are reported using tables, bar charts and histograms while some indicate the percentage of respondents who selected each alternative for each item. The findings of this study are presented in a descriptive manner supported by tables, bar charts, histograms and percentages (note to reader: all percentages are recorded to the nearest percent). Specifically the findings are primarily described according to how they appear in the questionnaire with reference to the literature review. This

way relationships between variables can be investigated by comparing some responses on one item with some responses on other items.

Of the 84 teaching principals selected for the study in the Spring of 1997, 16 respondents replied that their schools would not re-open for the school year 1997/1998. Understandably, these principals felt they could not partake in the study as earlier anticipated thereby reducing the sample size from 84 to 68. Because of the added duties and responsibilities thrust upon these principals with closing the school, they felt unable to take the time to respond to the study. They responded that the descriptions they supplied themselves would not necessarily or accurately reflect the average teaching principal. However, 45 respondents of the target population did reply to the study rendering a response rate of approximately 66%.

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire (see Appendix A). Section A of the instrument itself dealt mainly with demographic information of the teaching administrator such as gender, age, level of education, number of years teaching, administrative experience, grade levels, and type of school.

Age/Gender

The majority of the respondents in this study were in the 41 to 50 year old range; specifically 53% were in this age group. This compares with Doud's 1989 study which noted that the average age of the teaching principal was 47 years.

Aside from 53% (24/45) being in the 41 to 50 year old range, the remaining respondents indicated the following: just over 12% (5/45) were less than 30 years old, almost 29% (13/45) ranged from 31 to 40 years, and lastly 3 respondents were over 50 years. The following histogram summarizes at a glance the breakdown of the ages

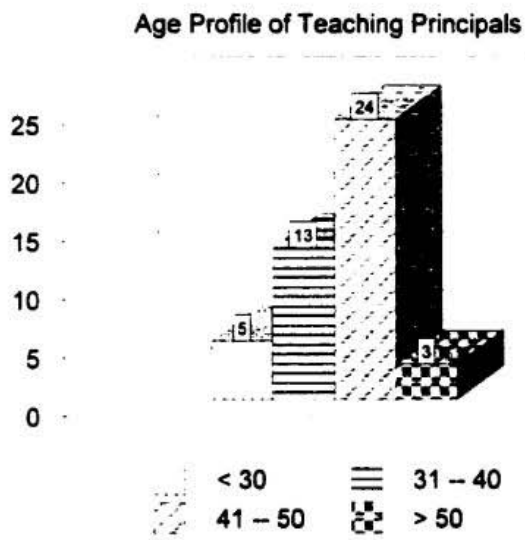


Figure 4-1

of the participants.

"While women comprise 69% of the teaching position in the nation, they hold only a fraction of the administrative positions" (Feistritzer, 1988, cited in Chance and Neuhauser, 1991, p. 5). Of the 45 respondents in this study almost 69% (31/45) were male and just over 31% (14/45) were female. Interestingly, at the K-6 level the ratio

of male to female was very close to 1 to 1 with 11 participants being male and 10 female. The ratio is considerably larger with 18 respondents being male, and 3 female, in schools that were classified K-12. Lastly, at the secondary level, of schools which housed grades 7 to 12, 3 respondents were male and 1 female.

Level of Education

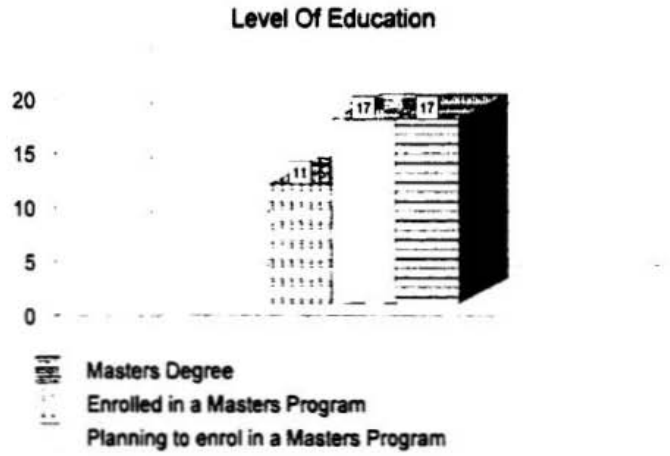


Figure 4-2

One significant piece of information garnered from this study, which was not readily available or provided in other studies, was the educational background of the participants. As figure 4-2 depicts, 24 % of the respondents have completed their Masters' degree; 38% are in the process of obtaining a Masters' degree; 38% have completed at least a Bachelor of Education and are pursuing or have completed some

courses at the Graduate level.

Teaching/ Administrative/ Combined Experience

To compare the administrative experience of the participants to the number of years these participants have been in the educational field, this section of the instrument was deliberately divided into distinct categories, namely, the number of years teaching, the time devoted as an administrator, and the combination of the two. In describing this section of the findings, these distinctions were honoured. Figures 4-3, 4-4, and 4-5 respectively summarize these categories briefly.

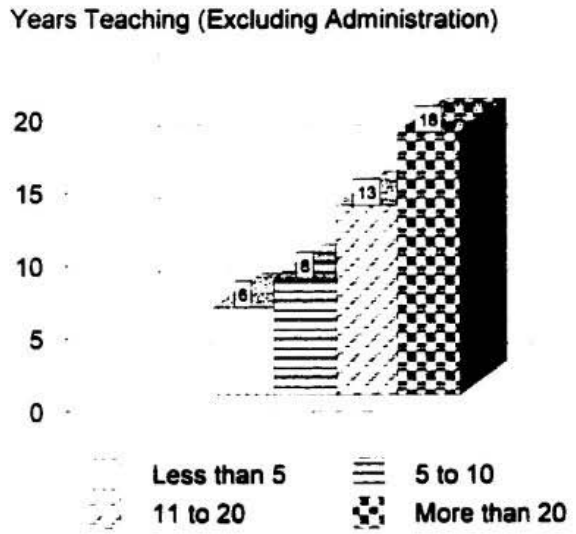


Figure 4-3

The target population had considerable experience in the teaching field. As figure 4-3 shows, 38% (18/45) of the subjects possess more than 20 years teaching

experience; 29% or 13 participants possess 11 to 20 years experience; 18% (8/45) indicated they have 5 to 10 years teaching experience, and lastly 13% (6/45) noted less than 5 years teaching experience. These particular respondents with less than 5 years were from areas considered isolated.

The majority of the participants have less than 15 years teaching experience. The majority of these respondents are relatively new to administration as well.

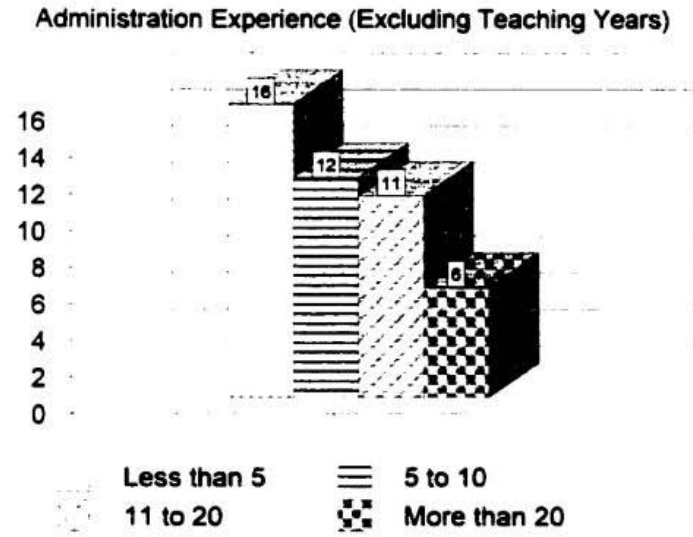


Figure 4-4

Figure 4-4 indicates that the majority of respondents in this study are new to administration possessing 10 years administrative experience or less. Specifically, figure 4-3 shows 28 of the respondents or 62% possess less than ten years in an administrative position. Interestingly, only 6 of 45 respondents or 13% indicated

they possessed 20 or more years experience as an administrator. The preceding graph illustrates the total years the group possessed in experience as an administrator.

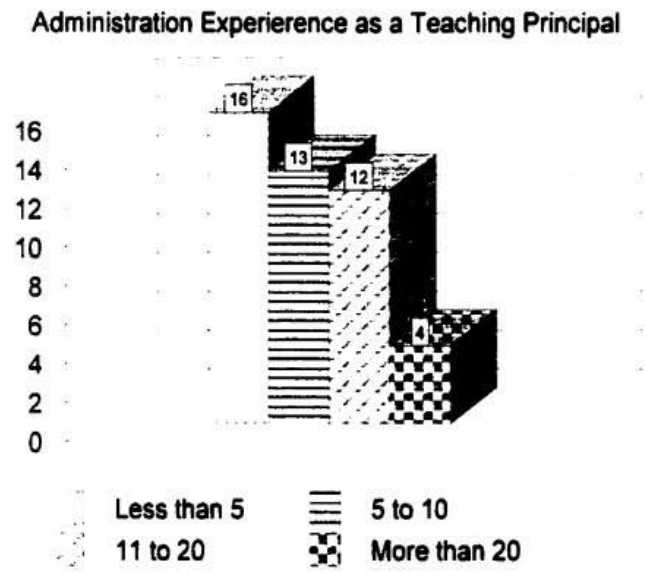


Figure 4-5

Figure 4-5 illustrates the experience of the respondents possessed as a teaching principal. While 36% (16/ 45) possess less than five years as a teaching principal. 29% (13/45) of the sample have five to ten years as a teaching principal. Furthermore, 27% (12/45) have been in this dual role for 11 to 20 years while only 9% (4/45) have 20 or more years dedicated as a teaching principal.

