

**NEW REALITIES OF TEACHERS' WORK LIVES:
THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE
ON AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xi
DECLARATION	xii
PERMISSION TO COPY	xiii
ABSTRACT	xiv
 CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION	
Introduction	1
1.1 Teachers' work in the change context in Australia and internationally in the 1990s	3
1.2 The topic, its scope and delimitations	13
1.3 Conceptual framework	17
1.4 Research questions	19
1.5 Significance of the study	21
1.6 Structure and layout of the thesis	22
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Introduction	28
2.1 The nature of teachers' work	31
2.2 Teachers' thinking about their work	40
2.3 Educational change and the role of the teacher	48
2.4 The changing contexts of teachers' work	53
2.5 Teachers' responses to changes in education	59
2.6 Teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction	66
Summary	75

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	Page
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	
Introduction	78
3.1 The selection of the research approach	79
3.2 The development phase of the research	83
3.3 The sample	97
3.4 The data gathering phase of the research	100
3.5 The data analysis phase of the research	103
Orientation to the findings of the study as presented in Chapters 4 - 7	110
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 1	
Introduction	113
4.1 Changes affecting teachers' work	115
4.2 Characteristics of changes most affecting teachers' work	120
4.3 Relationships between perceived change characteristics and teachers' perceptions of effects on their work	135
Summary of the findings related to Research Question 1	136
CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2	
Introduction	139
5.1 Degree and overall nature of change effects on teachers' work	141
5.2 Actions taken and roles played by teachers involved with educational change	144
5.3 Effects of educational changes on teachers' work	147
5.4 Relationships between perceived change characteristics and processes and teachers' perceptions of how changes have affected their work	153
Summary of the findings related to Research Question 2	154

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	Page
CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 3	
Introduction	156
6.1 The impact of educational change on teachers' sources of work satisfaction and dissatisfaction	157
6.2 Teachers' satisfaction with key aspects of their work lives	161
6.3 Relationships between elements of teachers' experiences with an educational change and their levels of satisfaction with key aspects of their work lives	182
Summary of the findings related to Research Question 3	185
CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 4	
Introduction	188
7.1 Teachers' level of commitment to the achievement of change objectives	190
7.2 Teachers' perceptions of their typical responses to educational change initiatives	191
7.3 Influence of experiences with significant change on teachers' predicted responses to future changes	196
7.4 Relationships between teachers' experiences with an educational change and their predicted likely response to future changes in education	200
Summary of the findings related to Research Question 4	204
CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	
Introduction	207
8.1 The educational changes which affect teachers most in their work lives	210
8.2 The effects of educational change on teachers' work	213
8.3 Teachers' satisfaction with the quality of their work lives	217
8.4 Teachers' predicted responses to future educational changes	220
8.5 New realities of teachers' work lives	222
8.6 Implications of the nature of teachers' work for teachers, principals, education systems and teacher educators	235
8.7 Recommendations relating to future educational changes	241
8.8 Recommendations for future research	246
The key conclusions of the study for teachers' work in the contemporary change context	250

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	Page
ATTACHMENTS	
References	255
Appendix I: The interview schedule	272
Appendix II: The questionnaire for teachers	277
Appendix III: The questionnaire for principals	289
Appendix IV: Briefing notes for participants	301
Appendix V: Sample draft and amended interview transcripts	313

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
3.1	The Sample: Demographic Details	98
3.2	Questionnaire Response Rates	99
3.3	Inter-Item Correlation Analyses	108
4.1	Recent Educational Changes Affecting Teachers' Work	116
4.2	Other Changes Affecting Teachers' Work	118
4.3	Educational Changes having Most Impact on Teachers' Work	119
4.4	Work Domain Most Affected by Most Significant Educational Change	121
4.4(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Work Domain Affected by Change	122
4.5	Perceived Source of Origin of Most Significant Changes	124
4.5(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Perceived Source of Origin	125
4.6	Perceived Intended Beneficiaries of Most Significant Changes	126
4.6(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Intended Beneficiaries	127
4.7	Perceived Actual Beneficiaries of Most Significant Changes	128
4.7(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Actual Beneficiaries	129
4.8	Perceived Main Objective of Most Significant Changes	130
4.8(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Main Objective to Teachers' Work Context	131
4.9	Degree of Control over Teacher Influence in Decision-Making Related to Most Significant Educational Change	132
4.9(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Control of Decision-Making	133
5.1	Perceived Degree of Impact of Most Significant Changes on Teachers' Work	142
5.1(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Degree of Impact	143

LIST OF TABLES (CONTINUED)

Table	Title	Page
5.2	Perceived Nature of Overall Impact of Most Significant Changes on Teachers' Work	143
5.2(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Nature of Overall Impact	144
5.3	Roles Played by Teachers Responding to Most Significant Changes	145
5.3(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Categories of Roles Played	146
5.4	Effects of Most Significant Change on Teachers' Work Lives	151
5.5	Strategies Adopted by Teachers in Response to Most Significant Change	152
6.1	Teachers' Sources of Work Satisfaction	158
6.2	Impact of Change on Sources of Work Satisfaction	159
6.3	Teachers' Sources of Work Dissatisfaction	159
6.4	Impact of Change on Sources of Work Dissatisfaction	160
6.5	Correlations between Teachers' Levels of Commitment to the Achievement of Change Objectives and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives	183
6.6	Correlations between Teachers' Opportunities to Influence Decision-Making Related to Change Implementation and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives	184
6.7	Correlations between Teachers' Perceptions of the Overall Impact of a Significant Change on their Work and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives	185
7.1	Teachers' Levels of Commitment to Achieving the Goals of Most Significant Changes	190
7.1(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Level of Commitment	191
7.2	Teachers' Characteristic Response to Educational Changes	192
7.2(a)	Teacher-Principal Comparisons for Characteristic Response	192

LIST OF TABLES (CONTINUED)

Table	Title	Page
7.3	Will Experience with Most significant Change Affect Teachers' Responses to Future Educational Changes?	197
7.3(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Future Response Affected	197
7.4	Predicted Nature of Responses to Future Changes in Education	198
7.4(a)	Sub-Group Comparisons for Responses to Future Changes	199
7.5	Correlations between Teachers' Predicted Responses to Future Changes in Education and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives	203

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Title	Page
1.1	Conceptual Framework for the 1994-97 Study of the Consortium for Cross Cultural Research in Education	14
1.2	The Study's Conceptual Framework	18
1.3	The Study's Research Questions Applied to the Conceptual Framework	20
3.1	Chronology of Development and Data Gathering Phases	84
6.1	Teachers' Feelings about the Working Relationship between Teacher and Principal	162
6.2	Teachers' Feelings about the Working Relationship with Teacher Colleagues	164
6.3	Teachers' Feelings about the Nature of Teacher-Student Interactions	165
6.4	Teachers' Feelings about levels of Parent and Community Support	166
6.5	Teachers' Feelings about Policy Directions of their Education Systems	168
6.6	Teachers' Feelings about the Conditions of their Employment	171
6.7	Teachers' Feelings about their Opportunities to Maintain Control over Educational Decision-Making	173
6.8	Teachers' Feelings about their Capacity to Influence the Impact of Educational Change on their Work	176
6.9	Teachers' Feelings about the Quality of Available Facilities and Resources	178
6.10	Teachers' Feelings about the Effort Needed to Meet All Expectations and Requirements in their Work	179
8.1	Sample Item From Amended Teacher Satisfaction Instrument	249

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	Australian Education Council
CCCRE	Consortium for Cross Cultural Research in Education
DEA	Department of Education and the Arts (The Tasmanian state education authority, known since 1995 as the Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development - DECCD)
DECS	Department of Education and Children's Services (The South Australian state education authority, known prior to 1993 as the Education Department of South Australia - EDSA)
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training (The Australian federal education authority at the time of the study)
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
Sth. Aust.	South Australia
Tas.	Tasmania
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education

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While this investigation was important to me it was, of course, considerably less so for its subjects. Yet 100 busy teachers and 87 equally busy school principals gave their time and knowledge to the study. Their contributions were both thoughtful and thorough, and, especially given the turbulent nature of the context within which the study was conducted, their openness and co-operation are appreciated deeply.

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For reasons known only to herself, Amanda Keddle remained convinced that I both could and would bring the project to a successful conclusion. Her confidence that this would be the case sustained me through much of the final year and a half of the process and especially through the times in that period when my own doubts were assuaged merely by her confidence and encouragement. Her interest in, and passion for, research in education were most important.

Finally, but most important of all, I acknowledge the acceptance, understanding and unquestioning support that my daughter, Kate, and my son, Jack, have given me. I appreciate this deeply.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institute, college or university, and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Churchill". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Rick" and "Churchill" being capitalized and prominent.

Rick Churchill

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I hereby give permission to the staff of the University Library and to the staff and students of the School of Education within the University of Tasmania to copy this thesis in whole or in part without reference to me. This permission covers only single copies made for study purposes, subject to the normal conditions of acknowledgment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Churchill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'l'.

Rick Churchill

ABSTRACT

The study reported in this thesis was an investigation into the work lives of Australian primary and secondary school teachers employed in the state education systems of South Australia and Tasmania. While the educational authorities of South Australia and Tasmania were the smallest of Australia's six state education systems, they remained sizeable organisations, controlling a total of almost 1000 schools. The study involved data which were collected through the application of an interview schedule and twin teacher and principal versions of a detailed survey to a sample of 100 teachers and 87 school principals. These three research instruments were designed specifically for use in this study and were the products of an extensive process of trial and development. The period investigated in the study, the first half of the 1990s, was perceived by the participating teachers and principals to be a time of turbulence in schools and education systems as these organisations, and the people who worked within them, were confronted with escalating expectations for profound educational change. The study found that the educational changes which were such a defining feature of the early 1990s affected these teachers' work lives significantly at a number of levels: first, the sheer number of different changes to which teachers were expected to respond was important; second, the overwhelming majority of the educational changes of the time were seen by these teachers as having been imposed on them from and by sources outside their work context of the school; third, these teachers perceived that half of the change initiatives of the time were intended to meet the needs of education systems as organisations, rather than to improve teaching or learning in schools; and fourth, the overall impact on their work lives which these teachers attributed to their involvement with educational changes was seen as negative by an overwhelming majority of the participating teachers. These teachers were, nevertheless, found to be highly satisfied with three key elements of their work lives: with the nature and quality of the working relationship between teacher and principal; with the working relationships they shared with their teacher colleagues; and with the nature of their interactions with students at school. On the other hand, the participating teachers were particularly dissatisfied with the policy directions adopted and pursued by their own respective education systems and with the inordinate amount of effort they saw as required for them to meet all of the expectations of the teacher's role. These teachers' experiences with recent educational changes had significant implications for their self-predicted responses to future changes in education. A more complete picture of the multi-faceted nature of contemporary teachers' work was the most significant finding to have emerged from the study, with this picture being characterised by ten new realities of teachers' work lives: a myriad of change expectations; intensification; politicisation; competition between two kinds of collaboration; resourcing pressures; mis-matches between expectations, needs and access in professional development; dissatisfaction with education systems; conflict between organisational and professional goals; dissonance associated with a paradox between professional expertise and external control; and ironic options for distance and immunity. Five recommendations relating to future educational change efforts are drawn from the study: first, the number of simultaneous innovations should be kept to a level which is manageable by teacher implementers; second, proposed innovations should be connected directly to teachers' core tasks of teaching and learning; third, the level of resourcing provided should be adequate for both implementation and institutionalisation; fourth, local ownership of innovations should be promoted to enhance teacher commitment; and fifth, teachers should have access to positive experiences with a prior change before being expected to engage further initiatives.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The first half of the final decade of the 20th Century was a time of unprecedented levels of pressure for fundamental change in Australian society. For many Australians these change pressures affected virtually every aspect of daily life. In the nation's workplaces, for those with jobs, employees' expectations of being able to continue to practise their various trades in the same fields of employment, secure in their familiarity with established work practices, were called into question by changes to the structure of the workforce in the context of an economy struggling to emerge from recession; by the impact of new technology; by measures aimed at reducing overall labour costs; and, among other things, by requirements for increased productivity. In the nation's homes, the treasured pattern of the nuclear family peacefully sharing its three bedroom brick veneer house on a quarter of an acre of suburban land within a white European community was becoming less and less the typical Australian experience. The social context was coming to be characterised by increasing numbers of single parent families; by growth in the rates at which child abuse and domestic violence were reported; by burgeoning levels of homelessness; and by the increasingly multicultural nature of Australia's demography.

In the nation's schools, educational administrators, teachers, parents and students were all affected by these factors, and by other forces which, within the wider milieu of the society, were altering the character of Australian communities profoundly. Such circumstances generated unprecedented rates of change within schools and school systems as Australian educators sought to both cope with and respond to the new, but still evolving and changing, social context.

The study which is reported in this thesis investigated only one aspect of this turbulent change context: that of the impact of educational change on the working lives of teachers in a selection of the nation's state primary and secondary schools. Thus its focus was set firmly on educational changes *per se*, rather than on the wider social changes to which they were related; and on the working lives of teachers in their school workplaces, rather than on the broader working lives of all Australian workers. Nevertheless, the study and its subjects operated within this complex social framework and were unavoidably and profoundly affected by it.

For this contextual reason the thesis begins with a brief outline of the key issues which related to the changing working lives of teachers in Australian state schools in the local socio-political environment as this was developing continually in the first half of the 1990s. This outline is presented, initially, in the following section:

1.1 Teachers' work in the change context in Australia and internationally in the 1990s

In this section the understandings of teachers' work and of schools as workplaces which had attained some currency in Australia in the years leading up to the study are introduced. Similarly, the concept of change in education, as this had been known in the quarter century leading up to the current decade, is described. The section concludes with a brief outline of the key forces affecting education, and therefore, teachers' work, in Australia during the first half of the 1990s: the period covered by the study.

The remainder of this introductory chapter then presents details related to five other key elements, each of which is important for an understanding of the study as a whole:

1.2 The topic, its scope and delimitations

(The issues which are specifically included in, and those which are excluded from, the study are detailed in this section)

1.3 Conceptual framework

1.4 Research questions

(The study's four research questions and the links between them and the study's conceptual framework are presented in this section)

1.5 Significance of the study

1.6 Structure and layout of the thesis

1.1 Teachers' Work in the Change Context in Australia and Internationally in the 1990s

• Teachers' Work

Contemporary understandings of the nature of teachers' work come from a number of different viewpoints. Leaving aside, for now, the established depictions of teachers' work lives as teachers themselves experience these lives (found, for example, in the work of Hargreaves (1994), Huberman, Grounauer & Marti (1993) and Goodson (1992) which are described in detail in Chapter Two), other conceptions of the work that teachers undertake have been described from, notable among a range of positions, the corporate, critical, or moral purpose perspectives.

The Education Department of South Australia (EDSA) published *Teachers' Work* in 1991. Indicative of this document's corporate perspective was its sub-title, *The Quality of Teaching in Our Schools*. While acknowledging, *inter alia*, that "teachers' work has become harder and more complex", *Teachers' Work* extended its list of the tasks expected of teachers in South Australian state schools to some nine pages. In summary, educators in that state education system were informed that eight key tasks were expected of them in their work as teachers:

- apply curriculum knowledge and teaching methods which facilitate successful student learning. ...
- respond to the needs, rights and contributions of all students and take into account their gender, abilities and geographical, cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds ... to promote equality of educational opportunity. ...
- develop and maintain working relationships which support a co-operative and congenial climate within the classroom and school. ...
- assess, record and report student achievement and performance to encourage and assist learning. ...
- provide a balanced and challenging program relevant to the learning needs of students, and consistent with the ideals and aims of public schooling in South Australia. ...
- establish structures and processes to achieve a productive learning environment.
- employ behaviour management strategies which ensure a safe, orderly and success-oriented learning environment. ...
- actively carry out the non-instructional responsibilities which are part of the teacher's role

(EDSA, 1991: 3-11)

The critical perspective, on the other hand, posits the view that a description of what teachers do, or are expected to do, needs to acknowledge that what happens in schools is influenced profoundly by the socio-political and economic phenomena which emanate from the broader Australian society's apparent need to control the work of teachers (Reid, 1993). It is asserted, from this perspective, that such a need to control teachers' work acts, in turn, to limit or counter the potential of this work to contribute towards social justice through education.

For yet other observers of teachers' work (see, for example, Goodlad, 1990) there are moral purposes to the activities of teachers which need to be understood in order to make sense of what teachers do and why they do it. For Goodlad, teachers' moral purposes are fourfold: facilitating critical enculturation; providing access to knowledge; building positive teacher-student relationships; and practising social stewardship.

Regardless of which particular perspective offered the best underpinning for a theoretical understanding, the reality of teachers' work in Australia in the mid-1990s was undeniably problematic. On 16th July, 1995 Melbourne's *The Sunday Age* published a story on the contemporary realities of teachers' work lives under the somewhat provocative headline "Class Warfare". The article extended to two full broadsheet pages and said, in part:

Educators once liked to describe children as empty vessels or blank wax tablets on which the world might be writ. But teachers ... today say children as young as five come to school already half-filled with problems, their surfaces already scratched by the complexities of the world ...

It used to be said that teachers had it easy - a six-hour working day, school holidays, freedom from the stringencies of the commercial world. But a harsher economy, more complex social structures and a broader view of education have combined to cause an explosion in what is expected from teachers.

In a landmark decision earlier this year, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission identified a "significant expansion of the traditional teaching duties", noting that changing society and parental roles had left teachers to take on extra duties. It found "the standard working week of 38 hours is no more than a formality" and some teachers spent 50 hours or more just to do the job adequately. Many teachers are quitting. ... Those who remain tell stories of growing strain, ranging from slabs of sick leave and breakdown, to sheer exhaustion and a sense of hopelessness.

(*The Sunday Age*, 16 July 1995: 1-2)

In much the same vein, on 3rd February, 1997 the country's only national daily *The Australian* devoted more than a page to a discussion of the problems associated with, and those resulting from, the realities of teachers' work lives in the 1990s. Headed "Blackboard Blues: Low status, low pay, low morale", Carolyn Jones' article asserted:

Australia's state school teachers are in an unenviable position. They are more qualified and experienced than at any time in our history yet their status in the community is low, the real value of their salaries has fallen, and their morale has hit rock bottom.

(*The Australian*, 3 February, 1997)

Even if allowances are made for some element of journalistic licence at *The Sunday Age* and *The Australian*, there can be no doubt that the work lives of teachers in Australia in the 1990s are far removed from the traditional understanding of the experiences of Australian teachers in the early decades of this century, as these were depicted, for example, in Brian James' (1950) classic work of Australian fiction, *The Advancement of Spencer Button* in which, according to Clement Semmler's introduction to the 1974 edition (p. iii), James presented:

... a rich variety of school teacher portraits. These range from the best teachers, who were often not the go-getter types, and hence did not achieve their deserved promotions, down through the lazy, the misfits, the no-hopers, and all those who, while mis-cast as teachers and hence figures of fun, nevertheless inspired affection among their pupils for their very inadequacy as teachers.

While other pictures of teachers and their work emerged at various times during the period following the publication of James' novel (see, for example, Connell, 1985), a broadly accepted and definitive scholarly understanding of Australian teachers' work had yet to be published by the beginning of the 1990s. In 1994, however, the Australian Council for Educational Administration published its first yearbook. The title, *The Workplace in Education: Australian Perspectives*, and the recurring themes in many of its chapter headings: "The nature of work"; "Changing work cultures of teaching"; "Imposed change and teachers' work"; and "Changes in teaching, learning and educational workplaces" indicated a burgeoning interest in the interrelated issues of teachers' work, schools as workplaces and educational change. By the mid-1990s there was widespread interest in the actions and perceptions of teachers, as the key educational workers, in schools, as the key educational workplaces.

This interest in the work of teachers is far from an obscure curiosity relevant to only a minute proportion of the Australian community. In the early 1990s, for example, the Flinders Institute for the Study of Teaching had been established at the second of South Australia's three universities. By 1996 interest in teachers' work was widespread enough for the Commonwealth parliament's Senate to announce the establishment of an inquiry into a severe shortage of teachers which was projected for 2002. The inquiry was charged with the examination of aspects of the work lives of the nation's 203,000 teachers, of whom, according to figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Education Union, 143,000 worked in some 7087 state schools.

The demographic profile of Australia's teachers has come to be characterised by ageing and by feminisation. In common with the situation in other OECD member countries, over a third of Australian teachers in the mid 1990s were aged between 40 and 55, while only a quarter of all primary teachers were male. Indeed, according to *The Australian*:

Walk into any state school classroom and it's likely that the teacher taking charge will be middle-aged, female, Australian-born, from a middle-class background and have at least 20 years experience.

(*The Australian*, 3 February 1977: 1)

Despite the extensive classroom experience of the archetypal Australian teacher of the 1990s, the work required of the teacher had changed profoundly over the years of her tenure in the nation's schools. By the end of the period covered by this study teaching had become

... the exploding profession. ... Teachers design courses, devise and mark papers, stand and deliver to students of mixed abilities. These are their core functions. But in the past decade they have taken on extra roles of social worker, nurse, psychologist, administrator, clerk and implementer of untold government ... reforms.

(*The Australian*, 3 February 1997: 4)

Thus, it was not only the profound changes in the social context within which they operated which had effects on teachers' work. The raft of changes which were wrought within the narrower confines of education systems and schools generated further significant implications for the lives of Australia's teachers.

- **Educational Change**

The concept of change has been at the forefront of educational theory and practice for more than thirty years. Similarly, the documentation of educational change efforts has a long history: as is evidenced, for example, in the work of Orlosky and Smith (1972).

Furthermore, the antipodean experience of educational change and its documentation has paralleled those of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Much of the Australian experience of educational change in the years prior to this study was well documented in *Australia's Teachers: An Agenda for the Next Decade*, published in 1990 by the Schools Council for the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET): a document which described the change demands which had impacted on Australian education in the quarter century after 1965.

In the Schools Council's description (NBEET, 1990: 8-12), the latter half of the 1960s and the first years of the 1970s were characterised as constituting an era in which innovations were generated as responses to a widespread questioning of both the processes and the products of contemporary education. This era saw a trend away from centrally prescribed curricula and the birth of school-based curriculum development in a range of attempts to make schools' offerings more relevant to student needs and interests.

The election of the federal Labor government in 1972 saw Commonwealth authorities become increasingly active and influential in the nation's schools, both through funding arrangements and through the actions which followed the recommendations contained in the reports commissioned by its educational agencies. Perhaps the best known of these reports was *Schools in Australia*, published in 1973 by the Interim Committee for the Commonwealth Schools Commission, but known more popularly as the Karmel Report. While the Karmel Report's recommendations for increased funding for education were important, of more long-term significance was its notion that schools should become agencies for social change, promoting equity in response to their communities' disparate needs. Thus many of the change efforts of the decade which followed featured educational experimentation (including, for example, so-called "open space" schools), a wide variety in the forms that education took in different contexts (supported in part, for example, through the Choice and Diversity program) and attempts to democratise educational management in line with the then current vogue of workers' participation in industry. By the early 1980s,

however, it was widely held in educational circles that, even if the innovations of the previous decade had made improvements in the processes of schooling experienced by students, these innovations had achieved little in the way of improved educational outcomes in terms of those things which were perceived to be important if education was to address the needs of the wider society as a whole.

A number of new reviews of the state of education in Australia were commissioned in the early 1980s. The first such major document to emerge from this process was entitled *Education and Change in South Australia*, although since its publication in 1982 it has been known more generally as the Keeves Report. This report was typical of many in the 1980s in that the tenor of its recommendations related not to providing increased funds to improve the quality of education, but to an overall demand that schools and school systems use their resources more efficiently to return increased value for educational expenditure. This period marked the beginning of an era in which the expectation arose that teachers, schools and educational authorities would “do more with less”.

Simultaneously, changes in the demographic makeup of the school student population combined with the new tighter educational funding levels to bring a particularly problematic situation for teachers into focus. Students were entering schools as five year olds in much lower numbers by the 1980s than had been the case in the demographic patterns of the previous two decades, yet higher proportions of the total student population were staying at school beyond the years of compulsory attendance. These events created funding and resourcing problems for both teachers and administrators involved in primary and junior secondary education; and curriculum and behaviour management challenges for teachers working with students in the senior secondary years. In all Australian education systems, senior secondary education was restructured completely from the late 1980s to accommodate what came to be known as the Australian Vocational Training Scheme. In some systems, notably that of South Australia, fundamental restructuring of post-compulsory schooling occurred more than once.

In this current decade, the forces acting to require far-reaching educational changes have become more overtly political than ever before. This has been particularly evident, for example, in the situation in which the responsibility for much educational decision-making has been devolved to the local level (which itself has had considerable implications for both

the amount and complexity of work required of teachers), while the systemic procedures and mechanisms which govern and control school-based decision-making have been tightened considerably to ensure conformity to centralised administrative requirements and central policy directions. Significant reductions in the funds provided to resource schools and the work of teachers have been implemented within this context of devolution. In Tasmania, for example, the adoption of the recommendations of the CRESAP Report (1990) resulted in a 20 percent reduction in education funding, achieved mostly through an immediate 17 percent reduction in the number of teachers employed in that state's education system.

The situations experienced in Australia's government education systems in the period spanning the years between the mid-1960s and the mid-1990s were consistent with the trends which have been apparent in education systems in much of the rest of the western world. In the view of Michael Fullan (1995), there have been four eras of change in western education in that period, with each era coinciding approximately with each succeeding decade. Thus, for Fullan, the nature of the change context in the 1960s related to the *adoption* of innovations; in the 1970s, change processes centred on issues related to effective *implementation*; while the 1980s featured responses to *simultaneous multiple innovations*. The 1990s, in Fullan's analysis, are exemplified by unpredictability and *dynamic complexity* in the educational change context, a context in which teachers and other educational workers can only respond to change productively if they are helped to manage the inherently complex and unstable situations which are characteristic of the contemporary educational change environment.

- **Australian Society and Education in the 1990s**

By the mid 1990s, the social, economic and political organisation of Australian society was embroiled in a continuing process of profound restructuring. Contemporary commentators, such as Mackay in *Reinventing Australia* (1993) and Suter in *Where Did It All Go Wrong?* (1995), identified the emerging society as characterised by cost reduction pressures; by the opening up of domestic markets through tariff reductions; by the failure of new technologies to deliver on the promise of job creation; by the privatisation of state enterprises; by the paradox of a highly educated workforce in a context of entrenched levels of unemployment; by conflict between the twin imperatives of economic development and

of environmental concerns; by a re-examination of Australian cultural identity in a context of multiculturalism; and by an overall decline in Australians' standards of living, associated with the emergence of a three-tiered social structure consisting of a relatively small but growing class of wealthy citizens, a large but shrinking middle class, and a large and growing class of the newly poor. Nevertheless, despite all efforts and intentions to the contrary, by 1994 Australia remained less affluent and less competitive than government and, especially, the business community, desired.

As they collectively constituted a key arm of government, Australian education systems, and the state education systems in particular, were simultaneously both driven by and helped to drive a seemingly radical vision of a restructured Australia. The projected link between the nature and purpose of education and the development of Australia into a modern, competitive, globalised society was made directly in then Prime Minister Hawke's now-clichéd notion of "the clever country" in 1990 which, in turn, helped to set the agenda for the oft-cited Finn (1991), Mayer (1992) and Carmichael (1992) reports. The overall vision was one of people engaged in purposeful lifelong learning, with school systems projected to have a focus on developing traditional literacy and numeracy skills, vocational preparation and multi-skilling, along with an orientation towards innovation, flexibility and enterprise.

From the late 1980s Australia's federal and state government departments in general, and state education systems in particular, came under significant pressure for increased productivity as a direct result of the fiscal stringencies generated by Australia's macro-economic situation and its perceived shortcomings in the area of international competitiveness. Hence, at the very time that Australian society was being shaped within the maelstrom of upheaval associated with what Toffler (1990; 1985) described as a change from a manufacturing society to an information society and what Hargreaves (1994) saw as the emergence of the postmodern age, education systems were coming to be increasingly accountable for their performance and for the outcomes which resulted from their endeavours. These pressures took the form of a general concern for responsiveness and for quality in educational operations and thus for measurable outcomes. These concerns were made manifest through cuts in government funding levels; through the decentralisation or devolution of much operational decision-making to local district and school levels; through the establishment of tighter systemic review procedures; and through federal curriculum initiatives in areas judged to be of national importance. In this latter

area, the promotion of vocational preparation and the development of national curriculum statements and profiles were both significant and indicative.

At the systemic level, Australian state education authorities responded most visibly to the multitude of pressures for change through the announcement of a plethora of new policies and guidelines for teachers and schools. In April 1989, near the beginning of the period covered by this study, the Australian Education Council (a body consisting of the federal and state ministers of education, together with senior officials representing the education departments of each of the respective public service bureaucracies) issued the statement which came to be known as the *Hobart Declaration on Schooling*, in which ten common and agreed goals for schooling in Australia were proclaimed. In November of the same year, the South Australian Education Department issued a new plan for the next triennium in which a review of junior secondary education was announced and the establishment of a restructured model for the final two years of secondary schooling was affirmed. At much the same time, the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts identified four major goals in the then current version of its corporate plan; including an intention to improve learning programs in schools through new policies for both primary and secondary education, through encouraging students' participation in education beyond Year 10 and through measures designed to provide educational and social justice for all students (DEET, 1990).

For the remainder of the period 1989-94, the scant half-decade covered in this study, the expectation that education systems would be responsive to a changing set of educational needs in Australia generated an ever-increasing flow of statements detailing new priorities for, and consequent expectations of, teachers and schools. Indeed, by 1995, the four goals identified by the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts only five years earlier had escalated to 21 curriculum priorities, to which needed to be added the national agenda for the education of girls and responses to the implications of a revamped state Education Act with its attendant regulations.

The simultaneous co-existence of so many pervasive pressures on state education in Australia produced, as was the case in many other settings, a volatile situation characterised, according to Hargreaves (1995a), by a number of paradoxes, each of which had significant implications for the work of teachers in schools. By the mid 1990s teachers were being expected to operate within an increasingly complex and contradictory milieu.

Their work was conducted in a dissonant context, with some of the more notable paradoxes identified (Hargreaves, 1995a: 14-15) as including: parents failing to support the priorities they wished schools to pursue; business failing to utilise the skills it claimed to want in school leavers; parochial national curricula being developed in a context of increasing globalisation; standardised testing and common curricula being promoted in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society; and orientations both toward the future and toward a world of change being promoted at a time of increased nostalgia for the clearer choices supposedly associated with the less complex times of the past.

An additional paradox, not identified specifically by Hargreaves, was evident in the educational environment in Australia. This further paradox involved systemic rhetoric advocating the devolution of decision-making to local levels, while devolution in reality was accompanied by significantly increased central control mechanisms taking the form of stricter systemic accountability requirements.

That the turbulent times of the late 1980s and early 1990s had produced considerable difficulties for teachers did not escape the notice of state education ministers or federal officials. However, both the ministerial members of the Australian Education Council, and the Australian government itself, saw the appropriate response to these problems as one which addressed structural, rather than personal, issues. A profound change in the structure of the teaching profession was promoted as the pathway through which to address issues related to the quality of teaching and learning:

The morale, career paths and conditions of the teaching force are of major concern to employing authorities and to the Australian Government. Award restructuring for all sectors of the economy is a key strategy of the Australian Government's agenda for micro-economic reform. The need to change workplace practices and improve the efficiency of all industries, including education and schooling is crucial for Australia's economic future. The award restructuring process aims to achieve enhanced quality teaching, improved career and training opportunities for teachers and develop more efficient and effective schools.

(DEET, 1990: 63)

Thus the beginning of the 1990s was marked as a time when the links between education and industry were to be seen as having important implications for both teachers' teaching and students' learning in Australian schools. One of the more visible signs of the expectation that education would prepare students more fully for effective participation in the workforce, while itself performing more productively in an industrial sense, was an

increased emphasis on vocational preparation across the curriculum. Australia's teachers, for so long derided for their lack of experience in the "real world" of work, were made responsible, not only for quality and productivity in their own work, but for the capacity of their students to meet the vocational competency expectations of Australian industry. Yet this was only one of a multiplicity of change pressures which were all impacting on the work of Australian teachers at the time of this study.

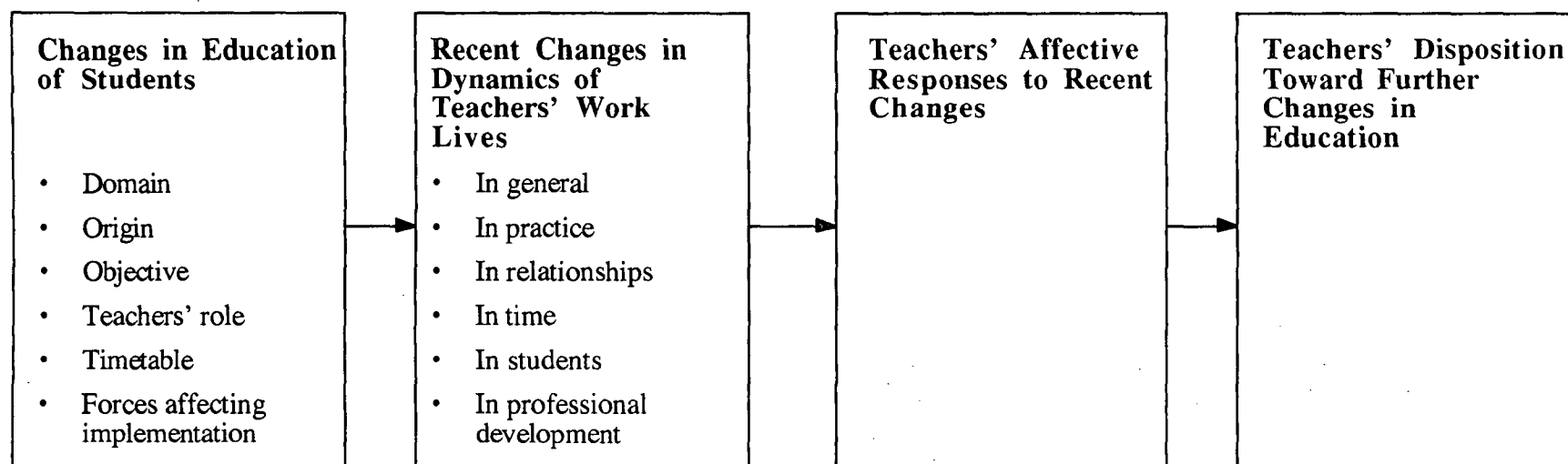
1.2 The Topic, its Scope and Delimitations

The study which follows is an examination of teachers' work in the complex change environment described above. It focuses, in particular, on the impact of the educational changes of the early 1990s on the work of a sample of 100 teachers employed in the state education systems of South Australia and Tasmania.

This study had its genesis in 1993 in the initial plans of the University of Michigan-based Consortium for Cross-Cultural Research in Education (CCCCRE) to launch an international research project investigating the impact of educational change on the work lives of secondary school teachers. The current study began as the Australian contribution to this proposed examination of educational change and teachers' working lives across societies and education systems as diverse as those of the Russian Federation, the Netherlands, India, Great Britain, Israel, Canada, Singapore and the United States of America, in addition to that of Australia. The main focus of the CCCRE study, therefore, was always on cross-cultural issues which were to be investigated through the application of a common interview schedule to matched samples of 50 secondary teachers in each of the participating countries. A simplified version of the conceptual framework for the CCCRE study is presented in Figure 1.1 on the following page.

The framework of the CCCRE study which is displayed in Figure 1.1 is indicative of the largely linear and uni-directional nature of the assumptions which underpinned that study. Thus, *changes in education of students* were seen as resulting in *recent changes in dynamics of teachers' work lives* which, in turn, influenced *teachers' affective responses to recent changes* and, ultimately, these same *teachers' disposition toward further changes in education*. Aspects of the Australian contribution to the CCCRE study have been reported at successive annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association since that international comparative study began (see, for example, Churchill & Williamson, 1995).

Fig. 1.1 Conceptual Framework for the 1994-97 Study of the Consortium for Cross-Cultural Research in Education



The current study was distinct in its own right. It was conducted separately from the CCCRE project, albeit in conjunction with meeting the commitments involved in participation in the small team of researchers which conducted the Australian part of the cross-cultural study. Several important features of the two studies are indicative of their divergent research pathways and specific interests: first, the CCCRE study limited its understanding of educational changes to “changes in the education of students”, while the current study encouraged its participating teachers to nominate any educational change seen by them as affecting any aspect of their work significantly; second, the CCCRE study limited its sample to secondary teachers only, while the current study included both primary and secondary teachers; third, the CCCRE study limited its data gathering procedures to single interviews with individual teachers, while the current study adopted a research approach which added questionnaires for both teachers and principals to the teacher interviews in which an interview schedule significantly different from that applied in the cross-cultural study was used; and fourth, the CCCRE study investigated issues which could be probed in a cross-cultural context, while the current study was grounded firmly in the contemporary social, political, economic and educational contexts of contemporary Australia.