Spectrum of Schools/Enrolments

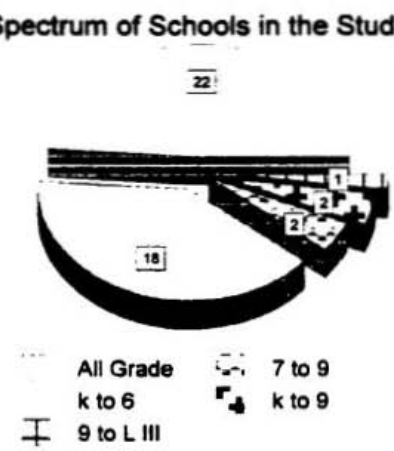


Figure 4-6

The preceding figure 4-6 illustrates the various school types administered by the participants who responded to this study. Forty nine percent of the 45 respondents (22/45) indicated they administered all grade schools (K–Level III) and 40% (18/45) stated that they managed schools which housed some or all of grades Kindergarten to six. Additionally, a little over 4% (2/45) indicated their respective schools were Kindergarten to grade 9, while one respondent reported that he administered a high school encompassing grades 9 to Level III. Lastly, a little over 4% (2/45) also indicated they administered schools which housed grades 7 to 9 only.

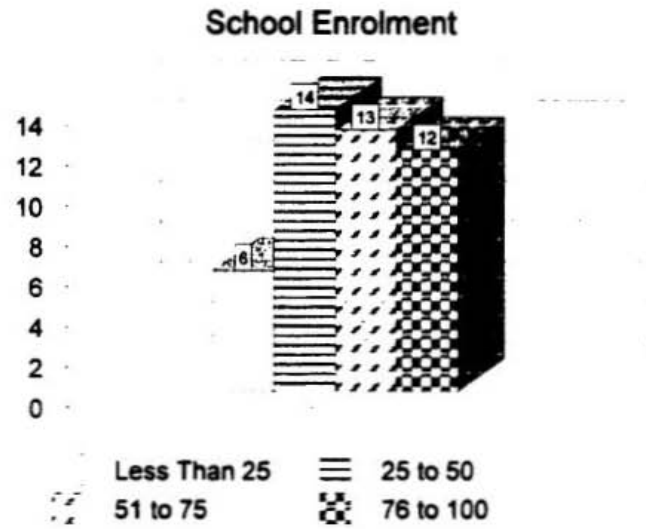


Figure 4-7

Figure 4-7 reflects the number of students enrolled in the schools administered by the teaching principals who responded to this study. Interestingly, 13% (6 /45) of the surveyed group have schools with enrolments of less than 25 pupils. Thirty one percent (14 /45) of the participants administered schools with enrolments between 25 and 50 students. In addition, 29% (13/45) of the teaching principals are located in schools with enrolments between 51 and 75 pupils while 27% (12/45) are in schools with a student population between 76 and 100.

Professional Support Services

According to the participants who responded to this survey, secretarial and guidance services are essential to the administration of their respective schools. Because of the combined duties of teacher and principal, the position is more

challenging if the school is without a secretary. The teaching principals surveyed in this study emphatically stated that secretaries are vital and provide an important service to any administrator. Notwithstanding, 21% (9/45) of the respondents indicated that they have no secretary to assist them in administrative matters. In fact, 76% (34/45) of the subjects commented that they have secretarial services for less than 15 hours per week. This part of the demographic information section was particularly a "sore spot" for some of the respondents as some replied with sarcastic responses aimed at continuous government/board cutbacks over the years or lack of funding provided to the school. It was not uncommon for respondents to state with emphasis "what is a secretary?!"and "secretary???".

Secondly, guidance services or the lack thereof was another bone of contention for those participants who responded to this study. Because the majority of respondents administered in schools with enrolments of 51 to 100 inclusive, guidance services were allocated according to 'need'. Guidance counsellors play an important role in schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of their duties include, but are not limited to, scheduling students' courses, counselling students and teaching part time. Furthermore, some are asked to fill in for principals when administrators are out of school for meetings with their respective boards or these administrators are availing of professional development. Forty four percent (

20 out of 45) of the respondents clearly indicated they have no guidance counsellor. Four percent (2/45) noted they have a half time guidance counsellor with teaching responsibilities within the school. While 36% (16/45) indicated that they have the use of guidance services, the services are nevertheless shared with other schools in that district. Understandably, a number of concerns were noted by the participants. "When we need a counsellor for that day he is assigned to another school." The frustration arises when the guidance counsellor has a set schedule and may be divided among as many as four schools. "When we need him (the guidance counsellor), we can never get him!"

The remaining portion of the subjects varied in their responses. One individual stated he had 0.1 of a unit for guidance. Since this participant did not elaborate on this comment .1 of a unit could possibly mean that the guidance counsellor was teaching 90% of the time with the remaining 10% allocated for guidance services. Another teaching administrator added that he had access to guidance services "only two periods in a fourteen day cycle". Again, as this participant did not elaborate, this could mean 2 periods in one morning of the week, the middle of the day, or on separate days throughout the cycle. As the majority of the school months have 20 teaching days, a guidance counsellor may be in that school only twice a month. Additionally, other respondents made frequent comments such

as "on call when not in class" which could mean that their guidance counsellor taught the majority of his/her time.

Multi-grading/Teaching Duties

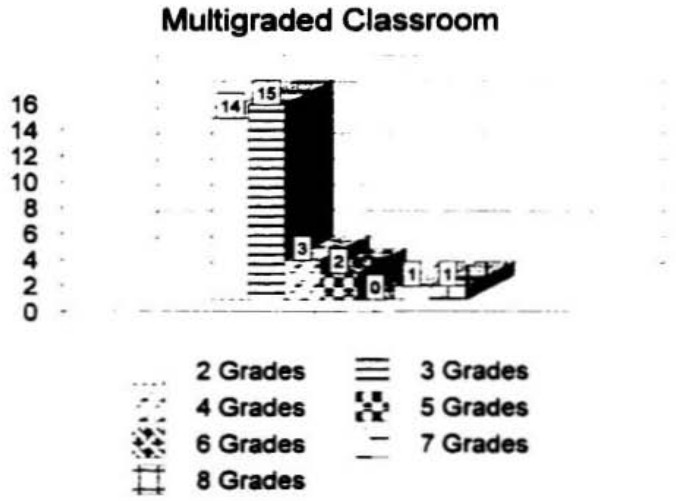
Section B of the instrument focussed on multi-graded situations and actual teaching duties performed by the principal. Understandably, situations of multi-grading are prevalent in schools where the student population is under 100 pupils.

The assigned teaching units in the schools were allotted according to the government formula for student enrolment. Although one would assume that 1 teacher per 22 students is ideal according to government allocations, it was apparent in some schools that this formula was not adopted. In 5 of the schools, it was noted that they were understaffed by .25 of a teaching unit and in some cases .5 of a unit. These schools have to avail of educational support services from other schools: units shared throughout the district particularly in guidance and through itinerant teachers.

Hence, the number of teaching units in the schools would be proportional to the number of students enrolled in the school. With a student enrolment of 80, for example, the government should allocate at least 4.5 units. Twenty one percent of the respondents stated that they had 7 or more teaching units in their school including themselves with student populations of 75 to 100.

With a very small school where the enrollment is considerably less, (25 pupils

and under) there may be 1.5 units allotted to this school. Therefore, multi-grading is sometimes unavoidable in order to lower costs and to keep the schools viable in the respective community. Yet, it can be considered stressful and problematic for principals as well as teachers who have to teach in these situations. The findings in this area were particularly alarming as 80% (36/45) of the respondents stated they are teaching in a multi-graded situation. Furthermore, as figure 4-8 depicts, 100% of



Number of Grades in One Class Principal Taught

Figure 4-8

these respondents were teaching 2 or more grades at the same time. Specifically, 31% (14/45) taught 2 grade levels at the same time while, just under half (49%, 22/45) of them were teaching in multi-graded situations which encompassed three

or more grades at the same time.

Noteworthy, a little over 16% (7/45) added that they taught in classrooms that encompassed 4 or more grades at the same time. As these individuals did not elaborate on their specific situation, it may be assumed these individuals taught the entire day in this multi-graded setting. This situation would not be unusual, especially if these four or more grade levels totalled 8 students.

However, one of these teaching principals did indicate that he was teaching 5 different grade levels at the same time with a school enrolment of less than 25 pupils and a teaching allocation of 3 units including himself. This individual taught grades 5 to 9 including the subjects mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, health and religion.

There also appears to be a direct correlation between the teaching duties of the principal and the number of pupils attending the respective school. As with multi-grading, the lower the student enrolment, the higher the percentage of assigned teaching duties. Section B of the instrument also dealt with the percentage of the time the teaching administrator actually spent in the classroom. Ninety six percent (43/45) subjects in this study have to perform teaching duties each work day. Two respondents indicated that they teach "5 hours in a fourteen day cycle" and the other "30 hours per 14 day cycle" respectively. Figure 4-7 depicts how much time the

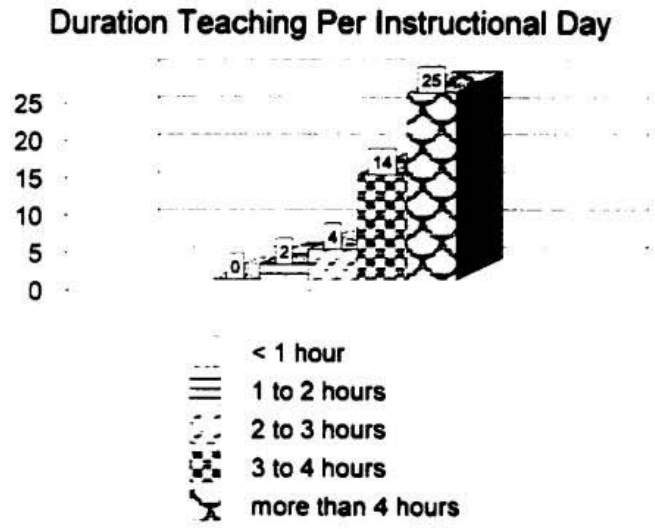


Figure 4-9

majority of the participants teach per instructional day.

With respect to figure 4-9, 4% (2/45) spent 1 to 2 hours per day teaching; 9% (4/45) 2 to 3 hours per day teaching, 31% (14/45) 3 to 4 hours per day teaching and 56% (25/45) spent each day teaching with no preparatory or administrative periods pertaining to teaching matters such as lesson preparation, correcting, or meetings. These 56% of the subjects who taught more than 4 hours per day, often in multi-graded classrooms, administered schools with student populations of 25 pupils or less.

Accepting the Position/Re-Evaluating

Section C of the instrument dealt mainly with reasons why the teaching

principals accepted the challenge of the dual role and why they would take on the challenge of that role knowing the pressures associated with the teaching principalship. Respondents were asked to rank the primary reasons why they accepted the position from 1 to 10 where 1 is the primary reason why they accepted the position and 10 is the least reason. These reasons reflect those predominant in the literature. The reasons available for ranking included the following:

A increased income

B I wanted to still have direct ties with the classroom because of my enjoyment for teaching (enjoyment of teaching)

C the opportunity of an entry level position would increase my chances of obtaining an administrative position (board or school level) elsewhere (Experience for Positions Elsewhere)

D the challenge of the dual role intrigued me (Challenge Intriguing)

E the school needed a principal that required the dual role (School Needed Teaching Principal)

F I enjoy both positions (Enjoy Both Positions)

G I really had no choice. My job description was being re-defined as a result of losing teaching unit(s) and board/government financial restraints (Cutbacks/Redefined Job Description)

H accepting the dual role would allow me to be up to date on classroom strategies and pedagogy techniques (Awareness of Classroom Activities)

I I enjoy small schools, consequently the teaching principal is inevitable

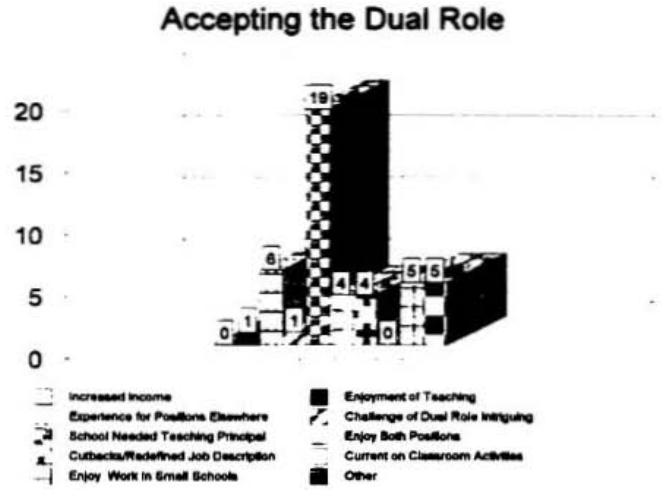


Figure 4-10

(Enjoy Small Schools)

J Other (please explain)

Figure 4-10 depicts the information forwarded by the respondents. The most frequent reason chosen by 42% (19/45) of the respondents stated reason E. "the school required a principal that required the dual role." If the respondents wanted to enter into administration, they had to accept this position as advertised: an administrative position with teaching duties and responsibilities. Ninety eight percent (44/45) of the subjects had not had a prior administrative position in other schools or other school districts before accepting their current position.

The second reason chosen by 13% (6/45) of the respondents was reason C. "the opportunity to obtain experience is essential for obtaining other administrative positions either at the board level or elsewhere in the school district". Thirteen

percent (6/45) of the respondents selected having to accept all duties included with the administrative position if they wanted that position. Reason G incorporated the idea of a lack of choice as job descriptions were being redefined due to loss of teaching units as a result of recent and ongoing government reforms. Therefore, some administrators felt they were forced to take on the additional teaching duties because of their imposed redefined job descriptions.

Surprisingly, none of the subjects chose reason A or H as one of their top three reasons for accepting the position. Increased incomes are described in similar studies in the United States and was often given as a reason why teachers wanted to accept administrative positions (Muse et al. 1991., Jacobson and Woodworth 1990). Nevertheless, 52% (23/45) of the respondents indicated under 'additional comments' that their bonuses were rather insubstantial in comparison to their work load. Some comments including: "$5000 a year to do a second job"; "I work at least 70 hours a week and get paid for 40"; "...the bonus is insignificant" indicate a dissatisfaction with the incentives being paid to teaching principals. Coupled with this the small bonus may be the added burden of purchasing all groceries for the entire year in September at a considerable cost. This added burden is further compounded when the teaching principal is starting a new position and/or moving to a new community. Four of the forty-five surveyed added that purchasing all groceries at the beginning

of the year was a distasteful venture because they had to get bank loans in order to do so. With the already high cost of food, adding interest on top of the purchase, left a bitter taste. However, increased income was apparently not a major consideration in this study.

Additional reasons offered in the section entitled "Other" included: "With only 3.5 teaching units for 50 some odd students you have to be a teaching principal if you want to be in Administration...I had no choice really." Several other responses by some administrators confirmed the idea of being forced to take on the duties of a teaching principal because job security was a paramount concern. "This job was offered to me. If I were to remain in Labrador, I had to accept this extra responsibility". As one administrator professed "..not much else available" while another respondent stated "the extra security (position wise) of being an administrator while being a young teacher."

While the most frequent reason in this section was that the school required a principal to fulfill the dual role, there was surprisingly a predominant theme prevalent in the section entitled "Other". Eleven percent (5/45) of the administrators who responded to the question why they accepted the challenge of the dual role added that job security was the deciding factor. Because of the location of the school, low pupil enrolment and reduced teacher allocation, these teaching administrators felt 'forced'

to accept the positions if they wished to remain in administration or the teaching profession for that matter. According to one respondent "with only 3.5 units for K-12 you have to be a teaching principal if you are in admin". Another respondent added. "I was the most junior teacher on staff. If I wanted a job I had to accept this

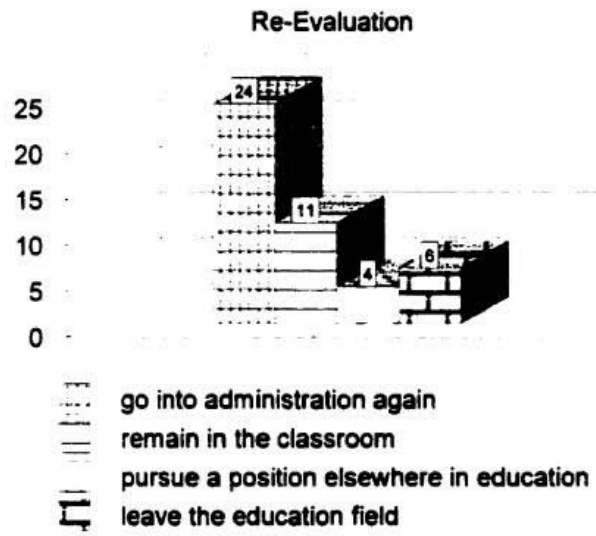


Figure 4-11

position because I was also the most qualified. I have a masters degree."

After considering their main reason for accepting the position, 53% (24/45) of the respondents indicated they would go into administration again. Although this is not necessarily serve as a direct indicator of job satisfaction, it could indicate there is some degree of satisfaction with their current position. As figure 4-11 shows,

almost one quarter of the sample taken, indicated they would prefer to remain in the classroom indicating they may prefer the teaching role. Approximately 9%(4/45) would pursue a position elsewhere in education. Thirteen percent (6/45) of the sample were extremely disappointed with their current role in education in the province and stated that they would rather leave the educational field all together to pursue careers elsewhere. Levels of dissatisfaction are largely attributed to the perceived disadvantages with the position which will be discussed fully in the following section.

Advantages/Disadvantages of the Dual Role

Advantages

The teaching principal is found in many different types of schools: not just those with an enrolment of less than 100. Various situations exist throughout the province whereby principals have teaching duties in student populations in excess of 100 pupils. The small school where ever it exists, however, has its advantages over larger urban schools. In this study, subjects were asked to rank the advantages of the dual position using a semantic differential ranking scale where 1 was least important advantage and 5 was the most important. "A semantic differential scale asks an individual to give a quantitative rating to the subject on a number of bipolar adjectives such as good-bad, friendly-unfriendly, positive negative" (Gay, 1992, p.

173). "In practice, however, these dimensions are frequently ignored and or replaced by other dimensions thought to be appropriate in a particular situation" (Gay, 1992, p. 173). The dimensions used in this study were least important-most important and least problematic-most problematic. In analysing the data, it was accepted that a response of 3 or higher would be considered significant and advantageous whereas a ranking of 1 or 2 was considered to be insignificant or inapplicable to their position.

Many advantages were garnered from the findings. Maintaining teaching skills, good rapport between parents and administration, camaraderie among the smaller staffs, experience, credibility with the staffs, knowledge of students and community, awareness of classroom activities, enjoyment and job security were the choices offered to respondents in this study. Figure 4-12 summarizes the sample

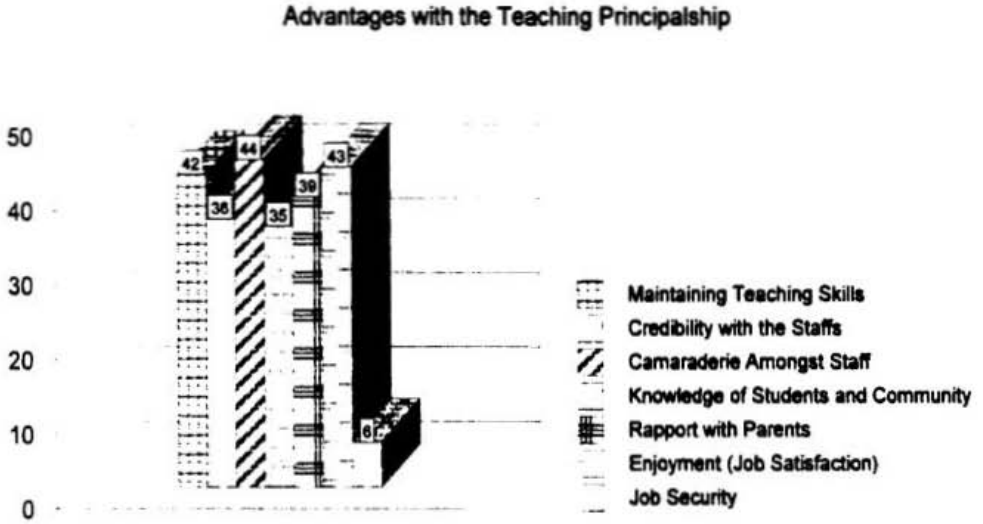


Figure 4-12

group's responses that provided a rating of 3 or higher for the advantages previously listed.