Perhaps most significantly, however, the concepts under investigation in the current study were not seen as linked only uni-directionally, as they had been in the CCCRE study. As is explained in more detail in section 1.3 of this chapter, the current study was conducted in the context of the notion that educational changes, teachers’ work and teachers’ feelings about change and about their work were interrelated issues, with each affecting the other in multi-directional ways.

Both the current study’s scope and its delimitations were focussed on clear understandings of the study’s teacher subjects and, in turn, on these teachers’ perceptions of educational changes. Thus, despite the pervasive impact of workplace reform, in general, in Australia at the time of the study and the significant role played by teacher unions in Australian education, the focus of the study on the perceptions of individual teachers (and practical limitations of size) meant that consideration of teachers’ reactions to union statements and actions was excluded.

There were 100 Australian teachers involved in the study, although this precise number of subjects was arrived at more by chance than by design. The processes involved in the selection of the teacher subjects are described in Chapter Three in detail. The sample of

100 teachers represented males and females, high school and primary school teachers, and ages and years of experience in proportions appropriate for the wider population of Australian teachers. The teachers in this study were all classroom teachers, in that none of them held any non-teaching promotion position and all of them had classroom teaching making up a minimum of 80 percent of their assigned duties. All this study's teachers were employed in either primary or secondary schools within one of two state education systems. Hence, those teachers engaged in working with students at other grade levels, or in the six other state or territory education systems, or in systemic catholic schools, or in any of Australia's many non-state, non-catholic independent schools were not targeted in the study. In that sense, therefore, the study's scope was limited to the teachers employed in primary and secondary state schools in South Australia and Tasmania by the very nature of the sample.

Although it may appear to be a contradiction in terms, the second limitation on the scope of the study resulted from the teacher subjects not being provided with a definitive explanation of the researcher's understanding of the term "educational change". Rather, teachers' perceptions of what constituted significant educational changes were accepted for the purposes of the study and no further definition was put forward. In this sense, any educational innovation which was not understood by the participating teachers to constitute a significant change (such as, for example, the not uncommon receipt of packages of teaching materials disseminated by peripheral groups including mining and forest industry organisations), was effectively excluded from the scope of the study. Teachers were provided with a dozen examples of recent educational changes to ameliorate any possible confusion which might have resulted from the lack of a single definition, but even this list of exemplars was generated by other teachers in the preparatory workshops which are outlined in the second section of Chapter Three. Thus the study was limited in its examination of the effects of educational changes by the extent to which the participating teachers were able to identify particular innovations which they perceived to have affected their work significantly.

On the other hand, the term "recent" in the expression "recent educational change" was defined clearly. For the purposes of the study, recent education changes were understood to include the educational innovations experienced by teachers in the five years prior to their participation in the study. As data were gathered from the teacher participants in the final term of the 1994 school year, the study's focus was limited to the educational changes of the 1989-94 period.

No attempt was made to separate educational changes, as such, from the processes involved in the management, implementation or dissemination of these changes. Thus the term “educational changes”, as it is used in this study, should be understood to include the particular innovations, as such, as well as the processes and procedures associated with each of the innovations.

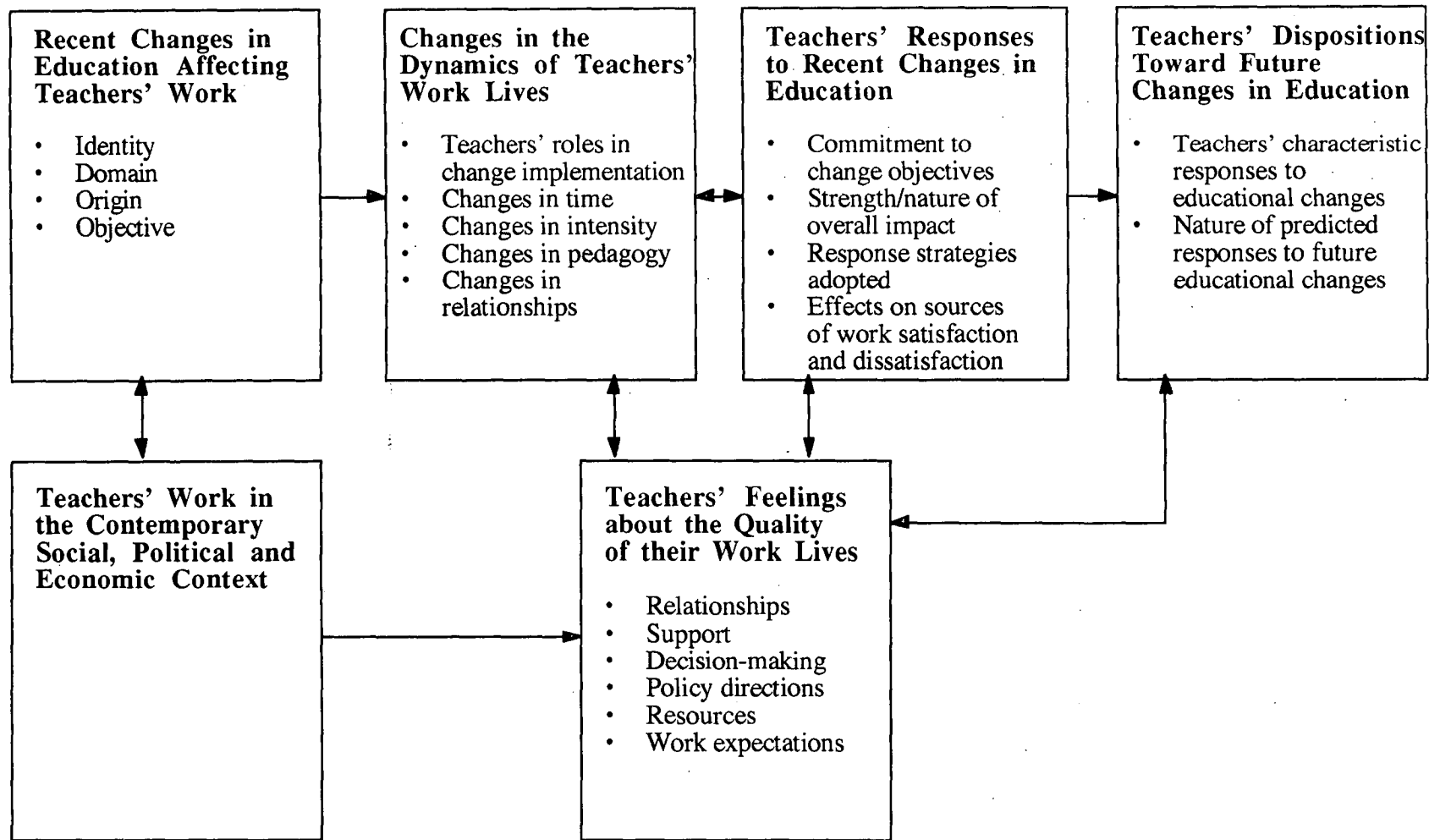
Given these limitations on the scope of the investigation, the broad nature of the topic addressed by the research presented here was *The Impact of Educational Change on Australian Teachers' Work Lives*. It was from this starting point that the study's conceptual framework evolved, with the initial assumptions being that Australian teachers' work lives had been affected by their involvement with educational change and that these teachers would be able to recognise, theorise about, and discuss, these effects.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

There were six major facets to the conceptual framework which underpinned the study. These six facets were all interrelated, although not in the entirely linear fashion which was a feature of the framework for the CCCRE project. The current study was based on the notion that the participating teachers' perceptions related to their work constituted “reality” as far as they were concerned. Thus the study is more a reporting of perceived reality, as seen from the perspectives of those most involved in the situation, rather than a study based on empirical observations conducted by a researcher operating from a position outside teachers' day-to-day work contexts.

A diagram of the study's conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.2 on the following page. This framework acknowledges that teachers' work was conducted within Australia's broader contemporary social, political and economic context and that, in addition to being the ultimate source from which recent changes in education emanated, elements of this context had implications for teachers' feelings about the quality of their work lives. These changes, and teachers' feelings about their work, were understood to not only come from the broader contemporary context, but also to be a part of that context. In turn, the dynamics of teachers' work lives were seen as being affected both by educational innovations *per se* and by their own feelings about the quality of their work lives. Changes in the dynamics of teachers' work were viewed as both influenced by, and influencing, these teachers' perceptions of the overall quality of their working lives.

Fig. 1.2 The Study's Conceptual Framework



The changes in the nature of teachers' work lives, both as teachers experienced these and as these changes were linked to their perceptions of overall work life quality, were, in turn, seen as influencing the nature of their responses to these recent changes in education.

Again, the relationships between these concepts were seen as flowing both ways, with the experiences of teachers responding to recent changes in education being influenced by their perceptions of the quality of their work lives, while also contributing to shaping these same perceptions of work life quality.

Finally, these teachers' cognitive, behavioural and affective responses to recent changes in education and their feelings about the quality of their work lives were understood to have implications for their dispositions toward future changes in education. These dispositions toward future changes were also viewed as influencing, and being influenced by, teachers' feelings about the overall quality of their work lives.

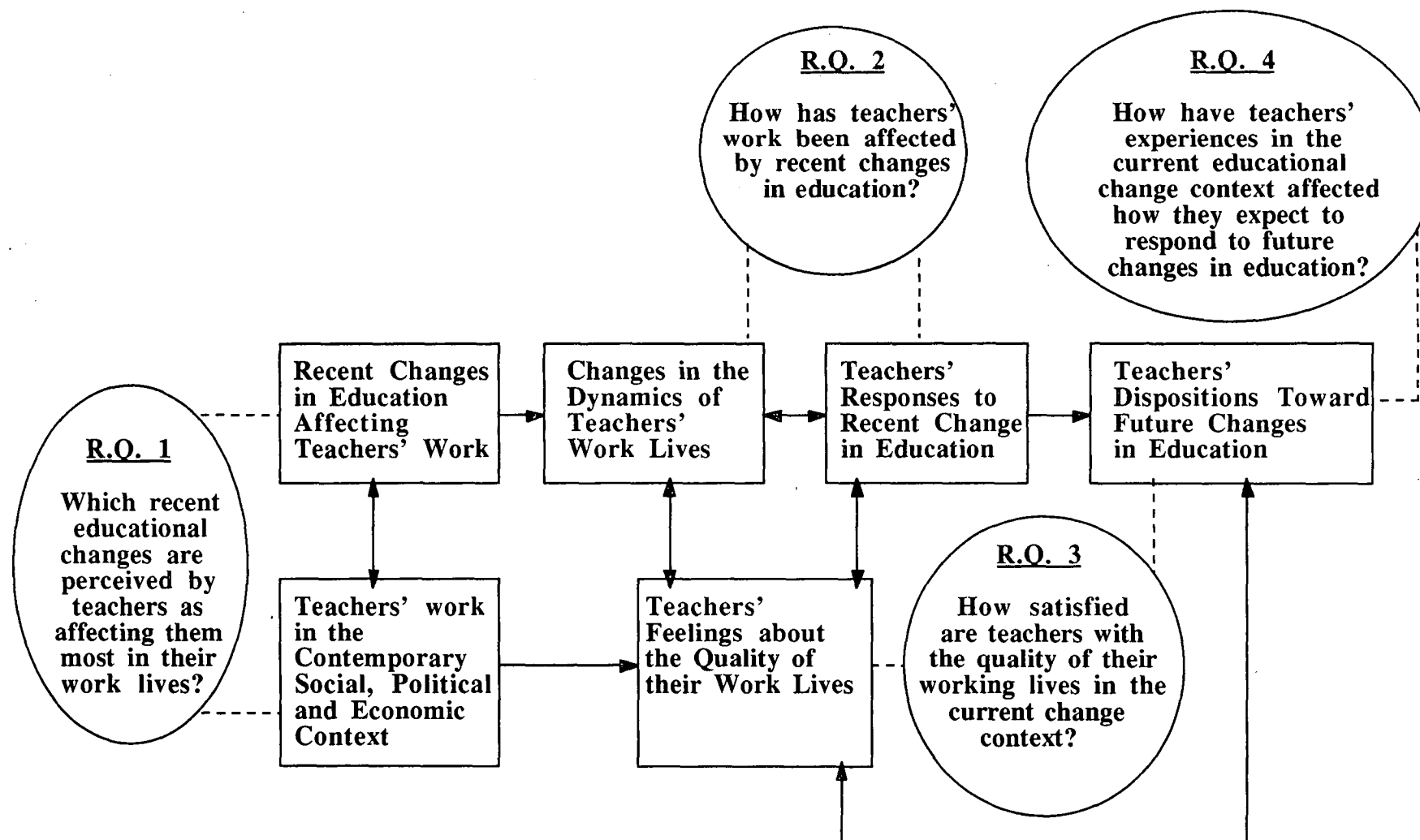
Although not represented in Figure 1.2, it was considered initially that a number of factors relating to the demographic characteristics of the various sub-groups of the teacher sample might have some significance for the study. These factors included the state system in which the teachers worked, their gender, the length of their teaching experience and the level of schooling at which they taught. It was later to transpire that these factors seemingly had little impact on the nature of these teachers' responses when the study's data were collected and analysed.

1.4 Research Questions

Four research questions were employed in the study's investigations into the impact of change on teachers' work and these teachers' consequent attitudes toward the educational changes of the future. Figure 1.3, which is presented on the following page, shows the links between the six elements of the study's conceptual framework and how these were examined through the four research questions.

Research Question 1: *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?* was the vehicle through which the elements of the conceptual framework relating to teachers' work in the contemporary context and the particular changes which emanated from this context to impact on their work were investigated.

Fig. 1.3 The Study's Research Questions Applied to the Conceptual Framework



Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* was the avenue used to uncover consequent changes in the day-to-day dynamics of teachers' work lives and the nature of their behavioural and affective responses to recent changes in education.

Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their working lives in the current change context?* was the pathway through which investigations of teachers' feelings about aspects of the quality of their work lives, and of how these feelings were related to their responses to recent changes in education, were conducted.

Finally, teachers' subsequent dispositions toward future educational changes were gleaned through inquiries conducted in respect of Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?*

1.5 Significance of the Study

The logic which underlies the significance of this study is, perhaps deceptively, simple. Teachers comprise the "workforce of reform" (Connell, 1991) and hence, if it is to have any meaningful impact, educational change depends to no small extent on the work of teachers.

There has been an undeniably high level of concern about the quality of teaching in schools. This has been apparent, for example in the Schools Council's issues paper *Teacher Quality* (1989), in the *National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning* (1991), in the international project on teacher quality begun by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in late 1990, and in the *Teaching Counts* statement issued by the then federal Minister for Education in the Australian Government, Kim Beazley, in 1993 (see also Berkeley, 1991). Despite all this, no clear vision has emerged of how the active collaboration of teachers themselves might be enlisted in the change processes inherent in addressing concerns about the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

If teachers are to enact the changes seen as necessary for education to fulfil the role projected for it by successive Australian governments in their pursuit of the revitalisation of

society, then teachers' perceptions of their work lives and their dispositions toward such educational changes must be taken into account in such initiatives. In this regard, albeit in another context when referring to the US-based *Rand Change Agent Study*, McLaughlin (1990) suggested that it was an error to assume that the policies seen as important by education systems would be viewed similarly by teachers as constituting significant priorities.

The lack of a direct connection between the priorities of advocates of particular educational changes and the priorities inherent in teachers' day-to-day realities is, therefore, far from a new message. Indeed, the need for such a connection was made abundantly clear a quarter of a century ago:

Educational change depends on what teachers do and think - it is as simple and as complex as that.

(Sarason, 1971: 193)

The role of teachers in the effective implementation of any educational change remains crucial in the contemporary context. If any lingering thoughts that the dispositions of teachers toward current and future educational initiatives could be glossed over remained in the minds of proponents of education change in Australia, these beliefs should have been shattered by the front page headline of the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 4th July, 1995. The headline, which read, "Teachers Ban Carr Reforms", indicated that the teachers in Australia's largest state education system were to refuse to co-operate with reform measures which the Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, had laid out for the state's education system. Herein lies the significance of this study: the impact of educational change on teachers' work and teachers' consequent dispositions toward future changes in education must be understood and addressed in the processes associated with the conception, development, dissemination and implementation of the educational changes of the future.

1.6 Structure and Layout of the Thesis

The thesis is comprised of this introduction and seven further chapters, together with a set of attachments consisting of five appendices and a list of references. Within this structure, the remainder of the thesis is set out as follows:

- **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The literature relevant to the study is reviewed and discussed in this chapter. Particular attention is paid to the presentation of contemporary understandings of teachers' work, as these understandings have evolved from the somewhat scant depictions of teachers in Australian fiction and from the classic sociological viewpoints of Lortie (1975) and Connell (1985) to the emergence of current perspectives found, for example, in the work of Huberman, Grounauer & Marti (1993) and Hargreaves (1994). A discussion of the literature related to teachers' thinking about their work is followed by an examination of the key features associated with the various educational change movements since the 1960s and of the assumptions inherent in these models about the roles expected of teachers involved with educational changes. The fourth section of the review contains an outline of the major educational trends which have come to influence the nature of the contemporary context in which Australian teachers conduct their work. The review then turns to an examination of what is known about teachers' responses to educational change. The final section of the review of the literature deals with understandings related to the extent to which teachers are satisfied with key elements of their working lives in the contemporary context of change.

- **Chapter 3: Methods**

In this chapter the various approaches adopted and procedures used in the study's research methodology are described. The research approach involved investigations conducted at multiple sites and the use of both quantitative and qualitative data gathering approaches. The processes involved in the development of the study's several research instruments and the procedures involved in the management of the project are detailed here. This description is followed by an outline of the demographic nature of the study's samples of teachers and principals, accompanied by a portrayal of how the members of these samples were identified and selected for participation in the study. The plans for, and subsequent procedures used, in both the gathering and the analysis of the study's data are then explained. The chapter concludes with an orientation to the findings of the study as these are presented subsequently in Chapter Four, Chapter Five, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. While it might be argued that such a section could be considered to be an introduction to the findings in Chapters Four to Seven, and thus better placed as the initial section of Chapter four, the view was taken that the orientation details describe the "method" of presentation of the study's findings, and hence belonged more logically in the Methods Chapter.