Maintaining teaching skills was considered to be a major advantage to the dual role, especially as 25% (11/45) of the respondents said that given the choice they would remain teaching. In this study, 94% (42/45) agreed that being able to practice their teaching skills was very important to their role as a teaching principal ranking it a 3 or higher. In fact, of this 94%, 74% (31/42) gave a ranking of 4 or 5 and the remaining 26% (11/42) gave this advantage a 3. Nevertheless, 6% (3/45) of the remaining respondents felt that maintaining pedagogical techniques was not important or advantages to their dual role.

As an administrator, awareness of classroom activities is vital in the instructional leadership process. Because teaching administrators have considerable teaching duties, not only are their teaching skills maintained but there is an in-depth personal experience of new and existing programs. A little over 82% (37/45) of the respondents felt that an awareness of classroom activities was a definite advantage as a result of the dual role. However, only little over 73% (33/45) felt they were familiar with current practices in the classroom. While not explicitly stated by the participants, professional isolation, may have contributed to the discrepancy between awareness of classroom activities and familiarity of current classroom practices.

Credibility with the staff is an advantage with any administrative position. This is usually acquired through vast experience from many educational positions, in addition to being in the position for an extended period of time, educational and academic accomplishments, personality, ability to handle difficult situations amongst staff and students as well as the ability of the administrator to lead in implementing change in the workplace (Jacobson & Woodworth, 1990). Eighty four percent (38/45) of the respondents ranked credibility with the staff 4 or higher as an advantage with the teaching principal position.

This credibility is further accentuated with the teaching principalship because other teachers have a greater appreciation of the challenges associated with this dual position. Their principals are "in the trenches along side them" as it were, sharing similar teaching duties, enjoyment and sometimes frustrations of the teaching experience.

Because of the acceptance of the principal as "one of us", as he/she also has assigned teaching duties, it is generally accepted that there is amongst the staff of small schools, a closeness which may not be easily accomplished with larger staffs. The small school often enjoys, because of its sheer numbers, a camaraderie amongst its staff that would be considered friendly, approachable and enjoyable. It would not be uncommon for small staffs to socialize outside school hours fostering friendships

as well as professional ties, especially in small communities where the isolation separates them from urban centres. In this study, 98% (44/45) of the participants agree, because they are accepted by the staff, camaraderie is good, beneficial and essential. Two percent (1/45) however, ranked this item 2.

As the teaching principal is in the classroom more often than his/her counterpart in an urban situation, many felt that the principal does know the students better. The teaching principal may be teaching, or may have taught, all the students throughout the course of the school year or over several years. Seventy eight percent (35/45) felt the principal does know the students better as a teaching principal and therefore considered this an advantage of the dual role. Since the teaching administrator knows his/her students well, then the evolution of problems is less likely and resolutions can be easily and readily found in most cases.

Notwithstanding a close rapport with students, cultivating a rapport with parents is another aspiration of many an administrator in education. The small school environment may not only allow for a good rapport with students but also with parents and the community-at-large. The school often serves social purposes in small communities such as meeting places and the use of gymnasium facilities. The teaching administrator not only has contact with the parents of pupils that he/she teaches but also with the community-at-large through groups and organizations.

Thus there is an element of acceptance, support from the community, and importantly, trust. Eighty seven percent (39/45) of the participants felt that maintaining good rapport with parents was an advantage inherent in the position, while 13% (6/45) felt that maintaining this rapport was not to their advantage whatsoever.

In addition, the level of satisfaction in performing the duties and responsibilities of both teacher and principal was considered to be advantageous. Ninety six percent (43/45) of the respondents rated job satisfaction with a 3 or higher on the Likert scale while 4% (2/45) gave a ranking of 2 or 1. If enjoyment of the dual role was determined to be an advantage with the position this could be directly related with job satisfaction and morale.

While job security was not provided in the instrument as an advantage, 13% (6/45) of the participants included security in their job as being advantageous in the section entitled 'Other'. Being relatively new to the teaching profession and knowing that the likelihood of a layoff at the end of the school year is considerably reduced when one is a teaching principal, is satisfying in and of itself. While one of these 6 respondents simply wrote "job security", another elaborated, "the extra security, position wise, of being an administrator while being a young teacher.".

Disadvantages

The advantages of the teaching principalship such as maintaining teaching skills and good rapport with the staff were noteworthy. Nevertheless, disadvantages also surfaced in this study, many of which reflected those noted in the literature review. These disadvantages were closely related to the teaching principalship position and could be considered inherent with the position itself.

In this particular section of the instrument, subjects were again asked to rank various disadvantages using a Likert scale where 1 was the least troublesome or disadvantageous and 5 was the most troublesome to their current situation. Again a rating of 3 or higher was considered to be significant whereas a rating of 1 or 2 was considered to be insignificant.

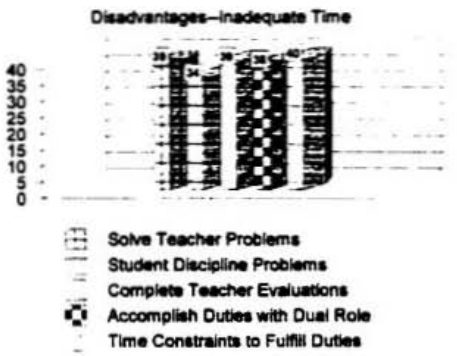


Figure 4-13

One theme that is prevalent with respect to disadvantages is "inadequate time". Because of the numerous subsections associated with this disadvantage, figure 4-13

summarizes the participants responses to this item. Time, or more accurately its lack thereof, was a major disadvantage associated with the dual role. This disadvantage emphasized the lack of time to perform duties or inadequate time to accomplish duties and responsibilities associated with the teaching principalship. The issue of time has therefore been divided into subsections including inadequate time to resolve teacher problems, inadequate time to resolve student discipline problems, inability to perform teacher evaluations, and a lack of time to accomplish duties with either role.

Time was really the second disadvantage the participants were asked to rank in the instrument. Each subsection of this item was considered and ranked separately by the respondents. The first subsection of 'inadequate time' pertained to "inadequate time to resolve teacher problems". A little over 86% (39/45) of the participants felt that this disadvantage reflected their current situation. Of these 39 participants, a little over 71% (28/39) gave this item a rating of 4 or 5; 11 gave it a rating of 3. The remaining 6 participants of the sample group who responded to the survey (13%) did not consider this item to be applicable at all to their current situation.

"Inadequate time to resolve student discipline problems" was the second item under this category. This item was considered disadvantageous by over 75% (34/45)

of the participants of the survey group. This particular disadvantage had a large variance in answers by the respondents. Over 33% (15/45) of the respondents rated this item as 5 on the rating scale, 20% (9/45) rated this with a 4, a little over 22% (10/45) gave this item a 3, over 18% (8/45) rated it with a 2 and just over 7% (3/45) gave the item a rating of 1.

"Insufficient opportunity to complete or perform teacher evaluations" was the next item subjects were requested to rank. Just over 93% (39/42) gave this item a rating of 3 or higher. Interestingly, 20 of the 42 participants who responded to this item gave it a rating of 5. Three of the 42 respondents did not consider this item to be a major hindrance or disadvantage to their position. Incidently, 3 respondents elected not to respond to this particular item.

"Lack of time to accomplish duties associated with either role" was the last item in this particular section under 'inadequate time'. The vast majority of the teaching principals in this study expressed this item as a major disadvantage with the teaching principalship. Over 84%, in fact 38 out of 45 of the participants, gave this item especially a rating of 4 or 5. This was one of the more stressful aspects of the principal's job, the lack of time to accomplish the duties associated with being a principal and a teacher.

Time constraints, a lack of time and pressure to perform the duties involved

with the dual role coupled with the actual duties involved with this hybrid role have confounded the teaching principal in that the dual responsibilities have interfered with each other immensely. Because of time constraints imposed upon teaching principals to fulfill their duties, subjects were asked to rate. because of the perceived inadequate time involved, the pressures involved in accomplishing the duties of the dual role. Just over 88% (40/45) concurred that the dual role is too intense and demanding at times to allow them to fulfill the duties involved with either role. Over 66% (30/45) gave this a rating of 4 or 5. Over 75% (34/45) of the subjects felt their roles became like two separate jobs at times and would often interfere with each other.

Figure 4-14 illustrates the remaining disadvantages noted by the participants

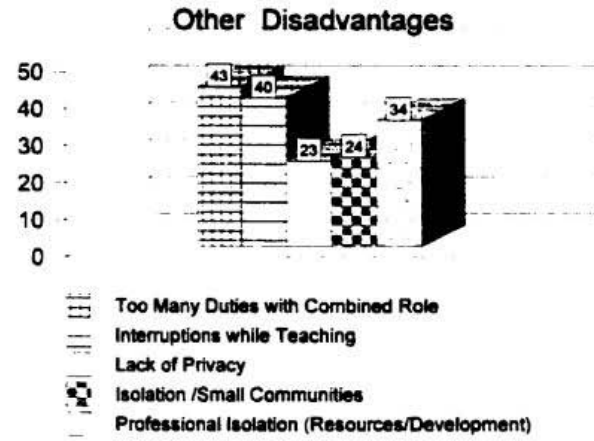


Figure 4-14

in regard to the teaching principalship.

The next disadvantage considered pertained to the duties involved with the teaching principalship. These duties consisted of responsibilities such as, but are not limited to, plant manager, curriculum leader, disciplinarian, evaluator of personnel, ordering school supplies, balancing the school budget, registration, assigned teaching courses and endless paper work that has to be filled out monthly in respect to meetings, orders, attendance, surveys, principals' reports, and newsletters.

"Too many duties involved with the dual role" was the first item in this section of the instrument. An overwhelming 96% (43/45) felt this statement was accurate, giving it a rating of 3 or higher. Incidently, only 2 participants gave this rating a 1 and 2 respectively.

A third disadvantage the respondents were asked to consider dealt with the amount of interruptions to their teaching that occurred during the school day as a result of having the combined responsibilities of teacher and principal. Over 88% (40/45) of the respondents gave this item a rating of 3 or higher in respect to its level of disadvantage in filling the role. Over 44% (20/45) of the participants gave this particular item a rating of 5; just over 26% (12/45) gave this item a 4 while over 18% (8/45) gave it a rating of 3.

The fourth disadvantage for consideration pertained to privacy. When

questioned if privacy or a lack of privacy was a cause for concern in fulfilling their role. a bare majority of the subjects, just over 51% (23/45), felt it was a disadvantage whereas 49% (22/45) believed privacy or its lack thereof was not a major disadvantage.

The last item subjects were asked to consider under this section dealt with isolation. While isolation can be seen as a disadvantage in a teaching situation, and it was seen by the majority of the participants to be a disadvantage, it was not considered by those who responded to the survey to be a major hindrance in fulfilling the teaching principalship. Twenty four of the 45 participants, a little over 53%, considered isolation to be disadvantageous to the teaching principal. This percentage altered slightly, however, in respect to professional isolation. Thirty two of the 45 participants (just over 71%) acknowledged that a lack of professional contacts was a cause for concern and in fact may be considered disadvantageous when fulfilling the dual role. The desire of the respondents to move to a larger centre (9%–6/45) as mentioned previously in the findings may be directly linked to professional isolation and a lack of professional contacts. Coupled with a lack of professional contacts, over 75% (34/45) of the respondents added that inadequate resources was a predominant challenge in filling the role, giving this item a rating of 3 or higher.

The disadvantages perceived with this hybrid role are numerous. However,

one disadvantage is prominent–inadequate time–and had to be given special consideration and consequently divided into separate sections for clarity and distinction. Nevertheless, having too many duties, numerous interruptions, a lack of privacy and professional isolation were given equal consideration.

Role Conflict

Role conflict for the purpose of this study can be defined as any interruption that prevents, affects, or obstructs performance of duties encompassed with the role of a teaching principal. When questioned whether or not they had ever been forced to leave their teaching responsibilities to deal with administrative matters, 96% (43/45) of the respondents replied with an unequivocal yes. Fifty six percent (25/45) were interrupted performing teaching duties at least once per day. In fact, just over 33% (15/45) found they had to leave their teaching duties as many as 3 or more times a day to attend to administrative matters. Forty two percent (19/45) found they had to leave their teaching duties at least once a week, while roughly 7% (3/45) found themselves leaving their classroom at least once per month.

Subjects were then asked to rank reasons for leaving their teaching duties to attend to administrative matters. The majority of the teaching principals in this study have no time or very limited scheduled time allotted for secretarial services. Just over

89% (40/45) felt answering the telephone was a frequent interruption. Forty seven percent (21/45) felt handling discipline problems within the school caused them to leave their teaching duties. Sixty seven percent (30/45) felt that responding to parental inquiries over the phone or in person interrupted their teaching duties. while just over 71% (32/45) felt responding to teacher needs prevented or caused them to leave their teaching duties.

Visitations from central office personnel during instructional school hours was considered conflicting by 47% (21/45) of the survey group, while student or school emergencies was rated considerably lower with just over 36% (16/45).

With diminished guidance services in many of the schools in the survey group. many principals noted they were responsible for individual student scheduling. However. only 16% (7/45) felt guidance interrupted their duties in fulfilling their teaching role. Many participants added that guidance services such as scheduling was completed outside of school hours.

In many small schools, support personnel such as maintenance or custodial workers during the school hours was relatively nonexistent. While support personnel did exist. the hours were few. Seventy three percent (33/45) of the survey group felt that school maintenance/plant problems were a major cause of interruption in fulfilling the duties of the dual role.

Four respondents submitted further role conflict including "distance education courses" and "running the canteen". With distance education courses these administrators had to make sure the equipment was running properly and the students had to be supervised during this time if the course was offered during regular class hours. This responsibility fell to the teaching principal. In respect to the canteen, orders had to placed, supplies stocked and monies taken care of usually during school hours. Items had to be served from the canteen and students had to be supervised as well.

Preparation for the Teaching Principalship

Section E of the instrument dealt with the preparation of post secondary education for the teaching principalship. Eighty (36/45) of the subjects felt their university training did not prepare them for their current role and in fact were quite negative towards it. It was in this section of the instrument that many cynical responses were encountered and many comments offered by rural administrators in these small schools were disparaging. They suggested that collaboration between school districts, The Department of Education, and universities fell short in many areas. Specifically, the respondents indicated that there was a lack of administrative clinical internships and professional development for those who would administer small rural schools. They added there was too much emphasis on theory in

comparison to the actual practical setting and the issue of multi-grading in any of the administrative curriculum was not addressed. These problems were explicitly stated in survey responses. Many of the subjects specifically included the following comments...

> "None of my courses addressed multi-grade programming; the Department of Education in-servicing still doesn't recognize the multi-grade classroom".
>
> "During the period I completed my B.Ed., I did not hear the word multi-grade teaching once. The program was too intellectual based and lacked practical instruction."
>
> "There should be university courses that deal with all-grade schools". I completed two university courses that actually dealt with administration. They were completely useless to me in the dual role".
>
> "I had absolutely no idea what I was getting myself into with regard to multi-grading and the role of the teaching principal".
>
> "Prior to the mid-80s, most of the training I received was 'on the job'. I feel that very little of what I learned in university was actually put into practice"
>
> "There was nothing to suggest to me that I would have to be a wizard to juggle books, teachers, board office, and government officials".
>
> "Not enough 'hands-on', grass roots information (courses/practicals) that prepare you for this type of position"
>
> "I was prepared marginally. More on the job-training is necessary. Much of the theory would not be practical here. I was left here on my own with little direction. Shoot from the hip and hope it works".

"There was no real life situations...more current methodologies would have helped".

"University did not prepare me for multi-grading with such wide gaps between age groups and age."

While the respondents clearly indicated a need for better preparation for their dual role, several respondents recommended improved autonomy with this position. One participant offered "...giving principals the power to determine what programs to offer and how they would be delivered would not only ensure greater job satisfaction but improved education as well." Teaching principals should have more influence with respect to offering programs, appointing teachers within the school and allocating resources. However, two respondents expressed their frustration with inferior programs and declining resources.

Origin of Teaching Principal

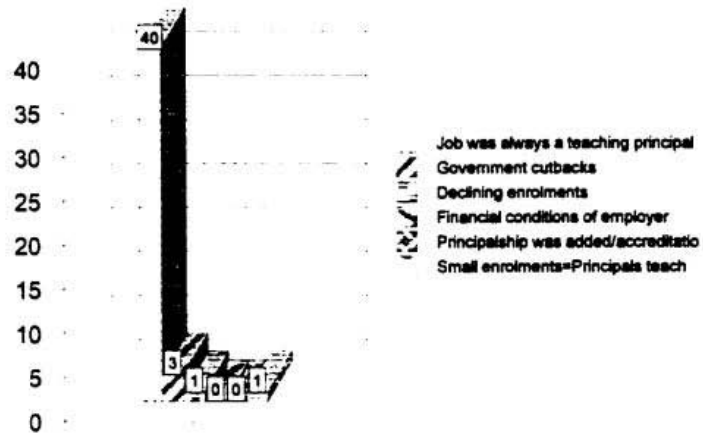


Figure 4-15

The last part of this section of the instrument dealt with the origin and future of the teaching principal in their school. Figure 4.15 reviews the reasons for the evolution of the teaching administrator position in their school. Many of the respondents (89%, 40/45) indicated that their position was always a teaching principalship for as long as they could remember or were told that it was. Seven percent (3/45) indicated that their position came about as a result of a direct reduction in teaching units and one respondent felt the position originated as a result of declining enrollments. The last question on the instrument dealt with how the subjects viewed the future of the teaching principalship in their respective schools.

Although six scenarios were supplied including "other", three reasons were predominantly selected by the respondents. Figure 4-16 summarizes the responses

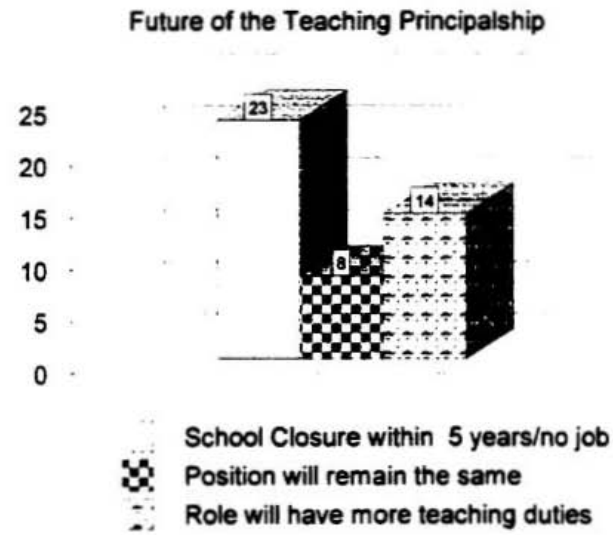


Figure 4-16

of the survey group. Fifty one percent (23/45) of the respondents felt their schools would close within the next five years due to government reform strategies and/or declining enrolments, while 18% (8/45) felt the position would remain the same, and 31% (14/45) viewed the position as encompassing more teaching duties in the future.

The findings of the survey focussed on a variety of issues from age and gender, teaching and administrative experience to the origin of the teaching principalship and the future of this position in the respective school. Many of the findings in this study reflected those previously researched in the literature review.