- **Chapter 4: Findings related to Research Question 1**

Chapter Four is the first of four chapters in which the findings of the study, gleaned from the data gathered through the processes described in the previous chapter, are presented. In this chapter, the specific recent educational changes which the study's teachers saw as affecting them most in their work lives are identified and the characteristics of these changes are examined. The results of investigations into the existence of any relationships between the characteristics of these changes in education and the consequent effects on their work lives that teachers' ascribed to them are detailed in this chapter. The results of a significant number of comparison tests which were conducted to detect any differences in the response patterns between the members of the various sub-groups of the teacher sample are presented in this chapter, which concludes with a summary of the study's findings related to the first of the study's research questions: *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?*

- **Chapter 5: Findings Related to Research Question 2**

This chapter focuses on the ways in which teachers believe that their work lives have been affected directly by their experience of recent significant educational change. The relative strength of the impact of such changes on teachers' work and their perceptions of this impact in positive or negative terms are key issues illuminated by the findings. A number of relationships between the characteristics associated with particular types of educational changes and how these changes' subsequent effects on teachers' work lives have been perceived were detected and these relationships are presented here. A summary of the study's findings related to the second research question: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* is presented at the end of the chapter.

- **Chapter 6: Findings Related to Research Question 3**

This chapter details the findings of the study in relation to teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with key aspects underpinning the quality of teachers' working lives. These teachers' sources of work-related satisfaction and dissatisfaction are identified, along with their perceptions of the impacts that recent significant educational changes have had on these sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Subsequently, the results of investigations into the extent of teacher satisfaction with ten key elements of their working lives are

presented. The existence of relationships between teachers' levels of satisfaction with these key elements of their working lives and their respective experiences with particular types of educational changes is portrayed. Chapter Six is concluded by a summary of the findings of the study relevant to Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their working lives in the current change context?*

- **Chapter 7: Findings Related to Research Question 4**

Chapter Seven is the last of the four chapters which present the findings of the study. In this chapter, the study's teachers' beliefs about their typical modes of response to educational change initiatives and their levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with the educational changes which have been of most significance to them in their work are described. The main focus of the chapter is on the findings related to how the study's teachers believe that their experiences with recent educational change will be likely to affect their likely responses to the educational changes of the future. In this regard, relationships between key elements of teachers' experiences with recent changes and their subsequent predictions relating to the nature of their likely responses to future changes in education are identified and described. A summary of the findings in relation to the last of the study's four research questions: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?* concludes this chapter.

- **Chapter 8: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations**

In this chapter the study's findings are discussed in detail and conclusions are identified within a structure consisting of eight sections. In its first four sections, the chapter's structure parallels the order and logic of the study's research questions and its conceptual framework. Thus the chapter commences with the conclusions drawn from the study's findings related to the characteristics of the particular types of educational changes which teachers perceive as affecting them most in their work lives. In the second section, the nature of the effects that these educational changes have had on teachers' work lives are presented. The study's conclusions relating to the extent to which teachers expressed satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the quality of the work lives are outlined next, followed by the study's conclusions relating to how teachers' dispositions toward the educational

changes of the future have been influenced by their experiences of recent educational changes.

Several of significant implications arising from the study are identified for each of the key groups with a direct professional interest in teachers' work: teachers themselves, school principals, system-level educational administrators and teacher educators. These implications, outlined in the sixth section of the chapter, are based on ten new realities of teachers' work lives, which are identified and described in the preceding section of this final chapter. These ten new realities, taken in concert, imply that prior understandings of the nature of teachers' work, and therefore of what teachers need to know in order to be able to perform their work, can no longer be considered adequate in the contemporary context. The new realities of teachers' work lives have implications for how teachers can manage their own work most productively; for how principals can work best with their teachers; for the understandings needed by educational officials in terms of what might be reasonable expectations of teachers and for what might constitute reasonable levels of support to which they may be entitled; and for the sorts of pre-service and in-service training programs which might be offered by teacher educators.

A number of recommendations relating to the development, dissemination and implementation of educational change initiatives are made in the final chapter's seventh section, with particular attention paid to the common model of innovation efforts being directed centrally by one or more systemic officers having one change venture as the single focus of their own work.

Selected recommendations related to future research are presented in the eight section of the chapter, both in relation to research topics which would bear further investigation, and in relation to certain modifications to aspects of the research methods used in this study which might facilitate possible future research projects. In particular, suggestions are made concerning improvements which might be made to the scales which were used to measure teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the current study.

Finally, the case for the need for the various stakeholders in educational change to approach their roles and tasks with a deeper understanding of the true nature of the realities of Australian teachers' work, as these were uncovered in the study, is presented to conclude the main body of the text.

- **Attachments**

The thesis is completed by the inclusion of key materials which are necessary for a complete understanding of the conduct of the study, but which would be distracting if they were to be included in the main body of the text. There are six attachments, with the first of these being a list of references in which all the sources cited throughout the thesis are cited. In the first of the five appendices which follow, the schedule employed in the interviews which were conducted with 38 of the teachers who participated in the study is presented. The second and third appendices present, respectively, the teacher and the principal versions of the twin questionnaires used in the study. Appendix IV contains the sets of briefing notes and other documents provided to assist teachers and principals who were, initially, only potential participants in the study; while Appendix V presents, as an exemplar, a draft interview transcript as this was provided to one teacher participant, together with the amended final version of the same transcript, as this was used in the study following amendment by the teacher interviewed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a distillation of the literature related to the links between the study's twin themes of teachers' work and educational change. The review is focussed deliberately and specifically on those areas where teachers' work and educational change intersect directly. As a consequence, there are many areas of relevance to teachers' work or to educational change which are not examined in this chapter. There is, for example, no presentation or analysis of the literature related to teacher quality, even though there had been a distinctly Australian focus to the major international study on teacher quality which was conducted early in this decade for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Similarly, there is no presentation or analysis of the raft of literature which began to spawn in its modern guise in the early 1980s and which covers the field of effective implementation of educational change and the productive management of change processes.

There is a reason for the omission of these otherwise compelling aspects of the broader area of change in education that goes beyond the degree of arbitrariness which is required in research projects of this nature and in which it virtually becomes necessary to deny reality by artificially separating inter-dependent topics into those which are deemed relevant and those which are not. This form of arbitrary separation is as evident in this study as it is in any other in the same genre. However, in this study, the additional reason for omitting topics such as teacher quality, school reform movements and change management from the material reviewed in this chapter is that these topics offer little insight into the real world of

teachers' work or, at least, little of the aspects of this world which are seen as relevant in day-to-day terms from the perspective of teachers themselves.

In this sense the study has taken a social constructionist perspective on teachers' work and workplace (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990) and thus has a focus on how teachers' conceptions of their work have been affected by a broad range of contemporary contextual factors.

It is, then, a teacher's perspective on teachers' work which is the theme that underpins the review of the literature, as this review is presented in the following six sections of this chapter:

2.1 The nature of teachers' work

In this section the understandings of the nature of contemporary teachers' work lives, distilled from the burgeoning of scholarly interest in the area in the past twenty years, are presented and analysed. The central point made in this section, perhaps, is that any attempt to detail the work performed by teachers leads inevitably to conclusions about the complexity of the teacher's role. Indeed, in Reid's view (1993), the size and complexity of the teaching task are open to continual expansion, given the fluid and often non-consensual nature of educational ends in the Australian context.

2.2 Teachers' thinking about their work

In a sense this section presents the literature on teachers' popular culture: not to the extent of a social-psychological examination of how being a teacher might affect, or even determine, how an individual might think and act, but in the sense of developing understandings of how it feels to be a teacher and of those things that are important to teachers and for the act of teaching.

2.3 Educational change and the role of the teacher

A brief outline of the trends and characteristics associated with the major educational change movements of the past four decades is presented in the first part of this section. The link between educational change and the role of the teacher is made through an examination of the assumptions about teachers' roles which have been present, implicitly or explicitly,

in several understandings or models of change. Fullan (1993a), for example, promoted the view that “everyone must be a change agent”, while Connell (1991) described teachers involved in the Australian government’s Disadvantaged Schools Program as “the workforce of reform”. Such catchphrases are indicative of the literature related to the roles expected, or assumed, of teachers in their involvement with educational changes. Thus the literature which explores the roles envisaged for teachers in educational change efforts is analysed and discussed in the latter part of this section.

2.4 The changing contexts of teachers’ work

Although the accuracy of the truism that “nothing comes from nothing” and, therefore, that changes in the local educational context have had global origins and connections is acknowledged, this section features a strong emphasis on the educational context in Australia. Therefore, the research which describes and analyses the forces acting to result in changes within and to the local educational context, and the subsequent implications of these changes for Australian teachers’ work, is the focus of this section.

2.5 Teachers’ responses to changes in education

This section presents an analysis of the literature which depicts teachers’ responses to educational change. Reports of the research related to teachers’ characteristic responses to change in general and of that related to their specific responses to particular innovations are both detailed in this section.

2.6 Teachers’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction

Two questions are asked of the research literature in this section: first, “What are the factors which influence teachers’ levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work?”; and second, “What is known about current levels of teachers’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction?”. Both of these questions are examined in the light of the current educational change context.

The review is concluded with an outline of the connections between the key elements of the literature and the issues under specific investigation in this study. Thus the review presented in this chapter brings together prior understandings of the nature of the work that teachers perform and of how it may have felt to be a teacher in an Australian school at the time of the study. It is then the task of the study, *per se*, to examine how this work and

how these thoughts and feelings have affected, and have been affected by, recent changes in the educational context in Australia.

There is a considerable concentration in the review on the literature from the United States of America, The United Kingdom and, of course, Australia. The defence of this emphasis against any claim that it constitutes either xenophobia or ethnocentrism is that such an emphasis is entirely consistent with the origins, traditions and cultures of the two Australian state education systems which were the contexts of the study.

2.1 The Nature of Teachers' Work

The worlds of teachers and their work have been popularly depicted in works of fiction writing and in film and television programming for many years. Thus, many of our traditional images of what it is to be a teacher and of the nature of their work have not been entirely inconsistent with the stereotypical Mr. Chips or, perhaps more recently, with *Welcome Back Kotter* or *Stand By Me*. The Australian scene has been no less replete with pictures of teachers at work, with sources ranging from James' (1950) *The Advancement of Spencer Button* to the contemporary adolescent television soap opera *Heartbreak High*.

While the images of fiction, whether print, celluloid or videotape, have been pervasive, they have displayed little of the reality of teachers' work and, furthermore, the little that has been presented has tended to be inconsistent with more scholarly understandings and descriptions of teachers' work.

Contemporary research into the lives of teachers and consequent understandings of the nature of their work can be said to date from Lortie's classic sociological study *School Teacher* (1975). In the first section of this work Lortie sketched the historical development of the teaching profession in the United States of America from the somewhat ad hoc and non-institutionalised days of the 17th and 18th centuries, through the era in which centralised authority was first exercised over mass schooling which developed in the years following the declaration of the republic, to the spread of multi-classroom schools which resulted from the emerging urbanisation that characterised the 19th century. Finally, Lortie turned to the 20th century: an era which he described as dominated by the organisation of local school districts and the centralised bureaucracy, both of which are still in evidence today. Lortie saw the public perception of teaching as full of paradoxes:

honoured and distained, praised as “dedicated service” and lampooned as “easy work”. ... The services performed by teachers have usually been seen as above the run of everyday work, and the occupation has had the aura of a special mission honoured by society. But social ambiguity has stalked those who undertook the mission, for the real regard shown those who taught has never matched the professed regard. Teaching is a status accorded high respectability of a particular kind; but those occupying it do not receive the level or types of deference reserved for those working in the learned professions ... or demonstrating success in business.

(1975: 10)

In the second section of the report of his study Lortie suggested that there were five factors which attracted people to the teaching profession: contact with young people and other learners; the self-perception of teachers performing a valuable service to society; the opportunity to revisit or continue positive experiences of their own schooling; material rewards which were less accessible elsewhere to women and socially upwardly mobile male teachers; and the scheduling patterns of the school day and of the academic year which allowed more free time than might have been available in other occupations for teachers to attend to their families or other responsibilities (1975: 26-32). Even in the 1960s, however, in relation to the last of these attractors, despite an appearance of a working week of only 30 hours, teachers were reported to spend only slightly less than 50 hours per week engaged in work-related tasks (National Education Association, 1967, in Lortie, 1975: 89-90).

In the third section of his depiction of the world of teachers at work Lortie stated that, for teachers, the main goal of their work was the production of “good people - students who like learning” (1975: 132). Yet he saw education as characterised by the uncertainties of classroom life which made the attainment of this long term, intangible goal problematic for teachers. For Lortie, the difficulties teachers faced in attaining self-efficacy had two contributing elements:

One is that the highest hopes of some teachers - moral influence - cannot be assessed until the person's life has begun to unfold. The second is that one's efforts may have only temporary effects on students.

(1975: 146)

That Lortie's teachers spent much of their time working with students isolated from contact with, and therefore feedback from, other adults only accentuated their doubts about the value and effectiveness of their efforts. Teachers' doubts about their capacity to achieve the professed goals of their work were presented by Lortie as being magnified by the

difficulties they faced in their twin roles of performer in, and manager of, classroom events. These difficulties were illuminated by Lortie in a comparison between the work of teachers and that of actors, with teachers' work being depicted as the more problematic:

... both teachers and actors face similar task imperatives. They must overcome the influence of distractions and mobilise the attention of initially uninvolved audiences. ... In theatre work there is a complex division of labor aimed at reaching the audience: directors, stage managers, actors ... work together. The teacher typically works alone and is forced to play all those roles simultaneously. The theatrical setting, moreover, is usually manipulated to concentrate audience attention: lighting, scenery, properties and costumes all contribute to monopolising the audience's attention. The teacher, on the other hand, works under comparatively humdrum conditions, with fewer resources for riveting attention.

(1975: 165-6)

The difficulties inherent in operating effectively in the context of the vagaries of the situation described above led, in Lortie's analysis, to teachers' work being characterised by conservatism (preserving and reproducing the status quo); individualism (working alone rather than seeking common collegial solutions); and presentism (focussing on immediate, short-term demands rather than on important, long-term goals).

Lortie's seminal work marked the beginning of a burgeoning research interest in understanding the realities of the contemporary work lives of teachers. Perhaps ironically, as the literature on teachers and their work has expanded, so too has the extent to which Lortie's work has attracted criticism for its alleged overly-homogeneous treatment of teachers and teaching. In this regard, for example, Acker (1983) has presented a feminist critique of sociological studies of teaching, including the work of Lortie, and Troyna (1994) has criticised Lortie's work and other elements of the literature of the field for blindness to issues of minority groups in general and racial minorities in particular.

From the time of Lortie's *School Teacher*, much of the initial subsequent research on the nature of teachers' work and, for that matter, on how teachers themselves thought about and perceived their work, focussed on beginning teachers. Perhaps this focus resulted from the fact that a good proportion of the published material in the field emanated from authors engaged in the pre-service training of teachers. More recently, however, the 1980s and 1990s have been witness to a wider scholarly interest in the work lives of teachers throughout their careers. That this broader scholarly interest in the work of teachers has been a relatively recent phenomenon is evidenced clearly in the fact that when the American Educational Research Association published a monograph on key issues for historical

research in education early in the 1980s (Best, 1983), this work contained not even a single chapter on the work lives of teachers.

The mid-1980s, however, marked the beginning of a decade of increasing interest in, and scrutiny of, the work of teachers in general and of Australian teachers in particular. In *Teachers' Work* (1985), Connell built upon his earlier research with Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett in his depiction of the work lives and perceptions of six pseudonymous Australian secondary teachers. The teacher depictions presented by Connell were not of real, individual teachers, but rather, were composite portraits drawn from the interviews conducted with the 37 teachers who participated in the study. Nevertheless, the pictures presented of Sheila Goffman, Margaret Blackall, Terry Petersen and Jack Ryan (the four of Connell's six "teachers" who worked in state schools) provided illuminating insights into the world of Australian teachers' work in the early 1980s.

The overwhelming majority of depictions of the work that teachers do, and of how this work is done (see, for example, Crowther, 1994), have conceptualised teachers' work in one of two ways: either as work and worker which are both constrained significantly by social, political, economic and institutional factors; or as work which is the product of the exercise of professional judgement on the part of autonomous professionals who are seen as being largely free of contextual constraints.

The first of these conceptualisations, that which sees teachers and their work as being determined heavily by powerful social and contextual factors, underpins, for example, some of the work of Rosenholtz (1991), Broadfoot and Osborn (1988) and of Apple (1988a; 1988b). On the other hand, the conceptualisation of teachers as autonomous actors, able to make individual determinations about their work is apparent, for example, in much of the work of Louden (1992), Little (1990a) and Nias (1989a).

In their review of the British research into teachers' lives and careers, Ball and Goodson (1985) made one of the early efforts towards what would now be recognised as a contemporary understanding of the complexity of teachers' work. Such notions, in their view, developed from the neo-Marxist analyses of the late 1970s and early 1980s, much of which had depicted teachers as victims of the constraints within which they worked.

For the purposes of this study, however, rather than interpreting the dissonance between the two conceptions of teachers' work as an issue to be resolved one way or the other, the

view is taken that individual teachers will be spread across the continuum between the poles of determinism and autonomy. For each teacher, a multiplicity of personal factors (including age, experience, self-concept, pedagogic skill and particular motivations) interact with a similar multiplicity of contextual factors (including systemic requirements, school climate, leadership styles and changing political and economic circumstances). Within the experience of each individual teacher the combination of this raft of influencing factors results in a unique outcome: for some this may translate to a working life which is shaped and determined by social and contextual forces; while for others such a combination of influences may produce a working life in which the individual teacher acts with unfettered professional autonomy.

For the great majority of teachers, however, the reality will be between these two extremes: individual experience of the teacher's life will be shaped by environmental factors, while the nature and extent of the impact of these factors will be altered, sometimes markedly, in each teacher's experience by the set of personal factors unique to the background and persona of each individual teacher. In essence, not all teachers share an identical subjective experience of the factors which influence the contemporary educational context. This study's understanding of teachers at work is, therefore, an understanding of teachers as individuals: sometimes merely struggling to survive, sometimes building careers, always faced with the twin imperatives of creating elements of the classroom context and of responding immediately to those elements brought to that context by others (in this regard see, for example, Butt & Raymond, 1989).