The ages of the participants in this study correlates with the findings concluded by Doud (1989) and Muse & Thomas (1989). However, other findings surfaced in this study which were not readily available in other research findings. The educational level of the participants as well as job security in their positions were points which merited consideration and elaboration. Several recommendations were also elicited from the respondents in respect to their positions and preparation for their jobs in this section but are discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The concept of the rural teaching principal has altered considerably from its original conception. According to all 45 respondents who participated in this study, the teaching principal has considerable administrative duties in addition to his/her teaching assignment and with it mounting frustration. This study was designed to appraise and describe the dual role of current teaching principals in small rural schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. According to Jacobson and Woodworth (1990), the dual role of the teaching principal encompasses unique characteristics, responsibilities, and challenges. Because much of the literature on educational administration tends to emphasize the complexities of urban and sub-urban principalships (Chance & Lingren, 1988), this study was intended to contribute to the scarce knowledge base of the teaching principal, especially in the Newfoundland and Labrador context.

The purpose of this study was to describe the teaching administrator; to develop a comprehensive profile of teaching principals who work in this province and to ascertain his/her reasons for taking on this increasingly difficult challenge, especially considering the sources of frustration that undoubtedly accompany this position.

The findings of this study do reflect, to a great extent, those researched in the literature review. Interestingly, however, other salient points also surfaced which were worthy of comment. It is these additional points which have helped form many of the recommendations provided further in this final chapter.

In respect to the "typical" teaching principal, some aspects of this study reflect those found in the literature review. The findings of this study did compare, for example, with those undertaken by Doud (1989), Schmuck and Schmuck (1990) and Muse and Thomas (1991) in respect to age in that the majority of the respondents were in the 41 to 50 year old range, specifically 53% were in this age group. However, three salient points of the 'typical' teaching principal from this study did not correlate with those of the literature review. Specifically, the ratio of male to female principals as well as the level of administrative experience did not reflect any of the previous studies. Additionally, the level of education achieved by the participants was an interesting find.

Fauth, as early as 1984, noted that only 20% of elementary principals in the United States were female and at the secondary level less than 4% were female. The study performed by Pellicier, Anderson, Keef, Kelly and McCleary in 1988 concluded that the ratio of male to female at the secondary level was an outstanding 24 to 1. The findings of this study did not reflect in anyway the ten year study

conducted by Doud in 1989 which concluded that the ratio of male to female administrators was 4 to 1 at the elementary level.

Of the 45 respondents in this study almost 69% (31/45) were male and just over 31% were female. At the K-6 level in particular, the ratio of male to female was very close to 1 to 1 with 11 participants being male and 10 female. At the secondary level 3 respondents were male and 1 female.

Muse & Thomas (1989) found that 52% of their subjects in seven Western United States noted that they had 5 years or less experience in administration. They offered that these rural principalships are frequently used as "stepping stones" to other administrative positions often in larger areas. Jacobson (1988) cited in Hurley (1992) noted that rural administrative experience is seen as an acquired asset prior to seeking urban positions. While the majority of the respondents in this study 58% (26/45) possess ten years or less in administration, only 36% (16/45) have 5 years or less. Interestingly, a little over 13% (6/45) cited a desire to gain experience for positions elsewhere as their main reason for accepting the position.

The educational background was included in the instrument because there was no indication of it having been sought in earlier studies. It was thought that the educational background could have a bearing on the appointment of teaching principals and may help explain why the gender of the teaching principals was so

ambiguous.

While it is assumed that all teaching principals have at least a Bachelor of Education, all 45 participants in this study indicated that they are pursuing or they have completed some graduate work. In fact, just over 24% (11/45) of the respondents have completed a Masters degree in Education and almost 38% (17/45) are in the process of obtaining a Masters degree. The remaining 38% (17/45) are pursuing or have completed some courses at the graduate level.

Nevertheless, many of the respondents indicated that their position was always a teaching principalship for as long as they could remember or they were told that it was. This correlates with Muse and Thomas' (1991) theory that teaching administrators are characteristics of small schools. Yet, of the researchers such as Grady (1990), Muse and Thomas (1989), Doud (1989), Jacobson and Woodworth (1990), or Heller (1988) noted in the literature review, there was no mention of the teaching responsibilities of the rural administrator let alone instances of multi-grading. Multi-grading and limited support services and personnel, were sources of frustration and stress for many administrators who responded to this survey.

Notwithstanding, multi-grade situations are prevalent in schools with student populations of under 100 pupils It was noted in this study that multi-grading was sometimes unavoidable in order to lower costs and to keep schools viable in the

respective community. Eighty four percent (38/45) of the respondents indicated that they are teaching in a multi-graded situation. All of these respondents were teaching 2 or more grades at the same time.

This study also noted the lack of secretarial and guidance services. Twenty percent (9/45) of the respondents indicated that they have no secretary to assist them and 76% (34/45) commented that they have secretarial services for less than 15 hours per week.

Equally disconcerting, because the majority of the respondents administered in schools with enrolments between 51 to 100 pupils, guidance services were allocated to 'need'. In fact, 44% (20/45) of the subjects who responded indicated that they had no guidance counsellor while 4% (2/45) noted they had a half time guidance counsellor with teaching responsibilities within the school. Often guidance counsellors were shared among schools.

The advantages noted by several of the researchers in the literature are reiterated by the participants who responded to the survey. They do like the school and community where they teach and administer, and they enjoy the relationships they share with their colleagues (Grady 1990; Hutto 1990).

While researchers such as Mackler (1996) and Sackney (1980) noted that job satisfaction was important to an administrator, none of the researchers mentioned in

the literature review attempted to directly question why these individuals chose to accept a teaching administrative position. While Muse and Thomas (1991) alluded to the aspiration of some administrators to gain experience in order to secure positions in larger centres, no other reasons were provided. Reasons for accepting the dual role were deliberately included in the instrument of this study to ascertain why these individuals decided to take the challenge of this dual role and thus dual responsibilities. Consequently, the intent was to shed some light on this question.

Forty two percent (19/45) of the respondents of this survey stated that the school required a principal who could both administer and teach. While 13% (6/45) did reflect Muse and Thomas' theory of obtaining an administrative position in a larger urban centre, another 13% (6/45) alluded to being forced to take on additional teaching duties because of their imposed redefined job descriptions.

Interestingly, 11% (5/45) of the administrators who responded to this question added that job security was the deciding factor. This consideration did not surface during the literature review. Job security was undoubtedly given consideration because, in today's increasingly difficult economic times, it is no longer guaranteed. Administrators cannot be 'bumped' out of their positions by other administrators or by other teaching staff. This desire for security may also explain why many of the respondents in this study are pursuing or have pursued Masters degrees.

It is acknowledged, however, that the challenges tend to outweigh the advantages, especially when trying to balance the needs of the students with the limited resources they have. Some schools have to avail of educational support from other schools, particularly through guidance and through itinerant teachers which can be very frustrating. Coupled with these shared resources are the lack of secretarial services. Twenty percent (9/45) indicated they have no secretary whatsoever.

Time was noted as a major challenge by the majority of the participants as their dual roles tended to conflict with each other too often, especially frequent interruptions, numerous meetings, and teacher or student concerns (Pigford, 1988, Grady, 1990).

Increased workload and responsibilities as well as mounting stress and consequently frustration were also noted (Cross, Bandy, and Gleadow, 1980).

With the continued realignment of the school boards, the restructuring of the school system, and increased class size and course load, today's teaching principal has a great challenge in the rural school and with it an even greater challenge juggling his/her combined role. Several recommendations were elicited from the teaching principals who responded to this study. While some recommended avoiding this profession altogether, others acknowledged that better preparedness by the university programs and the hiring boards would be beneficial if not essential.

One of the biggest concerns by the respondents was multi-grading and unpreparedness for their current position. Teaching principals have trained in the same programs that have prepared most of their non-teaching administrative counterparts. Only 20% (9/45) of the survey group viewed their graduate or university training as beneficial to their position. The remaining 80% (36/45) offered such comments as: "During the period of university I completed my B.Ed., I did not hear the word multi-grade teaching once..."; "Prior to the mid-80s, most of the training I received was 'on the job'. I feel that very little of what I learned in university was actually put into practice."

The main issue prevalent in the above comments by the respondents reiterated the study conducted by Heller et al. (1988). The respondents strongly recommended that any individual anticipating taking on a teaching principalship role should concern him/herself with preparation that is more experienced based.

The lack or failure of university programs to address multi-grade or all grade situations, let alone the concept of the teaching principalship itself, were often singled out for criticism by the respondents. These comments concerning administrative preparation by the total group indicates that experience based practica are needed, especially in multi-graded situations. As with Heller et al. (1988) rural administrators in this study expressed interest for preparation programs which

included on the job training and experience.

Teaching principals want a more practical orientation as they prepare for the field. Therefore, preparation at the graduate level could emphasize internships or more on-the-job training exercises or programs. Additionally, undergraduate and graduate courses dealing with issues of the rural experience, especially multi-graded classrooms, would improve the preparedness of future teaching principals.

Two solid recommendations would therefore be to require all graduates, especially those in leadership or educational administration, to pursue courses dealing with rural education and multi-grading and to have these courses available at the university. Having additional courses to choose from such as the rural principalship, both at the under-graduate and graduate level would undoubtedly be beneficial. If nothing else, these required courses would ensure that all future teaching principals would have prior knowledge of the position as school boards sometimes wave the Master's degree requirement providing the individual agrees to pursue the degree at a future date.

Thirdly, it is recommended that rural school districts collaborate with universities to design and implement a program specifically for administrators in small rural schools. This program could emphasize the teaching principalship, curriculum enhancement with limited resources and monies, and innovative uses for

the latest computer technology, especially with distance education and the Internet.

A fourth recommendations would be to include the "rural experience" as part of a graduate course requirement. Admittedly, this would be extremely difficult to organize and implement because of the number of graduates, accommodations and other issues. Another possibility would be for the school board to provide an on-site in-service of about a week's duration for those entering a rural teaching-principal position. This new principal would shadow the leaving principal for a week to get a feel for the duties and responsibilities involved in the position and would be able to ask and receive any pertinent information that would make the transition easier and problem free. If "shadowing" were impossible to undertake because of scarce resources, a prospective teaching principal may be able to work with a neighbouring administrator in a similar setting who is deemed successful by their colleagues or board officials in order to familiarize themselves with the duties involved. The underlying theme here is one of better or improved preparedness. Additional courses or providing for practical experience would ensure that a future teaching principal is better equipped to handle the challenges that await him or her.

In this study, time was discovered to be a predominant disadvantage associated with the dual role. Respondents indicated that there was a lack of time mainly because their teaching duties conflicted with their administrative duties. Ninety eight

percent (44/45) of the participants in this study indicated that they taught every day, but it was a major challenge. This challenge was further exacerbated by frequent interruptions, such as answering the telephone, simply because there was no secretary available. Often it is the teaching that suffers as administrative matters tend to have precedence. Yet the majority of these respondents noted that their teaching was extremely important.

One recommendation to alleviate or eliminate this frustration is to take principals out of the formula for teacher allocation altogether thereby ensuring administrative time during the day to organize and manage the schools. Taking principals out of the formula would increase the allotted teaching units to the school which may result in smaller class sizes and reduced instances of multi-grading.

Another possibility would be reduce the amount of teaching duties a principal has, setting a maximum at 40% or even 50%. Many of the respondents, especially those who are administering schools with student populations of under 25 pupils are teaching 100% of the time. It is believed that as a result of teaching a maximum of 50%, teaching principals would have the best of both positions. They would be able to maintain their teaching skills which was deemed important by the respondents in this study and they would have time to perform their administrative functions. In addition, this familiarity leads to a higher level of job satisfaction and contentment

with the dual role. An administrator who is highly motivated and has a high level of job satisfaction can undoubtedly enhance the staff's morale thus leading to higher productivity and effectiveness in the school.

A third recommendation would be to have several schools administered by one principal. This principal would be solely responsible for administering several schools within a district. While the principal would have limited contact with the schools, the teachers in the respective schools would be free to concentrate on their teaching responsibilities and improving contact and rapport with students, parents, and the community as a whole (Gale, 1998).

A practical and effective solution to the frequent telephone interruptions would be to install an answering machine or a voice mail system. While the school boards like to be able to contact their principals at a moment's notice, maybe a more practical solution here would be to have a private pager number. Therefore, the principal could respond to calls according to emergency. Even more beneficial would be for school boards to guarantee secretarial services for at least two to three hours a day. Interruptions would be lessened considerably and much of the paper work now handled by these teaching administrators could be shared or completed by the secretary during this time.

Stress was another factor which surfaced from this study. It is the result of a

multitude of factors which can be attributed to the work environment. To alleviate some of the stress involved with administering a small school, a solid recommendation would be to increase the allotted professional development days from 2 to 4 a year for teaching principals within districts. Teaching principals would be able to get together with their colleague to exchange methods, to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of more experienced rural teaching administrators.

A network of sorts could be set up by the school board's computer or technology education coordinator for teaching principals especially those in remote areas to communicate with each other concerning pertinent issues (Garber, 1992). While Stem~Net and E-mail are common place, it is nevertheless sometimes difficult to get on line and some administrators are still uncomfortable with computers. However, a web page or web site could be arranged for these administrators enabling them to communicate with other professionals especially when isolation puts them at a disadvantage for travelling.

Importantly, there are a multitude of possibilities available today through the use of computers. New teaching principals could be partnered with experienced administrators for a year or two to guide the newcomer through the daily trials and challenges that accompany their new position. Knowing that there is support available would greatly reduce the levels of stress and frustration associated with the

rural teaching principalship.

Limited resources, along with reduced or no secretarial services, also increased levels of frustration experienced by the participants in this study. Many indicated that their guidance counsellor is either teaching the majority of his/her time or is shared with another school (in some cases shared with other schools). A recommendation to relieve some of this frustration and consequent stress would be to have an itinerant guidance counsellor–on call at the district office in addition to the services currently available–to handle any emergencies which may need prompt attention. Another recommendation would be to reduce the guidance counsellor's teaching duties to 50% within the school to which he or she is assigned.

Muse and Thomas (1991) noted a high turnover rate in rural areas while Jacobson (1988) blamed professional and geographical isolation and limited resources for this high turnover rate. While the majority of the respondents in this study indicated they had ten years or less as an administrator, they were clearly dissatisfied with the responsibilities thrust on them considering the relatively insignificant bonus they received for performing what they describe as "two jobs". While job security was cited by several participants as a reason for pursuing and consequently accepting the dual position, increased income was not a factor. Actually, improved income was not a major deciding factor probably because they

considered the bonus to be a pittance in comparison to the amount of extra responsibilities they have. Nevertheless, there remains a concern; dissatisfaction and a percentage wanting to leave the profession altogether.

One recommendation to retain and increase principal satisfaction in rural areas would undoubtedly be to increase incentives or benefits. Better bonuses may be a possibility-they are performing these extra duties but at least they would be paid well for them. Other improved benefits could include financial assistance and housing especially renting in remote areas, interest free loans for necessary purchases such as an entire year's groceries and/or transportation such as snowmobiles or boats. Specifically, four of the teaching principals added that purchasing all groceries for the entire year in September was a considerable burden. Some remote areas are not accessible by road and the primary means of transportation is by snowmobile or boat. Interest free loans to buy these necessities, even second hand, would greatly reduce the added burden, particularly for new administrators coming to the position.

Another incentive would be for school boards to provide grants or bursaries for those completing degrees to alleviate some of the financial burden involved with continuing education. While all participants in this study indicated that they have completed or are pursuing some graduate courses, only 24% have actually finished their programs.

While the respondents clearly indicated a need for better preparation for their dual role, several respondents recommended improved autonomy with this position. Teaching principals would have more influence with respect to offering programs, appointing teachers within the school and allocating resources. However, several expressed their frustration with inferior programs and declining resources. Giving principals the autonomy or power to determine what programs to offer and how they would be delivered would not only ensure greater job satisfaction but improved education as well. Mackler (1996) indicated having the power and authority to perform their jobs was one of the most significant issues for principals.

The teaching principalship is undoubtedly a feature of the small school. Although historically in the United States these types of positions tend to be on the decline since the 1800s (Grady, 1990), 44% of the respondents in this study from Newfoundland and Labrador indicated their position would remain the same or encompass more teaching duties together with their principalship. The teaching principalship is likely to encompass more teaching duties as a result of government reform policies initiated in some areas in the province since 1997. With deceasing enrollments occurring in the majority of the school districts through out the province, this alone may generate additional teaching duties for the principalship.

Time constraints such as inadequate time to perform teacher evaluation and

administrative tasks were cited as the major disadvantages of the teaching principalship. Conversely, camaraderie amongst students, parents and staff was cited as the greatest advantage by the respondents.

Nevertheless, despite the considerable advantages listed by the respondents, there are several challenges which have to be considered. The level of preparedness at the undergraduate and graduate level, the amount of teaching duties allocated to the position, multi-graded situations, as a well as the noteworthy high teacher and principal turnover rate need to be addressed if small rural schools are to improve.

This study has rendered many interesting points, some of which need to be addressed by individuals and their respective school boards, particularly in respect to the amount of administrative and teaching duties involved with the position. Placing a better prepared individual in the community school would not only improve job satisfaction but also help reduce much of the frustration and stress associated with the teaching principalship.

In light of the number of school closures facing the province in future years, it would be interesting to study the effects of these government reform policies to determine if the duties and responsibilities have changed, stayed the same or, as 28% of the respondents predicted, encompass more teaching duties. It would be beneficial therefore to repeat a study of this nature in future to reassess the levels of job

satisfaction and the amount of responsibilities.

Research on the effect of school closures on the communities and students and their school administration and teaching staff would be a worthwhile undertaking, especially in light of the ongoing protests by parents who are dissatisfied and angry with the turn of events. It would also be interesting to undertake a study of this nature in the future to ascertain whether the levels of frustration on the part of the teaching principals have lessened or worsened with government reform. While qualitative research has been conducted on teaching administrators in Newfoundland and Labrador (Gale, 1998), it would be an advantageous venture to engage in another study of this kind over the course of an administrator's school year to provide a more in-depth thorough examination of the duties and responsibilities involved with the dual role.

Furthermore, teaching principals will be of more interest to the educational professional as the numbers of teaching administrators are expected to increase. It can only be advantageous to engage in further and prolonged studies.

The underlying theme which surfaced in this study was the level of dissatisfaction and the sense of helplessness and frustration experienced by these individuals partly because they feel ill-prepared for the sometimes daunting challenges associated with their profession. While it is hoped that this study has

added to the knowledge base of teaching administrators, it has merely scratched the surface of this increasingly fascinating area. It has nevertheless rendered some interesting findings, worthy of additional exploration and research.

Appendix A

Date

P.O. Box 912
Wabush, Labrador
AOR 1BO

School Board Address

Dear (Chairperson for each board/Superintendent)

My name is Jamie Hunt and I am presently in the process of writing a masters thesis on teaching principals in small schools under the supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy of Memorial University of Newfoundland. The purpose of the study is to assess and analyse the duties and pressures involved with the dual role of teaching principal and how it would compare to their non-teaching counterparts. The teaching principal has never been studied before in the Newfoundland and Labrador context. At present we have 116 schools in the province whose total school enrolment is less than 100 pupils and it is here one would more than likely find the teaching principal. Therefore, principals in schools with populations less than 100 will be the subjects of this study. With government reforms being instituted in the near future, it is highly probable that multi-graded situations will increase.

I am writing to request your permission to undertake such a study within your school district. All subjects and school boards will be confidential and provided with an alias when used in the data and analysis. The participants may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time. The proposed study has been approved by the Memorial University of Newfoundland's ethics committee.

The findings of this study will be beneficial and made available to your board. Information from the study may be used to demonstrate how the pressures of the rural teaching principalship is distinctive from that of their urban colleagues. School boards may be able to devise procedures to alleviate or help with the challenges associated with the teaching principalship which will serve for the betterment of all

stakeholders involved.