Thus the generalisations which are made about teachers in the analysis of the literature which describes teachers and their work in the following pages are made with a cautionary note. In a perspective which is not dissimilar to Lincoln and Guba's notion of "multiple simultaneous shapers" (1985: 150), the caveat is advanced that, despite the existence of powerful common factors influencing teachers' culture (and, therefore, teachers' work), individual differences among teachers and their workplace contexts mean that it is not reasonable to speak blithely of teachers as a completely homogeneous group.

Heterogeneity within the teacher population has been found to be particularly apparent in intercultural studies of teachers and their work (see, for example, Sato & McLaughlin, 1992, for a comparison of the work of teachers in Japan and the United States; and Poppleton, 1992, for a comparison of teachers in five countries). Even within the borders of a single nation, however, it may not be reasonable to think of the work that teachers do

as capable of being encapsulated in one singular understanding. Indeed, the innumerable facets and wide variability of the tasks involved in teachers' work in Australia have led the Schools Council (1990: 48-49) to conclude that teachers' work could not be defined.

There are, nonetheless, a number of common threads in the contemporary literature on teachers' work. Included among these are that teaching is a form of work and that schools are workplaces. Additionally, there is an acceptance of the existence of both cultures of teaching and workplace cultures and, furthermore, that these cultures influence how teachers perform the various aspects of their work in schools.

That teaching constitutes a form of work can be accepted without demur, even if modern western understandings of the nature of work itself should not be assumed to apply universally (see, for example, Berrell, 1994). If teaching is, indeed, a form of work then it follows that teachers are workers and the sites where teachers perform their duties constitute workplaces (Watkins, 1993a). Given the expansion in the out-of-classroom duties that today's teachers are called on to perform (as will be outlined later in this chapter in section 2.3), the most typical, and most significant, workplace for state school teachers in Australia is, therefore, the school as a whole, rather than merely a classroom within the school. This stands in some contrast to the established view of the teacher at work as being almost totally engaged in classroom duties.

Teacher culture is a less self-evident matter. For Hargreaves (1995b) teacher culture centres on the relationships teachers share with their colleagues. The patterns of such relationships are said to vary within three broad dimensions: cultural content, cultural form and work structures. The first dimension, cultural content, consists of attitudes, values and the ways of operating which are shared by a particular teacher group, whether at classroom, grade level, faculty area, school, district or state level. Cultural content identifies the real purposes and priorities which underpin teachers' actions. Hargreaves' second dimension, cultural form, consists of the patterns of interaction between teachers themselves and between teachers and the others with whom they interact in their work. These patterns of interaction are, in Hargreaves' view, influenced in no small measure by the third dimension of teacher culture, that of work structures. Structures such as timetabling arrangements and decision-making processes have profound influences on the extent to which teachers work individually or collaboratively, and co-operatively or competitively, in particular workplace contexts. These connections between teacher culture

and aspects of their workplaces have been linked in the literature for over a decade. In Sikes' view, for example,

Socialisation into occupational culture, learning to be a ... proper teacher, takes place on the job. By observation and experience the young teacher learns the appropriate codes of conduct.

(1985: 36)

The essence of those aspects of a teacher's work which relate directly to interactions with students (work which teachers often distinguish from the other tasks they perform by referring to it as "real teaching") is coloured by the absence of an authoritative and universally accepted theory of instruction. The lack of an accepted theory of instruction, in the context of wide diversity in the chemistries of different student groups, together with the idiosyncratic characteristics of each teacher and an architecture of schools which has acted to isolate one group of teacher and students from the next, has led to a culture of autonomy and a tolerance among teachers for each other individual pedagogic preferences (see, for example, Huberman, 1993; Little, 1990a).

The uncertainties and lack of predicability of classroom events have led teachers, typically or frequently, to shy away from rigid or prescriptive classroom planning models and to adopt a style of working which has been described by Hatton (1988) as "bricolage". Bricolage means, in this context, tinkering. This understanding of school events and school cultures as characterised more by unpredictability than by anything else is consistent with Greenfield's emphasis on the existence and power of cultural differences between schools. In simple but telling terms Greenfield (1986: 162) depicted the complexity of the unique nature of the cultural contexts in schools as resulting from the reality of daily school life in which "nothing never happens".

In the bricolage conception of teachers' classroom work, teachers are portrayed as independent artisans (see also Huberman, 1993) applying, adapting and modifying available tools and resources in response to constantly changing circumstances, in order to meet goals associated with student learning. In this view of teachers as bricoleurs, however, teachers' adaptations are said to be conservative, their creativity is described as limited and the expansion of their pedagogic repertoires is understood to occur incidentally and pragmatically. Nevertheless, Hatton's notion of teachers' work as bricolage sits quite comfortably with long-established views of the isolated classroom teacher and with Lortie's perceptions of teachers' conservatism and presentism. Similarly, it is consistent with more

contemporary conceptions of the individualism or, more positively, individuality (Hargreaves, 1993) associated with teachers' classroom-related work.

McLaughlin (1993) has a similar understanding of teachers going about their classroom work in singular ways. She has described teachers as being less influenced by innovations or policy than by their own views about how they might respond best to the students they have in their classrooms. In her view:

Teachers are brokers who construct educational arrangements that acknowledge the goals of society, the characteristics of the students with whom they work, their professional judgement, and the character of the workplace context.
(McLaughlin, 1993: 98)

Ashenden described teaching as "the last of the cottage industries" (1992: 60). Yet, of course, education is more than a single industry and schools are not mere factories of a singular type. Some scholars (see, for example, McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990) have claimed that a complete understanding of the context in which teachers do their work should acknowledge the significant variety of social factors which have an influence on schools. Indeed, much of the research which emerged from the United States of America in the 1980s (see, for example, Rosenholtz, 1989, 1985; Little, 1982) has seen individual school site variables such as collegiality and teacher participation in decision-making as important factors influencing the contexts of teachers' work. Metz (1990), on the other hand, specified five sources of meaning in teachers' cultural contexts: the local community; students; teachers' personal backgrounds; the principal's behaviour; and teachers' collective perspectives on schooling. It should be noted, however, that Metz was particularly concerned with the impact of social class differences on teachers' work and so her focus was on the school as the context in which teachers worked, rather than on what individual teachers actually did at work and how such work was performed.

Debate over the extent to which teaching qualifies as a genuine profession has occupied the minds of commentators for decades. There exists a wide range of interpretations of the nature of teachers' work in this regard, with contemporary interpretations involving themes of professionalism, on the one hand, and proletarianism on the other. However, both the issues and the descriptors in such debates remain problematic and contestable (Helsby, 1995). Regardless of how, or indeed if, such debates are to be resolved, it is perfectly clear that, given the knowledge and skills required to act and to exercise judgement in the role of the teacher, "teaching is a highly complex form of work" (Rowan, 1994: 10).

One of the problems which has bedevilled attempts to come to a shared understanding of the nature of teachers' work has been that, while it has been accepted that good teaching generates improved learning, there has been no universal agreement upon which activities actually constitute good teaching (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). It is this lack of an accepted scientific knowledge base which is said to undermine any view of teaching as a genuine profession and, what is more, in the view of Berliner (1989) for example, to be the main obstacle in the path of teaching attaining professional status. Notwithstanding the work of Gage (in *Art, Science and Teaching* (1992) for example), a typical view of teaching's status which emerges from the literature depicts teaching's standing as "clearly ambiguous" (Shedd & Bacharach, 1991: 2).

Lieberman and Miller (1992: 4) are unequivocal in their view of teaching as an art, rather than a science. This understanding of teaching as an art, or craft, which is learned best through actual performance of the job itself is, however, underpinned by an understanding of the work of teachers which is an understanding constrained within the walls of teachers' classrooms. The notion of teachers as individual craftspeople is conspicuously silent about those elements of teachers' work which form the bulk of the extra duties which have come to be expected of teachers in the contemporary context.

Attempts to come to an understanding of the nature of teachers' work by describing what teachers should do (see, for example, the Education Department of South Australia's *Teachers' Work*, 1991) or what they say they do (see, for example, Shedd & Bacharach, 1991) have been fraught with difficulties associated with the over-simplification and disconnectedness inherent in task analysis and in the deconstruction of a complex holistic entity into its constituent parts. Even the most detailed list of individual tasks or functions performed by the teacher fails to deliver much beyond the broad understanding, cited earlier in Rowan's words, that teaching, as a form of work, is highly complex. This complexity is not expected to diminish in the foreseeable future: in an attempt to predict the future roles of the teacher in the schools of the Tasmanian state education system, facilitator, subject expert, coach, tutor, mentor, role model, pedagogic expert, pastoral carer and friend were all said to have particular importance as elements of the work of teachers in the coming decade (Tas. DECCD, 1996).

Nevertheless, what is conspicuous by its absence within the literature on the nature of teachers' work is a complete depiction and analysis of the out-of-classroom elements of the teacher's contemporary role. Perhaps it is both right and proper that the literature on the

work conducted by teachers retains its traditional focus on classroom-related teaching and learning: after all, as will be apparent in the following section of this review, the classroom remains the focus of teachers' own thinking. Nevertheless, the lack of a detailed explication of the nature of the non-instructional elements of teachers' work, and of how these elements interrelate with teachers' much more comprehensively described instructional tasks, leaves something of a vacuum. At the very least, the picture of the contemporary teacher's world, as this is presented in the extant literature, remains considerably less multi-dimensional than the reality it attempts to depict.

2.2 Teachers' Thinking about their Work

Coming to an understanding of how teachers think, act and feel about their work is said to be requisite upon having an understanding of the inter-relationships between teachers' individual lives and their various work contexts, both past and present (Goodson, 1980). While this could well be seen as amounting to an argument in support of individual biography as the most appropriate tool for investigating teachers' views on their work, autobiographies suffer from problems such as selective recall and reconstructed memories. The salient point to be remembered in this context, however, is that while teachers' feelings may, at times, be discussed as though teachers constitute an entirely homogeneous group, this is far from the actual truth of the matter. In the same way as Aristotle described his own perception of himself as a teacher with the metaphor of "midwife", it must be remembered that each individual teacher will bring uniquely personal metaphors and understandings to their own thinking about their work.

Given that the references to teachers' autonomy, to their individualism and even to their isolation so permeate the literature on teaching, an understanding of what it means to be a teacher must focus, of necessity, on the things that the disparate individuals who inhabit the profession share in common. In this regard Little (1992) applied Giddings' term "consciousness of kind" to describe the shared elements involved in the adoption of the teacher identity. In Little's thesis, the key element associated with being a teacher was an interest in, and disposition toward, student learning.

Perhaps the single most important element in coming to an understanding of teachers' thinking about their work is that teaching is a "moral craft" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1995: 5). Thus teaching has a purpose and goals which are valued highly in the minds of those

who perform this work. While some commentators have cautioned that post-war changes in attitudes toward education mean that:

the special kind of rhetoric in talking about teachers as people who are dedicated to high ideals and for whom work has a moral purpose, committed to the advancement of learning, devoted to helping children fulfil their potential and so on
(Poppleton & Riseborough, 1990a: 106-107)

should not be taken for granted, Australian teachers certainly see teaching more as a vocation than as mere work (Maclean, 1992). It is viewed generally by those engaged in it as a caring profession. In spite of these contemporary insights, however, something of the dearth of research into the occupational socialisation of teachers which was lamented a decade ago (Atkinson & Delamont, 1985), still lingers.

In Michael Huberman's landmark work *The Lives of Teachers* (1993: 113-121) the three most common reasons for becoming a teacher are identified as follows: first, pleasure derived from contact with young people and their achievements; second, as a way of earning a living and acquiring financial independence; and third, as a means of maintaining involvement with, and passion for, the content of a particular subject area. While these three factors constituted only the most common motives for selecting teaching as a career among Huberman's sample of Swiss teachers in the late 1980s, they are consistent with the career choice motives identified in other studies of why people become teachers (see, for example, Johnson, 1990; Goodlad, 1984).

Traditionally, then, it seems that many people have entered the teaching profession in order to satisfy a combination of emotional, economic and intellectual needs. Once engaged in the teaching career, however, a range of psychosocial factors interact with the reality of the work as this is performed to affect individual teacher's perceptions of their work in different ways. Nevertheless, despite the inevitable disparateness in teachers' perceptions of, and reactions to, their work lives that is generated by the unique combination of individual influences and experiences in each case, it remains possible to make several generalisations about different stages which may be apparent in teachers' career life cycles.

Huberman's explanation of the career life cycles of teachers (Huberman, Grounauer & Marti, 1993), in which he drew on many other studies, including an examination of Australian teachers' career experiences (Ingvarson & Greenway, 1984), is replete with depictions of the rich variety of alternative pathways which individual teachers may take as

they progress through their careers. Nevertheless, Huberman, in common with other analysts of the professional life cycle (see, for example, Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1979), identified a number of phases which might be discerned in the career experiences of the archetypal teacher. Thus from the phase of career entry (characterised by survival and learning on the job), a teacher may pass on to a stabilisation phase (characterised by a reaffirmed commitment to teaching as a career and by increased pedagogic mastery). From then on Huberman's overview of the phases of the teaching career life cycle becomes more complex with some teachers moving into a phase of experimentation and diversification (characterised by highly motivated, dynamic involvement in ventures extending beyond the limits of the classroom), while others move, instead, into a phase of reassessment (characterised by self doubt and questioning of the value of working as a teacher).

As an aside it is worth noting here that this moment of mid-career questioning occurs, seemingly typically, in teachers between the ages of 35 and 50 and between their fifteenth and twenty-fifth year of working as a teacher (see, for example Prick, 1989; Sikes, 1985). The point here is that at the time of the current study this age range and level of experience dominated the demographic profile of teachers in state schools in Australia. It would, of course, be a mistake to interpret this as necessarily meaning that the typical Australian state school teacher was experiencing a form of mid-career crisis at the time of the study. There appears to be nothing in the literature to indicate that all, or even a majority of teachers, endure such a time of uncertainty. A period of self-doubt was, however, common among the sample of teachers in Huberman's study which, it must be remembered, consisted of only those teachers who chose to remain in teaching whether they had experienced a period of mid-career reassessment or not. Nevertheless, it is clear mid-career doubts exist for many teachers. The mid-career has been characterised as a time of "confrontation between myth and reality" by Sarason (1977: 105).

The phase of reassessment, and that of experimentation and diversification, are depicted by Huberman as the two routes teachers may take on their career journeys to a subsequent phase of serenity (characterised by self-acceptance and by being at ease with, but more distant from, students in the classroom). For those teachers who do not achieve serenity, the alternative seems to be a phase of dissatisfied conservatism (characterised by unflattering views of contemporary students, of public attitudes toward education, and of colleagues in comparison with the respective equivalents during the earlier years of their careers). Finally, whether from a position of serenity or from one of conservatism,

teachers in the last years of their careers may begin to gradually separate themselves from some aspects of their work commitments and thus enter a phase of disengagement. Regardless of whether, in Huberman's terms (1993: 13), such a disengagement is "serene" or "bitter", this final phase of the professional career seems to be characterised by teachers concentrating their energies on those elements of the job that they value particularly, rather than on dealing fully with all of the myriad of aspects of a teacher's work.

Thus, in this classic modern study of teachers and their work lives, Huberman asserted, albeit with qualifications, that the careers of those engaged in teaching can be seen as consisting of several distinct phases. These phases, although not directly sequential or universal, nevertheless represent the career life cycle in teaching as being characterised by initial professional establishment, followed by increased activism and influence. Subsequently, for many, comes a period of personal and professional reassessment and, finally, a gradual drawing back from full engagement in professional activities.

The contemporary life cycle literature offers more of an insight into the mind of the teacher than had earlier sequential models, such as that suggested by Fuller (1969) which saw teachers moving through three stages: from a concern for self, to a concern for curriculum, and finally to concern for students as the dominant element in their view of their own work. Similarly, Huberman's multi-faceted models are much more sophisticated than the picture of three career stages: getting into the adult world; settling down; and becoming one's own man, which was put forward previously by Super and Hall (1978). Maclean's (1992) Australian study adds to the weight of evidence which suggests that there may be discernible stages in teachers' working lives. In his sociological analysis of Australian teachers' career patterns Maclean not only found that there were identifiable stages in teachers' work lives but, more significantly, that there was "both an internal (phenomenological) and external (structural) aspect" (1992: 13) to the working lives of Australian teachers.

There is an inescapable gender-related perspective to understanding teachers and their careers in education. While much of the career life cycle literature examines teachers' careers in a conventional sense (characterised, for example, by the notion that service will be largely uninterrupted by other life events), Nias (1989b) has pointed out that such a perspective is inadequate. In her view, the fact that the overwhelming majority of classroom teachers are women, with many of these women teachers being married or

otherwise involved with a person having a work life of their own, has particular significance for understanding how a large proportion of teachers think about their careers. Indeed, according to Nias, for many female teachers, career success and satisfaction is more likely to be derived from subjective factors such as congeniality, self-esteem and personal development opportunities, rather than from more overt normative measures of quality of work life.

In the Australian context, Porter, Warry and Apelt (1992) claimed that female teachers will, more often than not, have career patterns which differ from those of male teachers. In their view, the common requirements for Australian female teachers to play the role of primary care-giver in the family and to put her partner's career interests before her own are salient factors influencing the work experiences of this majority of Australian teachers.

A proper understanding of teachers' work lives must at least acknowledge that, whether populated by professionals or artisans, it is an occupational group which, at the classroom level, is dominated by women. In this regard it is important to recognise that women's broken career patterns and the strong possibility of concentration on quality of work life factors other than hierarchical promotion may well constitute the feelings of the mainstream of Australian teachers, rather than merely representing the views of those at the margins (see, for example, Spender, 1982). Nevertheless, as Acker (1995) has pointed out, despite the value of a gender perspective for a proper understanding of teachers and their work, it would not be appropriate to interpret either teachers' caring activities or the caring elements of teacher culture as emanating from certain uniquely female characteristics. Even so, for a not inconsiderable number of authors (see, for example, Acker, 1995; Briskin & Coulter, 1993), the activities and cultures associated with teachers and their work share much with traditional views of mothering and women's work. In this regard these authors see work involving nurturing, selflessness and repetitive tasks as characteristic of both mothering and teaching.