In closing, I thank you for your time and consideration in viewing this request. If you have further concerns you can contact Dennis my supervisor or Dr. Linda Phillips, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Education at the numbers listed below. If you would like to avail of this study by granting me permission to undertake this research, please sign the letter of endorsement and return it in the enclosed self addressed envelope. I anxiously await your response.

Sincerely,

E. Jamie Hunt

Mathematics and Science
Labrador City Collegiate

Phone: 709-944-2231/2232
Fax : 709-944-2652

Email: ejhunt@calvin.stemnet.nf.ca

Thesis Supervisor

Dr. Dennis Mulcahy
(709) 737-8587
dmulcahy@morgan.ucs.mun.nf.ca

Dr. Linda Phillips
(709) 737-8587
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Education

Appendix B

Jamie Hunt
P.O. Box 912
Wabush, Labrador
AOR 1BO

Dear Colleague,

My name is Jamie Hunt and I am presently in the process of writing a master thesis for Memorial University of Newfoundland on teaching principals in small schools. The purpose of the study is to assess and analyse the duties and pressures involved with the dual role of teacher/principal and how it would compare to your non-teaching counterparts. The teaching principal has never been studied before in the Newfoundland and Labrador context. At present we have 89 schools in the province whose total school enrolment is less than 100 students and it is here one is more likely to find the teaching principal. Therefore, principals in schools with populations of less than 100 will be subjects of this study. With government reforms being instituted, it is highly probable, in rural areas, multi-graded situations will increase as well as combining positions.

I am writing to request your participation in this study. All subjects and school boards will be confidential and direct identification of the subjects or school boards in any way shape or form will not be used. You may refuse to answer any question you wish and can withdraw from the study at any time. An alias will be supplied where it becomes essential to identify a person, school, or community. The proposed study has been approved by the Memorial University of Newfoundland's ethics committee and will be conducted during the 97/98 school year.

The findings of this study will be made available to you on request and at the Memorial University Library. Information from the study can be used to show how the pressures of the teaching rural principalship is different than that of their urban colleagues. School boards may be able to devise procedures to alleviate the challenges associated with the teaching principalship which will undoubtedly serve for the betterment of all stakeholders involved.

Enclosed you will find a letter from your school board approving and

supporting the study. In addition, you will find a consent form and a questionnaire which will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete with a return self-stamped/addressed envelope. If you have any questions concerning this study you can contact myself at the numbers listed below or Dr. Dennis Mulcahy my thesis supervisor or Dr.Linda Phillips; Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Education at MUN.

Although your participation is voluntary, your cooperation is extremely imperative to the success of this study. Please take the time to complete and mail the questionnaire over the next two weeks. As I know you are very busy, I would like to thank you for your contributed support, time and effort to this study.

Sincerely,

E. Jamie Hunt

Mathematics and Science
Labrador City Collegiate

Phone: 709-944-2231/2232
Fax : 709-944-2652

Email: ejhunt@calvin.stemnet.nf.ca

Thesis Supervisor

Dr. Dennis Mulcahy
(709) 737-8587
dmulcahy@morgan.ucs.mun.nf.ca

Dr. Linda Phillips
(709) 737-8587
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Education

Consent Form

I _____ hereby agree to participate in the quantitative study on Rural Teaching Principals undertaken by E. Jamie Hunt under the guidance of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy from Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Signature

_____

Appendix C

Teaching Principals in Newfoundland and Labrador

Section I

Please complete all sections.

A *Demographic Information (Please circle the appropriate response or write in the space provided)*

Sex: Male Female

Age: <30 30-40 41-50 50+

Level of Education (Please Circle One)

1 2 Degrees (Conjoint degree) 2 Masters Degree 3 Enrolled In a Masters Program

4 Planning to Enrol in a Graduate Program

Years Teaching: <5 5-10 11-20 20+
(excluding administration experience)

Administrative Experience in total:

<5 5-10 11-20 20+

Administrative Experience as a teaching principal

<5 5-10 11-20 20+

Grade Level(s) Taught _____

Subjects Taught _____

_____

Type of School: Primary Elementary Intermediate

High School All Grade 7 to 9

Other (Please Specify Grade Levels)_____

Isolation: Is your community considered isolated?

Yes No

School Enrolment: <25 25-50 51-75 76-100

School Secretary: Full-Time Half-Time None Other_____

How many teaching units does your school have (include yourself)?

_____

Guidance Counsellor: Full-Time 3/4th time Half-Time None

Other_____

B *Please circle the response which best describes your situation or fill in the response to the best of your knowledge.*

1 Are you a principal with teaching duties?

Yes No

If so, how long in years total have you been in a teaching principal position? (It is possible to be a teaching principal one year and the next year not.)

_____

2 Have you held prior teaching principal positions in other schools or districts?

Yes No

If so, how long?_____

3 What grades do you currently teach?

_____

4 Do you teach in a multi-graded classroom?

Yes No

If so, what grades?_____

What subjects do you teach in the multi-graded classroom?

_____

5 How long in hours do you teach per day?

_____

6 Did you have an administrative position without teaching responsibilities before in the same school, other schools or districts?

Yes No

If so, for how many years in total did you hold these position(s)?

_____

C Accepting the Position

1 *Please rank the reasons below as to why you are currently in the position of a teaching principal where 1 is the primary reason and ten is the least.*

____ increased income

____ I wanted to still have direct ties with the classroom because of my enjoyment of teaching

____ the opportunity of an entry level administrative position would increase my chances of obtaining an administrative position (board or school level) elsewhere

____ the challenge of the dual role intrigued me

____ the school needed a principal that required the dual role

____ I enjoy both positions

____ I really had no choice. My job description was being re-defined as the result of losing teaching unit(s) and board/government financial restraints

____ Accepting a dual role would allow me to be up to-date on classroom strategies and pedagogy techniques

____ I enjoy small schools, consequently the teaching principal is inevitable

____Other (Please write here)_____

_____

_____

2 Please check (✓) one item only.

If given the choice over again would you:

___ go into administration again

___ remain in the classroom

___ pursue a totally different position elsewhere

___ leave the educational field

D Advantages/Disadvantages

1 Below are some advantages that are prevalent in the literature of being a teaching principal. Rank each advantage as it applies to **your** situation where 1 is the least important and 5 is the most important.

A)	the ability to maintain teaching skills	1 2 3 4 5
B)	the ability in a small school to maintain good rapport with parents	1 2 3 4 5
C)	camaraderie with the staff is good	1 2 3 4 5
D)	credibility with the staff is good	1 2 3 4 5
E)	knowing the students better	1 2 3 4 5
F)	awareness of classroom activities	1 2 3 4 5
G)	the ability to be familiar with current practices in the classroom	1 2 3 4 5
H)	I just enjoy the position	1 2 3 4 5

____ other(s) (Please Specify)_____

2 Below are disadvantages consistent in the literature. Please rank each disadvantage from 1 to 5 as it applies to **your** situation where 1 is least disadvantageous and 5 is the most disadvantageous.

A)	too many duties involved with the dual role	1 2 3 4 5
B)	inadequate time to resolve teacher problems	1 2 3 4 5
C)	inadequate time to resolve student/discipline problems	1 2 3 4 5
D)	lack of time to accomplish duties associated with either role	1 2 3 4 5
E)	insufficient opportunity to complete or perform teacher evaluations	1 2 3 4 5
F)	pressures of the dual role are too intense and demanding at times to allow me to fulfil the duties involved with the dual role	1 2 3 4 5
G)	the two roles become like two jobs at times and they interfere with each other immensely	1 2 3 4 5
H)	frequent interruptions in performing either role	1 2 3 4 5
I)	duties associated with both roles often conflict which leads to stress and frustration on the job	1 2 3 4 5
J)	difficult to delegate when you are a teaching principal	1 2 3 4 5
K)	lack of privacy	1 2 3 4 5
L)	isolation	1 2 3 4 5
M)	lack of professional contacts	1 2 3 4 5
N)	inadequate resources	1 2 3 4 5
O)____	other(s) (Please Specify)_____	1 2 3 4 5

Role Conflicts

3 A) Have you ever been forced to leave your teaching responsibilities to deal with administrative issues?

Yes No

B) If so, approximately how many times a day would you have to do this?

1 2 3 4 5 >5

C) If you answered yes to question 3a in this section, then please rank the reasons below where 1 is the least reason why and 3, 4, or 5 would be considered the significant for you to leave your teaching duties.

1)	answering telephone calls	1 2 3 4 5
2)	handling discipline problems within the school	1 2 3 4 5
3)	responding to parental inquiries or needs over the phone or in person	1 2 3 4 5
4)	responding to teacher needs	1 2 3 4 5
5)	handling budgetary or finance issues	1 2 3 4 5
6)	personnel from central office visits during school hours	1 2 3 4 5
7)	student or school emergency	1 2 3 4 5
8)	student scheduling	1 2 3 4 5
9)	advising students on course/school/life problems	1 2 3 4 5
10)	other (Please explain)_____	1 2 3 4 5

E Preparing for the Teaching Principalship

1 Do you feel your university training prepared you for your current position?

Yes No

If you answered no, please indicate why?

_____
_____
_____

2 Please indicate in the space below what recommendations you would recommend for an individual preparing for the teaching principalship?

1_____
_____

2_____
_____

3_____
_____

(Please use back of the page if necessary)

Origin and Future of the Teaching Principalship

1 How did the position of teaching principal come about in you school? Please circle the letter. (Circle One Letter)

A) It was always a teaching principal position for as long as I know
B) the combination of the positions was due to a direct reduction in force
C) it has developed because of declining enrolments
D) financial conditions of the employer
E) the principal role was added to teaching responsibilities as a result of lost of previous principal or to meet accreditation requirements
F) Other (Please specify)

2 Please circle what you think is the future of your position as teaching principal?

A) The position will become two independent positions filled by two completely different people
B) Declining enrolments and costs will eventually lead to closure of the school within the next five years consequently there will be no position
C) The position will become solely administrative in the future
D) The position will more than likely stay the same
E) The position will encompass more teaching duties in the future
F) Other (Please specify)_____

_____

Any additional comments about your situation would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for time and effort in completing and returning this questionnaire.

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