Given the high-minded purposes and optimistic expectations with which most teachers enter the field, how they respond subsequently to the realities of day-to-day work as a teacher is of clear significance for the resulting perceptions they hold of their careers. Johnson (1990) found that teachers experienced satisfaction from their contact with children and believed that their work had been meaningful, but also faced frustration and disappointment that their work had not been as effective as they hoped at the beginning of their careers. Other studies of how teachers feel about their work and their careers have

revealed similar dissonance in teachers' minds. Rosenholtz (1991), for example, found that many teachers experienced uncertainty (about how teaching might be conducted in order that students might learn better) and threatened self-esteem (emanating from teachers' difficulties in attaining control over the factors which would influence their professional adequacy).

Of all the factors which contribute to teachers' views of their work and of their workplace contexts, students and their characteristics are clearly the most significant (McLaughlin, 1993). Teachers' views, at any one time, of their schools, their colleagues, their classrooms and even their commitment to the teaching profession are all, it seems, affected deeply by the needs, abilities, attitudes, backgrounds and behaviours of their current groups of students. In terms of self-efficacy at work, therefore, teachers' feelings are malleable rather than constant, with changing degrees of self-efficacy being felt with changes in the student groups which they are assigned.

Despite the individual differences resulting from each teacher's unique life experiences, the combination of teachers' cognitive and affective responses to their past and present teaching contexts and experiences has been said to contribute to a teacher culture with identifiable characteristics which are shared by many teachers. The literature recognises the existence of teacher culture, but does not go as far as suggesting that there is a complete, homogeneous culture applicable to all teachers. Nevertheless, within the context of differences between individuals, workplaces and across national borders (see, for example, Poppleton, 1992; Menlo & Poppleton, 1990), teachers demonstrate a significant degree of similarity in their values, beliefs, orientations and practices (Sparkes, 1991).

There are a number of key elements of such a teacher culture. One such element is said to be a valuing of common sense or the practical knowledge which teachers utilise in the context of the immediacy of the task of teaching (Sachs & Smith, 1988). A second element of teachers' culture is that of individualism. Derived from the uncertainties involved in coping as the sole adult in a single classroom, teachers' individualism, in the form of personal habits and survival strategies, is reinforced by a mutual reluctance on the part of teachers to critique the actions of their colleagues. In accord with the "sacred norms" of teacher culture (Sparkes, 1991: 8), teachers are "present-oriented, conservative and individualistic". Nias took the notion of individualism even further in her view of teachers seeing the preservation of their own personal identities as a priority in their lives. Indeed,

she claimed that many “chose teaching, in part, because they could ‘be themselves’ in the primary classroom” (Nias, 1986: 25).

Hence it comes as no surprise that, in studies of the reasons teachers give for their instructional decisions, such decisions are influenced by individual experience, rather than by the principles of educational theory (Hargreaves, 1984). Teacher culture is not underpinned by adherence to an accepted body of knowledge. Rather, the personal, situational and experiential characteristics of the individual teacher’s practical knowledge (Beattie, 1995) reinforces the autonomous, albeit often isolated, position of the individual within the broader teacher culture.

Despite the importance of consensual individualism within teacher culture, norms of appropriate professional behaviour do exist within teacher communities. Helsby (1995) claims that English teachers view working hard to attain the best results possible, forming positive relationships with students and working well with teacher colleagues as three key norms of teacher culture. Significantly, however, an important element of working well with teacher colleagues has been said to involve a willingness to respect other teachers’ professionalism (see, for example, Little, 1982), thus entrenching individualism still further and making genuine collaboration between teachers somewhat problematic, especially when such collaboration is a requirement imposed on teachers (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990).

The working relationships that exist between teachers need to be understood in the context of these key aspects of teacher culture. Thus teachers, who are often used to autonomy and privacy in their work, operate within a norm of professional equality (Smylie, 1992). Under the guise of the norm of professional equality there is at least implicit acceptance of each teacher’s right to make their own professional judgements in their work with their students. In effect, the norms of privacy and professional egalitarianism can act to block attempts to promote or to enforce collegial standards and expectations (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). This is not to say that workplace relationships with their colleagues are not important to teachers. Indeed, there is considerable evidence to the contrary (see, for example, Connell, 1991), but the desire for teachers to feel in control, and to feel that they are seen as in control, of their own work seemingly requires that their work practices remain free from the direct scrutiny of their colleagues.

Hargreaves and Tucker (1991) distinguished between teachers' thinking and teachers' feelings about their work. They claimed that the literature's hitherto concentration on teachers' thinking had led to an over-emphasis on the cognitive, at the expense of an understanding of the affective, aspects of teachers' work lives. Hargreaves and Tucker drew on the work of Lortie (1975) and Rosenholtz (1989), among others, in an explication of teachers' feelings in which they concluded that both uncertainty and guilt were common in teachers' feelings about their work. Teachers, in this analysis, are said to experience uncertainty and guilt related to their commitment to the notion of care (How much care is enough?); to the open-ended nature of the work (Is the work ever finished?); to increased accountability (Can others' expectations be met?); and to anxieties about being perceived as competent by colleagues. In a similar vein it has been asserted that teachers experience feelings of concern about five elements of their work: relationships with students and with other staff; classroom control; relationships with students' parents; student learning success; and the management of their own time (Cruickshank, 1981). Certainly, then given the uncertain nature of teaching, teachers' affective and cognitive domains both play roles in determining their thinking and feeling about their work.

As is the case with the published research on the nature of teachers' work, the literature on teachers' culture and their thoughts and feelings about their work is dominated by the image of the single teacher dealing with a group of students in an individual classroom. Teachers' thinking about the non-instructional elements of their work hardly features in the literature on teacher culture, beyond the seemingly universal criticism of tasks that take the teacher's attention away from classroom matters as not constituting real teaching. Teachers from the state education system in Victoria, Australia, for example, were found to perceive the time required for participation in decision making committees as outside the realm of their roles as teachers, as they defined these roles for themselves (Watkins, 1993c). Many other studies have reported similar findings.

When the Australian Teaching Council commissioned a study of teachers' thinking about their work (Australian Teaching Council, 1995), the key themes identified in the thinking of the Australian teachers involved were entirely consistent with the findings of an earlier Australian study, even though it had been conducted in the context of a dispute between the teachers' union and the state education system (Warton, Goodnow & Bowes, 1992). In both 1992 and 1995, Australian teachers cited the paramount importance of relationships with their students, their wish for greater levels of respect and understanding from the community, and their acceptance and valuing of their colleagues as their central concerns.

Only in their desire for more control over their professional lives did the participants in the Australian Teaching Council study touch on elements of their work other than those related directly to classroom activities. So strong is the norm of care within teacher culture that despite feeling misunderstood and undervalued by parents and the public, and despite pressures of change in the nature of teachers' work, "their own belief in the worth of their role remains unshaken" (Australian Teaching Council, 1995: 10).

The two themes which emerged from these two Australian studies are remarkably consistent with the international literature on teacher thinking and feeling which observed "remarkable unanimity between teachers on the importance of establishing warm, personal relationships between teacher and pupils in the classroom" (Poppleton, 1992: 218), accompanied by a common concern with the modest status afforded to them by their communities and with the inadequate public recognition given to their work. If there are two universals in teacher thinking, then perhaps these are a concern for the quality of teacher-pupil relationships and a concern about being unappreciated by the communities they serve.

There is some irony in the fact that it is the identification of teachers' adherence to the norm of individualism which is a constant in so many of the depictions of teacher culture. There are significant implications in this for studies of teachers and educational change as, even a decade ago, it was observed that:

teachers' apparent reluctance to alter what they do in classrooms can be understood only if we accept that teaching is a personal activity, shaped by individual perceptions, perspectives and judgements and that teachers ... bring to their work a sense of self, the preservation of which is of prime importance to them.

(Nias, 1987: 1)

2.3 Educational Change and the Role of the Teacher

In their sketch of how the educational innovation efforts of the preceding 30 years might be analysed, Smith, Kleine, Prunty & Dwyer (1992) delineated four perspectives. The first of these, the technological perspective of the 1960s, featured analyses of the innovations of that era which were based on the research, development and diffusion model of industry and which were exemplified by the production of so-called "teacher-proof" materials. The second perspective was the political perspective of the 1970s, which explained the implementation failures of the earlier technological innovations by reference to conflicts in

values and goals between the members of the various participating educational interest groups. Thirdly, it was suggested that a cultural perspective on innovation analysis developed in the 1980s. Under this cultural perspective local variations in implementation outcomes were understood as having resulted from the unique characteristics of the separate implementation contexts. It is only in the 1990s that the role of the individual person in innovations has finally been acknowledged. Furthermore, it is only this fourth perspective on innovation, according to Smith and his colleagues, that offers a complete view of the phenomenon of educational innovation in practice.

While educational change has an undeniably long history (see, for example, Orlosky & Smith, 1972), the suggestion that there are four eras discernible within the educational change movements of the recent past is not only the view of Smith, Kleine, Prunty and Dwyer. Indeed, Michael Fullan, perhaps the most widely-published commentator in the field in the past 20 years, has presented a very similar depiction (Fullan, 1995). According to Fullan the four identifiable eras of change each coincide approximately with succeeding decades, beginning with the 1960s. Furthermore, each of the successive eras of change has been, in Fullan's view, characterised by ever-increasing complexity in the change environment. In this analysis the nature of the change context in the 1960s related to teachers' adoption of innovations (a view which is entirely consistent with the technological perspective based around research development and diffusion which is offered in the account of Smith *et al* (1992) and with Miles' (1993: 219) description of the period as one of "innovation diffusion and adoption"). Similarly, Fullan's description of the 1970s, the second era of change, as a time when change processes centred on issues related to effective implementation, is not at all at odds with Smith *et al*'s political perspective on the change efforts of the same period or with Miles' (1993: 229) understanding of "supported implementation"). Fullan described the third era of change, the 1980s, as characterised by an educational change agenda dominated by multiple simultaneous innovations, an interpretation with close parallels to the multiple forms of change inherent in the cultural perspective put forward by Smith and his colleagues. In the 1990s, however, Fullan sees the change context as characterised by unpredictability and dynamic complexity.

The extent to which Fullan's analysis of the contemporary educational change situation will be applicable to the events of the remainder of the current decade, and the extent to which the role of the individual retains the significance attached to it by Smith *et al*, are of course, matters for future consideration.

Many commentators, particularly in the United States context, (see, for example, Conley & Cooper, 1991), but also in the United Kingdom and Australia, have distinguished between two contemporary “waves” of education reform efforts. The first wave is often said to have begun with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In the reform efforts which followed, the perceived inadequacies or recalcitrance of teachers were viewed as the cause of unsatisfactory educational outcomes. Teachers became either villains or victims, depending on one’s perspective on these first wave reform initiatives. The more recent second wave of reforms, by contrast, has purported to offer the roles of rescuer and empowered decision maker to teachers. Between the two waves of reform there are considerable differences in perceptions of teachers’ levels of both “will” and “skill” (Prawat, 1993; Miles & Louis, 1990).

The link between the implementation of educational innovations and the roles ascribed to, and played by, teachers in those processes has been well established in the research literature for over two decades (see, for example, Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). Indeed, in one of the best known phrases in educational publishing, it is acknowledged that “educational change depends on what teachers think and do - it’s as simple and as complex as that” (Fullan, 1982: 107). Similarly, in the Australian context, Peters, Dobbins and Johnson (1996) made the claim that all educational change is dependent on the individual teacher and on the teacher’s access to continuous professional development.

Educational reforms are often predicated on the assumption that teachers will always work in their students’ best interests. What such reform efforts and designs may fail to recognise is that teachers may have other needs which, at times, are even more important to them than good practice or student learning. Little and McLaughlin (1993), for example, cited several examples of staffroom interactions in which teachers used humour, breached confidentiality, or formed cliques in order to support each other as colleagues: strategies and actions which clearly run counter to expectations that teachers always act in ways which most benefit their students. While such findings may be uncomfortable (both for teachers and for promulgators of educational innovations) there is ample evidence in the literature that the goals associated with particular policies or innovations constitute merely a part, and often far from the most important part, of the various elements of the environment within which a teacher makes classroom decisions (see, for example, McLaughlin, 1990).

While teaching has been characterised as a feminine profession or as women’s work, it may well be not so much the case that women seek involvement in teaching as that men are

attracted away from taking up employment as teachers (Apple, 1988a). If teaching is a feminine profession, therefore, it may well have become so by default. Nevertheless, the situation in which the great majority of classroom teachers are women, while the great majority of those holding leadership positions in Australia's state education systems are men (Porter, Warry & Apelt, 1992), may well itself have implications for mis-matched perceptions at various stages in the change process. Robertson (1992) takes the feminist perspective on teacher development and educational change further by roundly criticising the previously well established work of Joyce and Showers (1988) for being dominated by a masculine over-confidence in the knowledge of experts at the expense of valuing the personal craft knowledge of teachers. Thus, for Robertson, innovations which are led by experts or bureaucrats fail to acknowledge the perspectives of women teachers.

Indeed, there is a wide body of literature (see, for example, Butt, Raymond, McCue & Yamagishi, 1992) which purports to explain the limited impact which curriculum innovations have had on classroom practice by referring to reformers' failure to acknowledge the key role of teachers' instructional intentions. It is further alleged by Butt and his colleagues that even those implementation models which do recognise the importance of teachers' beliefs and behaviours remain preoccupied with the achievement of those changes in teachers' practices which are those determined by others as being desirable. This is far from a new idea. Rist (1982) explained that the failure of many of the educational change efforts of the late 1970s could be linked to the fact that those who sought such reforms had failed to open any real dialogue with those who would implement them.

In the model of educational change which is underpinned by high levels of control being exercised by central administrative authorities, senior officials are said to occupy positions of power and authority, while teachers and principals "constitute a subordinate group" (Marsh & Huberman, 1984: 55). What emerges clearly from the literature on "top-down" educational change initiatives (see, for example, Rosenholtz, 1987) is a tendency to treat all teachers as if there were alike (Sikes, 1992) and thus to have a view of the nature of teaching which is at odds with the individual nature of teachers' work as this was outlined in the two earlier sections of this chapter.

The "top-down" model with its attendant high levels of control over change processes and strictly defined intended outcomes is, of course, only one of a number of models for centrally initiated educational innovations (Louis & Miles, 1990). In a top-down strategy

teachers are to be controlled and directed, rather than have their professional knowledge and judgement sought and valued. In a “goal-based” strategy, teachers are held accountable for centrally-determined outcomes, but are relatively free to exercise their initiative in determining the nature of the change processes they adopt. In an “evolutionary planning” strategy central authorities retain control over change processes while provision is made for teachers to participate in school-level determination of specific outcomes. Only in a fourth model, the “professional investment” strategy, are teachers able to exercise local control over both processes and outcomes. It is rare to find examples of large-scale innovation efforts which have adopted the professional investment approach.

Many a large-scale educational change effort has failed not only to acknowledge the individuality of teachers, but also not attended to disparities between the separate workplaces where implementation is envisaged. Such a uni-dimensional view of implementation, and even of the institutionalisation of change (Miles, 1983), has reflected a lack of “perspective consciousness” (Hanvey, 1975) and it has had its price:

The price of ignoring the context of teaching is failed idealism, guilt and frustration at not being able to meet the standards, criticism of teachers who fail to make the changes, and erratic leaping from one innovation bandwagon to another.

(Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992: 6)

Other educational change ventures have tended to neglect problems of engaging teachers in the implementation process altogether (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Doyle & Ponder, 1977-78), with the result that teachers simply do not become truly engaged and reform efforts achieve nothing substantive. The assumption, inherent in many changes of educational policy, that teachers will be both willing and able to compliantly alter their established practices, casts teachers in the role of “mere puppets” (Osborn & Broadfoot, 1992: 139) and runs counter to the considerable body of evidence to the contrary (see, for example, Darling-Hammond, 1993).

Even when generated from the best and highest of motives, the experience of educational innovations in state education systems in Australia in recent years has been one in which the role of the teacher has been either prescribed (as in contemporary exhortations for more teacher collaboration which Smyth (1991) dismisses as a transparent attempt to harness and control the work of teachers in the light of the failures of the great majority of the first wave reforms) or taken for granted. As Hargreaves saw it, albeit in another place:

Reform is often guided by the belief that every problem has a solution. Perhaps the real challenge of reform as a continuous process, though, is acknowledging that every solution has a problem.

(1992: 106)

In his more recent work Hargreaves (1995b: 13) suggests that the change agenda in the contemporary context should have moved beyond policy implementation to policy realisation, with the overall distinction involving four shifts in approach: first, a shift from policy development and implementation to policy realisation and reinvention; second, a shift from policy making as a representative process to policy making as an interactive process; third, a shift from teachers implementing policies to teachers making and remaking policies; and fourth, a shift from policy as text to policy as a continuous process of action and dialogue.

Clearly the change processes of the immediate future will continue to feature considerable expectations of the roles to be played by teachers. The most recent literature (see, for example, Lieberman, 1995) is full of exhortations to educational reformers (who may, or may not, be listening) to involve teachers much more fully in the new roles and structures which contemporary reform agendas envisage.

2.4 The Changing Contexts of Teachers' Work

The uncertainties of teaching are well documented in the literature (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1994; Lieberman & Miller, 1992; 1990b). In this regard it is pertinent to recall the absence of any meaningful consensus about a singular knowledge base for best practice in teaching. Similarly, there has never been a clear, or at least enduring, consensus on the major single purpose of education, whether this be to enrich individual students' lives or to impart basic skills and knowledge. The profound changes that were taking place in the context of Australian education around the time of this study had complicated this uncertainty still further for many participants and observers.

One of the most significant implications for teachers' work that has arisen directly from the changing social context of the past decade has been an emerging focus on increasing the expected level of teachers' professionalism: expecting them to know more; to participate in curricular decision-making processes that extend well beyond the boundaries of their classrooms; and to be involved in processes linked to the restructuring of their schools.

Contemporary changes in the nature of the context within which Australian teachers conducted their work in the mid-1990s developed from three principal factors: changes in the student population; changes in teachers' professional roles; and changes in roles and conditions in the broader society (Luzecky, 1992). In this regard, changes in the student population included increased retention levels among academically less inclined students, increased numbers of students whose primary language had not been English and the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools. Changes in teachers' professional roles had included a burgeoning of curriculum offerings and levels, teachers taking an increased share of the responsibility for assessment of senior secondary students' learning performance, teacher involvement in school management and increased levels of parent and community involvement with teachers in schools. The changes in the broader society which seemed to have most affected the contexts within which teachers conduct their work had resulted in innumerable calls on schools to develop teaching programmes to address a variety of social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse, sexism, racism, AIDS, unemployment and family breakdown.

Some analysts (see, for example, Cohn, 1992) have said that systemic responses to changes in the broader social context have taken the form of official construction and dissemination of reform and restructuring efforts. In the view of many such authors, these systemic initiatives have not only failed to resolve the problems underlying the changes in the social fabric, but have created a new context of their own in the schools, with this context subsequently generating further problems for teachers. Nevertheless, participation in the act of reform itself, especially in the reform of education systems and other branches of state administration, received widespread public and political support in Australia from the early 1980s (Apelt & Lingard, 1993). All these reform efforts were promoted contemporaneously with the broader industrial movement of award restructuring being applied to the education sector from the time of the 1988 National Wage Case. Thus the language of industry and of award restructuring, including terms like "work value", "structural efficiency" and "productivity" (Bluer & Carmichael, 1991) were first applied to a consideration of the work of teachers. Many teachers saw such terms as inappropriate descriptors of their work context (Angus, 1991), but were faced with the reality of a decline in the value of their incomes which gave teachers a sense of the impact of these concepts.

A number of authors have produced cogent descriptions and analyses of the restructuring of Australian state education systems and, therefore, of the work of the teachers employed

within those systems. In this regard the works of Smyth (1995) and Robertson (1996), both of which located the changes to education in the context of the broader Australian economic issues which were outlined in Chapter One, are perhaps the most comprehensive. For some (see, for example, Smith, 1995) the link between the economy and the education system was an interesting one; not, perhaps, for the overt reason of the part that improved educational provisions were asked to play in the restructuring of the national economy, but more that policy makers may have been in error to consider either the economy or the education system to be rational, coherent, purposeful or potentially responsive to comprehensive planning. Nevertheless, the economic imperative was paramount and, in Robertson's analysis, the message that was being sent to the education sector in the late 1980s and early 1990s was quite clear:

Translated by an array of self-styled school-reform gurus, the message goes something like this. Schools are large, bureaucratic organisations. Like all bureaucracies, schools have top-heavy hierarchies, limited accountability, and a myriad of rules and regulations. Teachers are not only out of date, they fail to demand that the basic skills in education are covered. In short, teachers are out of touch with the needs of kids, the community and the nation at large.
(Robertson, 1996: 32)

Robertson interpreted the late 1980s as a period of macro-restructuring in Australian education, with the directions of these efforts being focussed on devolution, centralisation and the management of performance being conducted within a discourse of "quality", "outcomes", "professionalism" and "collegiality". The outcomes Robertson identified as arising from these macro-restructuring efforts included increased managerial control, increased market influence and increased accountability. The early 1990s has been the era of micro-restructuring of education, with a focus on deregulation and differentiation at both school and classroom levels. Again, the discourse has been dominated by terms such as "quality", "outcomes" and "professionalism", with the addition of "teams" and "competencies". The initial outcomes from the micro-restructuring of education in Australia have included deregulation of elements of the educational labour market, greater managerial accountability and a pedagogic deskilling of teachers.

A number of observers of the contemporary educational scene have offered lists of the features which were common to the restructuring efforts undertaken in the state education sector (see, for example, Beare, 1995; Porter, Lingard & Knight, 1994; Angus, 1990). These features were said to include efficiency and effective resource management as priorities; central political control; central policy co-ordination; a smaller central

bureaucracy; devolution of day-to-day decision making to schools; excellence as a higher priority than equity; and attendance to the priorities of the national government and its educational agencies.

The intent of these macro-level reforms was, it seems, to imbue schools with the tools and culture of managerialism: strategic planning, site-based management, global budgeting and performance monitoring, but these seemingly offered little of real substance to teachers.

In essence, the changes have meant teachers can participate in making decisions over a limited range of technical issues, not the big ticket items such as; What is it we want children to know? How do we provide opportunities for students to genuinely participate in the learning process? What does it mean to educate a critical citizenry? Instead teachers have been left to dream up schemes as to how they can work smarter to increase student performance, compete for scarce students with neighbouring schools, raise money from the business sector, or access new technology for the school through school-business partnerships.

(Robertson, 1996: 43-44)

The advocates of the widespread processes of reforming state school education saw the macro-level reforms as major societal changes with national, if not global, significance. Caldwell claimed the scope of the reforms constituted nothing less than a “megatrend” (Caldwell, 1995: 3)

The full effects of the micro-level reforms of the 1990s are not, as yet, apparent. Indeed, the impact of these changes on teachers’ work is at the very heart of the current study. In one view of teachers’ work in the new context, however, it is predicted that teachers “will be weighed down by the pressure of management, time constraints, larger classes and the management of other workers” (Robertson, 1996: 51).

The inescapable implication underpinning the great majority of the change agenda in the years immediately prior to the period covered by the current study was that teachers’ inappropriate or inadequate teaching had been deemed to be at the heart of the issue (Sikes, 1992). Teacher quality became a public issue of concern (Berkeley, 1991; OECD, 1990; NBEET, 1989).

In essence, there were two main elements which need to be seen as the keys to the changing contexts of teachers’ work at the time of the study: first, the period was one which witnessed many large-scale changes in educational policy and organisation, including various forms of restructuring, reorganisations and reforms; and second,

devolution of much decision making to the local level, together with the expectation that teachers would work collaboratively on educational and management tasks, were common threads within many of the macro-level and micro-level changes of the time. Thus teachers became, simultaneously, both the subjects and the agents of the restructuring of state education in Australia.

The labour process perspective on teachers' work has suggested that teachers' work has been significantly intensified (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1992) as a direct result of expectations for responses to greater pressures and multiple innovations, especially in the context of difficult economic conditions. It is seemingly impossible to generate a comprehensive list of all the educational changes and all the social forces acting to change education at the time. The size of that challenge was indicated by Levin (1993: 8) who produced a "partial list of influences on education" which consisted of no less than 94 factors!

In the period immediately prior to the current study, South Australian teachers (via, initially, the recommendations of the Government Agencies Review Group at various times in the late 1980s) and Tasmanian teachers (via the implementation of the CRESAP Report in 1990) were called upon to be both more efficient and more productive. Efficiency is, of course, quite a different thing from productivity: efficiency refers to achieving the same amount at less cost, while productivity refers to achieving more at the same level of cost. Thus, significant reductions were made to teacher numbers and, in real terms, to the overall funding of state education, at the same time as those remaining in the teaching force were required to become more accountable for newly-specified improved educational outcomes. In a sense, therefore, the message to teachers was that they had been a major part of the problem and that they were now expected to become part of the solution by being simultaneously more accountable, more efficient, more effective, more collegial and more entrepreneurial.

The devolution of specific day-to-day management tasks and the relevant decision making processes to the local school level was almost holy writ in educational policy in Australia, just as it had become, for example, in the United States, in the United Kingdom and in New Zealand in the late 1980s and early 1990s (McKay, 1994). The advocates of devolution (see, for example, White, 1992; Chapman, 1988) claimed that it offered teachers increased personal and political efficacy while reducing the extent to which they might feel isolated within a large education system. Devolution has had many critics

however, both for perceptions of its real underlying purpose (see, for example, Smyth, 1993b) and for its impact on educators working in schools (see, for example, Watkins, 1993b).

A further, and not insubstantial, element of change to the context in which teachers take on their roles in the contemporary context is the extent to which teachers have come to be expected to collaborate collegially in the performance of many of their tasks. While, on the surface, such collaboration and collegiality has appeared to offer possibilities of shared burdens and more propitious outcomes, some analysts (see, for example, Smyth, 1993a) have seen these forms of imposed collegiality as constituting a form of centralised control masquerading as local autonomy. Elsewhere, Hargreaves (1994, for example) has expounded on the shortcomings associated with what he has termed as “contrived collegiality”. For still others, the efficacy of collegial interaction between teachers is influenced so strongly by factors specific to each local school context that its systemic impact remains uncertain (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

Among the most significant influences on the educational context within which Australian teachers conducted their work at the time of the study were three of the key documents of the early 1990s: the so-called Finn, Mayer and Carmichael Reports. The Finn Report, *Young People's Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training* (1991), set national student retention targets and proposed that employment-related competencies should permeate national curricula. The Mayer Report, *Putting General Education to Work* (1992), reconstructed the Finn key competencies into general skills, thus making them the direct concern of all teachers. The Carmichael Report, *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* (1992), separated key competencies from vocational competencies, complicating the nexus between contemporary general education and vocational training still further in the minds of many teachers. The form of change generation which underpinned the commissioning of these three reports was characterised by rhetoric about teacher professionalism and teaching quality, but this rhetoric was accompanied by an apparently contradictory desire to make the system of schooling immune to the individual differences between teachers. This model of change, in which all is directed and controlled from above, and its specific application in these three cases in Australia, have been roundly criticised as ineffectual (Porter, Lingard & Knight, 1994). Sungalia (1994) went even further. She expressed the view that the processes employed in these and other similar educational reforms ensured that little of any substance would change:

Such processes can give those in the classroom, in whose hands alone the quality of teaching and learning essentially lies, the excuse to continue on as they have always done, but now for a new variety of reasons: the pace and scope of the change has been just too great; they were not consulted; they were not given the opportunity to influence the reform agenda; they were simply made to conform and so their response could never have been expected to be authentic.

(1994: 248)

Despite the many changes to the social and political context within which teachers worked in the first half of the 1990s, however, it would be far too simplistic to assert that the high expectations held of teachers at the time came solely from sources external to schools or even from outside how teachers' conceived their own roles and challenges. Hargreaves' (1992) observation of other teachers could have applied equally to teachers in the Australian context when he noted:

Many of the demands and expectations in teaching seemed to come from within the teachers themselves, and teachers appeared to drive themselves with almost merciless commitment in an attempt to meet the virtually unattainable standards of pedagogical perfection they set themselves.

(1992: 94)

Even in the change context that Fullan (1995) described as characterised by dynamic complexity, therefore, there was little to indicate that Australia's teachers displayed any diminution of their commitment to care as the core value of their professional culture, despite the implication in Sungalia's (1994) remarks that they were less than enthusiastic in their responses to many of the individual educational changes of the time.

2.5 Teachers' Responses to Changes in Education

In the years immediately after World War II, Kurt Lewin wrote of unfreezing, changing and refreezing as the three characteristic stages of change within groups. Innumerable other models of stages in the change process have followed (see, for example, Hall & Loucks, 1978; as well as the so-called "stages of group development" literature). Despite this voluminous body of publications, some scholars (see, for example, Fennell, 1992) still maintain that the research into change in education, and particularly into teachers' involvement in such change, is far from conclusive.

Lieberman (1992: 9) feels that there can be little doubt that "schools have shown themselves to be resistant to political factors pressing for change". Several commentators

(see, for example, Liechtenstein, McLaughlin & Knudsen, 1992) have claimed that reform efforts have not been impaired so much by teacher or school-level intransigence as by the stultifying effects of the bureaucratic controls put in place by education systems. In the view of other observers, however, both teachers and education systems are more resistant to change than are other occupational groups and other large organisations (see, for example, Morrish, 1976). Still other scholars claim that teachers are not resistant to change, *per se*, as they make constant changes in their work in response to the dynamic nature of the environments found in schools and classrooms (Richardson, 1991); or that resistance from teachers is often resistance to a negative impact which is predicted to result from the change, rather than resistance to the change itself (Menlo, 1984).

Regardless of the range of views on teacher response to educational change, it is important to understand that much of the literature is underpinned by a perception of change as inherently positive (Richardson, 1991) and, as a result, of any recalcitrance or resistance to change on the part of teachers being viewed as necessarily problematic. While it is reasonable, therefore, to claim that large-scale efforts to impose changes on teachers and teaching have been generally ineffectual (Senge in O'Neil, 1995; Sikes, 1992), the popular image of teachers as sceptical about, and resistant to, change is perhaps somewhat less reasonable.

In Lortie's *School Teacher* (1975), the author opined that patterns of teacher recruitment and of the organisation of their work had acted to encourage those with an interest in preserving the status quo, rather than those with a predilection for change, to become and to remain teachers. Thus there may be an element of entrenched reluctance to change that forms a part of the teacher culture which was discussed earlier. Indeed, albeit in the fictional work *The Advancement of Spencer Button*, the innovation movements of early 20th century Australian education were satirised from the perspective of the teacher:

For a new day had dawned in the educational world. There were new ideas, new methods, new outlooks, new orientations - everything brand new, never thought of before. Everything old was despised. It was a new world with a new set of principles, new ethics, new morality. Though two and two did make four under the old system, they made four much more exactly and efficiently under the new, and, what is more, it was now known why they made four.

(James, 1950: 248)

The author's depiction of teachers' responses to the impact on their work resulting from the innovations which had been mandated by the employing authority featured a group of

typical teachers delivering “a tirade against the Department, which apparently didn’t consist of men at all, but of a group - undefined in number - of malign monsters who were worked by malevolent machinery” (1950: 77).

So there is nothing new about educational change, as such. Indeed change has come to be seen as a key element of the normal state of affairs. What is unusual about the intersections between educational change and teachers’ work, however, is that teachers are usually both the subject and the agents of change (Sikes, 1992; Walker & Barton, 1987) and that it is the speed, complexity and radicalism of recent change which is so apparent (Hodgkinson, 1991).

The contemporary literature on teachers’ responses to educational change can be understood to have a 20 year history, dating from the seminal work of Doyle and Ponder and their *Practicality Ethic in Teacher Decision Making* (1977-78). The publication of this work marks the beginning of two decades which have witnessed a move away from viewing teachers solely as obstacles in the path of change to the consideration of factors associated with education systems, schools and teachers themselves that interact to affect teachers’ responses to innovations. Among the influential works in this more holistic conception are those of Fullan (1993b), Osborn and Broadfoot (1992), Sikes (1992), Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), Guskey (1989), Marsh and Huberman (1984), Hall and Loucks (1978) and, of course, Doyle and Ponder (1977-78). A number of meta-analyses of the literature of the period are available (see, for example, Poole, 1991).

The major works of this modern era share an implicit understanding of teacher culture which, according to Lieberman and Miller, contains two rules: “be practical” and “be private” (1992: 7). The practicality ethic (Doyle & Ponder, 1977-78) and its corollary of privacy, it is said, lead those who operate within mainstream teacher culture to consider any idea or innovation in relation to the extent to which such an idea fits the teacher’s current school context; to the extent to which it can be applied immediately to an acknowledged teaching problem; and in relation to the extent to which the benefits thought likely to flow from its implementation are predicted to outweigh the costs associated with the time and effort necessary for such implementation.

This view of teachers’ characteristic responses to educational innovations as somewhat parochial was shared by Guskey (1989) who suggested that teachers respond only from the perspective of how they see each innovation affecting their classrooms and their students.

Furthermore, in Guskey's view, teachers have been led to approach innovations cynically, with this cynicism arising largely out of their experiences with what he has termed educational "fads and bandwagons" (1989: 450).

Guskey's model of how teachers respond to educational change says very little about how such parochialism and cynicism might be overcome in the initial phases of introducing an innovation. Rather, the model tends to ignore matters related to initial engagement and to concentrate on the factors which determine the extent to which teachers retain or abandon the key features of any given innovation. In this regard Guskey suggested that enduring change in teachers' instructional practices can only be achieved after teachers acknowledge that significant improvements in students' performance have been demonstrated to have resulted from such changes. Guskey's view, consistent with the conclusions drawn in an earlier Australian study (Punch & McAtee, 1979), that the most effective teachers are the most receptive to innovations and that the least effective teachers are the most resistant to change, follows logically from this notion of teachers' attitudes to change being determined by student learning or behavioural outcomes.

In her analysis of how teachers respond to imposed educational changes Sikes (1992: 39) cited four areas which needed to be considered: "teachers as people"; their "aims and purposes"; their "work contexts"; and their "work culture". In terms of teachers as people, Sikes noted that, as teachers were individuals and that as teaching was a part but not all of a teacher's life, teachers as a group responded in a variety of ways to imposed educational changes. In terms of teachers' aims and purposes, their responses to change were seen as being influenced by the extent to which they perceived the change as congruent with the values they held about teaching. In terms of teachers' work contexts, Sikes claimed that the poor conditions in many schools contained strong messages about the value ascribed to teachers' work and that, as a result, teachers understood the imposition of change to be associated with a similar lack of regard for teachers and their work.

The concept of work culture is the most critical of Sikes' four factors. Teacher cultures develop from the mixture of the characteristics, beliefs and values of those who come together in an educational institution. Nias (1989) saw such teacher cultures as underpinning shared behavioural norms: she termed it "the way we do things around here". Changes imposed externally often conflict with established teacher cultures in particular workplaces and, commonly, the subsequent outcome of such conflicts is that these powerful cultures redefine the form of unwanted changes. Sikes was able to identify

several common strategies applied by teachers in such situations. Included among such strategies were: first, carrying on as before (exemplified in ostensible compliance while simply waiting for the change's time to pass); and second, general sabotage (exemplified in deliberately poor implementation efforts and mistake-ridden compliance). Nevertheless, given the criticism of their work which teachers tend to see as implied in imposed changes, such reactions and strategies should come as no surprise.

While Sikes (1992) identified "carrying on as before" and "general sabotage" as two strategies used by teachers in the responses to imposed changes, Osborn and Broadfoot (1992: 139-140) put the view that teachers have four options in such circumstances: "cooperation" (accepting the change and making the requisite adjustments to their practice and, if necessary, to their belief systems); "retreatism" (submitting to the change without making any adjustments in either practice or beliefs); "resistance" (opposing both the principle of the change and its implementation); and "incorporation" (appearing to accept the change in principle, while diluting the change by making it part of existing practices). In their meta-analysis, Marsh and Huberman (1984: 59) found a not entirely dissimilar model of teachers' responses to prescriptive change. They described three characteristic forms of response: "dissonant rejection" (much like Osborn and Broadfoot's "resistance"); "dissonant adoption" (much like elements of Osborn and Broadfoot's "incorporation" and "retreatism" and Sikes' "carrying on as before" and "general sabotage"); and "consonant adoption" (much like Osborn and Broadfoot's "cooperation").

For the past 20 years the literature on teachers' responses to changes in education, and particularly to those changes which are imposed by authorities external to teachers' immediate work contexts, has reflected a reasonably consistent understanding of teachers' thinking about their work. The lessons of that era have been that "teachers adapt, rather than merely adopt, innovative practices", and that they "react to change proposals with what might best be called pragmatic scepticism" (Doyle & Ponder, 1977-78: 4). These two key lessons are entirely consistent with a view of teacher culture and teacher thinking as individualistic, conservative and present-minded, with an orientation toward the practical rather than the theoretical: all elements which stretch back in the literature to Lortie's *School Teacher* and beyond (see, for example, Louden, 1991; Cohen, 1988).

The largest body of the literature which deals with teachers and change is the work which attempts to explain the reasons behind teachers' responses to change and then to draw lessons for future proponents of change from these explanations. Fullan and Stiegelbauer

(1991: 127-128) assert that teachers ask themselves four questions in assessing whether or not to invest their time and effort in any given change. These four questions are: first, "Does the change potentially address a need?"; second, "How clear is the change in terms of what the teacher will have to do?"; third, "How will it affect the teacher personally in terms of time, energy ... and interference with existing priorities?"; and fourth, "How rewarding will the experience be in terms of interaction with peers and others?".

There is some consensus in the literature about these issues. Leithwood, Jantzi and Fernandez (1993) talked about the importance of need, clarity and perceptions of long-term value as important criteria for teachers in their evaluation of the potential worthiness of innovations. Nias (1987) saw teachers applying tests of comprehensibility, believability, legitimacy and sincerity in the process of making judgements of an innovation's merit. Rosenholtz (1989) described the importance of goal clarity, along with professional development opportunities and rewards, as factors influencing teachers' adoption decisions. Eisenhart, Cuthbert, Shrum and Harding (1988) claimed that the proximity of an innovation to the teacher's instructional work in the classroom was the key criterion in determining that teacher's attitudes. In this interpretation, teachers were depicted as displaying more positive attitudes towards innovations focussed on classroom activities, ambivalent attitudes towards innovations requiring a mixture of in-class and out-of-class involvement, and negative attitudes towards innovations not associated directly with classroom activities.

Each of these explanations of how teachers respond to educational changes offers a view of teachers as rational, if somewhat insular and conservative, in their consideration of the extent of their engagement with particular innovations. Similarly, Duffy and Roehler (1986: 57) described teachers as "boundedly rational" in this regard, asserting that teachers characteristically "combine information received ... with what they already know, restructure it, and make it fit their perception of reality".

Notwithstanding explanations of this genre, there remains a wide range of other factors which have been cited as influencing teachers' reactions to calls for educational change. Such factors have included a tendency towards inertia among educational employees (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988); the high degree of difficulty inherent in the task of changing teachers' values, attitudes and behaviours in specific ways (Osborn, 1996; Sparkes, 1991; Carter & Hacker, 1988; Kefford, 1980); the pace and number of innovations (Fullan, 1993b; Fennell, 1992; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988); lack of appropriate levels of time and

financial resources (Watkins, 1993c; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988); the sense of loss associated with the need to forego established patterns in order to embrace the requirements of new arrangements (Deal, 1990; 1984); a perception that teachers had not been involved sufficiently in the development phase of the proposed innovation (Australian Teaching Council, 1995; O'Donoghue, Brooker & Purdie, 1994); and the threats to competence and hence to professional efficacy which are inherent in genuine innovations (Heywood & Norman, 1988).

Even this extensive list needs to be considered alongside factors such as the roles played by the principal and other key educational leaders and change agents. These roles are said to be crucial in much of the implementation literature (see, for example, Fullan, 1993b; Leithwood, Jantzi & Fernandez, 1993; Senge, 1990). Indeed, in this regard, Huberman and Miles (1984) felt that the merits of a particular innovation were important in influencing teachers' adoption decisions, but that strong, supportive and strategic leadership was even more critical.

There is, of course, a raft of literature which reports on the experiences and outcomes which have flowed from the efforts and activities associated with particular educational innovations. This literature spans the style range from pure ethnography and case study of a single teacher and a single change to highly comparative meta-analyses. While issues of space and relevance preclude the detailing of such a large body of literature in this review, a single recent local example (Waugh & Godfrey, 1995) gives an indicative picture of Australian teachers' responses to imposed change in the contemporary educational context. Although other Australian studies have produced somewhat different findings (see, for example, Dimmock & Hattie, 1994), this particular example was chosen carefully: it involved teachers from a state education system other than either of the two systems under investigation in the current study; and with the researchers investigating the restructuring of secondary school curriculum in Western Australia, the selected study featured reports of teachers' responses to a large-scale, system-wide change.

Waugh and Godfrey's results (1995: 48-49) are demonstrative of Australian teachers' reactions to educational innovation correlating closely with the classical change literature of Doyle and Ponder (1977-78) and Hall and Loucks (1978). Western Australian teachers' responses to a restructuring of the curriculum were described as being determined by these teachers' application of six criteria: first, perceptions of whether or not benefits in student learning outweighed costs in extra work; second, perceptions of suitability and practicality

in the classroom; third, the extent to which arrangements could be made to alleviate teachers' concerns and uncertainties; fourth, opportunities for participation in decision making related to implementation at the school level; fifth, leadership and support from the school principal; and sixth, how the new curriculum compared with the old in terms of classroom management and student learning.

For many of the teachers surveyed by Waugh and Godfrey, the new system of unit-based curriculum which was proposed for Western Australia's secondary schools at the end of the 1980s did not meet the six criteria at all well, with the common result resembling an example of incorporation (Osborn & Broadfoot, 1992), as described earlier in this section.

Fullan (1993b: 21-22) listed what he termed "the eight basic lessons of the new paradigm of change", with the first of these being "you can't mandate what matters". In a sense this single lesson is the key to understanding the literature on teachers' responses to changes in education. Given the complex nature of teachers' work (Perry, Chapman & Snyder, 1995) and the widespread individual differences between teachers and between and within their classrooms, the main point at issue may be that so many innovations are mandated uncritically and superficially, rather than any level of active or passive resistance to educational change on the part of teachers. Regardless of the merits of that debate, in this study the view is taken that the decade-old perspective of Rosenholtz remains appropriate in the contemporary context:

It makes sense to filter the effects of current reforms through the lenses of teachers involved, since only those factors that are perceived by teachers can affect their subsequent attitudes and behaviours. That is, how teachers experience policy changes will affect their commitment to them.

(Rosenholtz, 1987: 536)

2.6 Teachers' Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

The connections between teacher satisfaction and the issues investigated in this study are twofold: first, the relationship between teacher satisfaction and the quality of subsequent work performance; and second, the relationship between teachers' satisfaction and their subsequent willingness and capacity to respond to educational changes.

There is an extensive body of literature which deals, albeit often tangentially, with teachers' perceptions of the quality of their working lives. The space available in this review does

not allow for a complete distillation of all of this research. More importantly, however, issues of space make it necessary to treat some of the literature's several differing concepts as though they were alike. In this regard "satisfaction" and "commitment" are treated here as both being characteristic of teachers' displaying positive feelings about their working lives, while "disaffection" and "dissatisfaction" are both treated as indicative of teachers' negative perceptions of the quality of their working lives. Similarly, "stress" (in the sense of distress rather than austress) and "burnout" are treated in this section as though the two terms are similar. Despite the acknowledged over-simplifications inherent in this approach, the view is taken that satisfied and committed teachers experience a much more positive quality of working life than do disaffected, dissatisfied, stressed or burned-out teachers.

The link between teacher satisfaction and performance levels is alluded to in the literature, but is far from documented extensively. Given the difficulties inherent in determining an appropriate set of outcome measures for education, it is unsurprising that there is insufficient in the literature to establish, beyond doubt, a clear link between teachers' satisfaction levels and educational productivity. Nevertheless, there are some indications that such an association may exist. In *A Place Called School* Goodlad (1984) suggested that those schools which teachers found to be more or less satisfying as workplaces were evaluated similarly in positive or negative terms by parents and students. Similarly, Rosenholtz (1991) found that levels of teacher commitment had significant effects on student achievement. Nevertheless, it should be noted, again, that "commitment" and "satisfaction" are not one and the same and that Rosenholtz's measure of student achievement was limited to the reading attainment of grade four students. On the other hand, Louis (1990: 18) claimed "considerable evidence" for the view that enhanced levels of work life quality could be associated with subsequent improvements in the commitment and productivity of teachers. There is, therefore, some agreement that enhanced levels of performance and productivity are associated directly with positive levels of satisfaction and quality of working life (see, for example, Virginia Education Association & Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1991; Pelsma, Richard, Harrington & Burry, 1987; Mager, Myers, Maresca, Rupp & Armstrong, 1986; Sergiovanni, 1967).

The extent to which there may be an association between teacher satisfaction and teachers' subsequent willingness and ability to become positively engaged in educational change efforts is of clear significance for the broader issue of educational reform in practice. The attraction of the logic underlying this connection is inescapable, given the key roles expected of teachers in the implementation of contemporary educational changes. There

have been several major studies (see, for example, Menlo & Poppleton, 1990) which have investigated the links between teacher satisfaction and “work centrality” (the degree to which the work of teaching is important in teachers’ lives) on the one hand, and teachers’ capacity to “understand the aims and objectives of ... reforms and to mediate them intelligently and competently” (1990: 174), on the other.

There can be little doubt that quality of work life issues have been significant factors influencing the recruitment and retention of teachers in the past two decades. Wangberg (1984) went as far as to say that the factors which led to teacher stress and dissatisfaction were significant obstacles in the path of attracting and retaining competent teachers. Dunham (1984) agreed, citing poor physical working conditions, increased workloads resulting from reduced levels of educational funding, difficult collegial relationships and inappropriate leadership styles as major quality of work life issues for teachers. Hence, the debate in the literature is not really about whether or not there are factors which can be identified as influencing the degree to which teachers’ may be satisfied or dissatisfied with their work lives. Rather, the debate is about two further theoretical issues: first, whether the same factors influence teachers’ levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, or whether one set of factors acts as “satisfiers” and another set acts as “dissatisfiers”; and second, how teachers’ feelings about each of the individual facets of their work relate to their overall levels of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

The classic work in the body of literature which holds that “satisfiers” and “dissatisfiers” are constituted of different factors is that of Herzberg (1966). Herzberg claimed that five satisfiers: achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and the work itself, affected satisfaction only, in that the absence of such factors did not automatically generate dissatisfaction. He identified eleven other factors as potential dissatisfiers including, for example, salary and job security, which, if not present at appropriate levels, led to dissatisfaction at work. Where Herzberg’s notion has been applied in an educational context (see, for example, Nias, 1989a; Sergiovanni, 1967), factors associated with the act of classroom teaching have been identified as typical satisfiers for teachers, while factors associated with the work setting and the employment context have been identified as common dissatisfiers. Hence, as Holdaway (1978: 33) observed of Herzberg’s model, it is a model in which it is possible for teachers to “be both very satisfied and very dissatisfied at the same time”. Holdaway cites the arguments of several of Herzberg’s critics in the debate over whether satisfiers and dissatisfiers are truly separate factors, but

eventually agrees that the distinction between the intrinsically motivating satisfiers and the more extrinsic and contextual dissatisfiers is theoretically useful.

Holdaway also proffered a resolution of the second point at issue: he suggested that the degree of satisfaction felt in relation to all individual quality of work life factors cannot be understood to transfer automatically into overall levels of satisfaction, as he claimed that the intrinsic satisfiers were much more important than the contextual factors in affecting overall satisfaction levels. In the end, he held that "inclusion of both facet and overall satisfaction is necessary and useful" (Holdaway, 1978: 45). The recent key Australian work of Dinham (1995b) took a view similar to that of Holdaway. On the other hand, however, Rice and Schneider (1994) contended that the general tenor of the relevant literature was that overall satisfaction levels could be defined adequately and justifiably as a function of the sum of facet satisfaction levels.

Regardless, the classic literature of the field does reveal a consensus on three matters in this context: first, that satisfaction levels have important implications for quality of work performance; second, that qualitatively different facets influence teachers' feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction; and third, that both overall and facet satisfaction of teachers are worthy of consideration in investigations of the quality of teachers' working lives.

Even in the context of consensus on these three key issues, there remains an almost bewildering array of different factors which have been examined in investigations of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the quality of their working lives. In this research, the most significant, and most commonly investigated intrinsic facets of teachers' work lives include:

- teachers' relationships with students (Bingham, Haubrich & White, 1993; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Johnson, 1990; O'Connor & Clarke, 1990; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990; Poppleton & Riseborough, 1988; Holdaway, 1978; Sergiovanni, 1967);
- teachers' relationships with their colleagues (Smith & Bourke, 1992; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Virginia Education Association & Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1991; Johnson, 1990; O'Connor & Clarke, 1990; Sim, 1990; Mykletun, 1984);
- the extent to which teachers' work has meaning and efficacy for them (Dinham, 1995a; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Johnson, 1990; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990;

Poppleton, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Poppleton & Riseborough, 1988; Sergiovanni, 1967);

- the extent to which teachers' work offers them opportunities for personal growth (Dinham, 1995a; Johnson, 1990; Wood, 1982);
- the results ascribed by teachers to educational changes (Dinham, 1995a; Friedman, 1992; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Mykletun, 1984);
- rewards and recognition teachers receive from those they see as important observers of their work (Dinham, 1995a; Tuettemann & Punch, 1992; Smith & Bourke, 1992; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Poppleton, 1989; Holdaway, 1978); and
- the extent to which teachers have professional autonomy (Tuettemann & Punch, 1992; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990; Sim, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989).

The extrinsic facets which have been most commonly investigated in the teacher satisfaction research include:

- the nature of the physical workplace conditions in schools (Friedman, 1992; Tuettemann & Punch, 1992; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Johnson, 1990; Pierce & Molloy, 1990; Sim, 1990; Ginsberg, Schwartz, Olson & Bennett, 1987; Pelsma, Richard, Harrington & Burry, 1987; Mykletun, 1984; Wood, 1982);
- the authority and supervision structures teachers work under and teachers' relationship with their principal (Dinham, 1995a; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1994; Kremer-Hayon & Wubbels, 1993; Rossmiller, 1992; Virginia Education Association & Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1991; Johnson, 1990; Ginsberg, Schwartz, Olson & Bennett, 1987);
- teachers' salary levels and the other industrial conditions governing the terms of their employment (Dinham, 1995a; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Johnson, 1990; Pelsma, Richard, Harrington & Burry, 1987; Wood, 1982);
- workload issues (Smith & Bourke, 1992; Tuettemann & Punch, 1992; O'Connor & Clarke, 1990);
- opportunities for teachers to participate in workplace decision making (Taylor & Bogotch, 1994; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1994; Rice & Schneider, 1994; Virginia Education Association & Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1991; Johnson, 1990; Wood, 1982);

- the perceived social status of teachers (Lam, Yeen & Ngoh, 1994; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; O'Connor & Clarke, 1990; Holdaway, 1978);
- school level management of student behaviour issues (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990);
- the level of societal expectations of teachers (Tuettemann & Punch, 1992); and
- the policies and practices of central educational authorities (Perry, Chapman & Snyder, 1995; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

The study conducted among over 2000 Dutch teachers by Prick (1989) found that job satisfaction was most highly correlated with satisfaction with those activities in which teachers came into direct contact with students. All the other aspects of job-related satisfaction which were investigated: school management; working conditions; relationships with colleagues; and opportunities for promotion were reported in Prick's study to be considerably less significant in their impacts on teachers' satisfaction. Such a finding is entirely indicative of the overwhelming majority of teacher satisfaction studies, in that the key satisfier has been found, almost universally, to be the nature of teachers' relationships with their students.

Louis (1990: 18-20), by way of contrast, identified seven factors which could have an influence on the quality of teachers' work lives: the level of respect and status accorded to them in the community; opportunities to participate in decision-making; access to stimulating interactions with their peers; opportunities to use and develop the full range of their skills; access to adequate resources; efficacious links between teaching and learning; and the presence of congruence between personal and school goals. In her analysis, Louis claimed that community respect and status was the most influential of these seven factors in determining the quality of teachers' work lives. Despite all of this, it is the absence of a factor encompassing the nature of teachers' relationships with their students which is perhaps the most striking element which emerges from any consideration of Louis' model.

In the Australian context, Maclean (1992) found that relationships with the people teachers encountered regularly during the course of their duties were at the heart of how Tasmanian teachers felt about the quality of their work lives. For these teachers, the most significant of all these relationships were those they shared with their students, but the students' parents, teachers' colleagues and their principal all had significant influence on how these teachers felt about their work. Maclean's Tasmanian study found that economic security, teacher-student relationships, holidays, the opportunity to put one's own ideas into practice

and relationships with other staff to be major sources of satisfaction for teachers. Conversely, he reported that overly large classes, work pressure, interrupted lessons, the low social status accorded to teaching and the extent of out-of-classroom work required of them were the main sources of work-related dissatisfaction for Tasmanian teachers (1992: 100-103).

The extent of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction with aspects of their work lives, and with the quality of their work lives overall, have been subjected to a considerable amount of research in recent years. When several of the major studies from around the world are considered in turn, beginning with the earlier studies and moving progressively toward the time of the current study, a number of enduring patterns in teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction become apparent.

Mykletun's (1984) study of comprehensive school teachers in Norway identified nine major work-related problem areas which were subjectively distressing for a majority of his respondents. In a study which presented Scandinavian teachers as perceiving the quality of their working lives quite negatively, these teachers were particularly dissatisfied with work overload, in both the quantitative and the qualitative senses of that term, but also expressed dissatisfaction with staff relationships, organisational climate and the threats to self-efficacy which they associated with educational change. The negative effects which Mykletun found educational change to have produced on teacher satisfaction levels in Norway were also detected in teachers from the state of Hessen in West Germany just a few years later (Lissmann & Gigerich, 1990).

At around the same time, a major study of English teachers (Poppleton & Riseborough, 1990b: 214) found similarly low levels of teacher satisfaction with key elements of their work lives: "only 22% claimed to be satisfied with their present job ... only 15% considered staff morale to be good ... only 7% and 4%, respectively, felt that pay and promotion opportunities were adequate or that teachers were regarded with respect in the community". Regardless, however, Poppleton and Riseborough still found high levels of commitment among English teachers in the mid-1980s, with over three quarters of the respondents claiming that success in their work was very important to them. Subsequently, Poppleton, Gershunsky and Pullin (1990) found overall job satisfaction levels to be high among both English and Russian teachers, with teachers from the two countries reporting high levels of commitment and work centrality.

Across the Atlantic in Canada, Ball and Stenlund (1990) found the same high levels of motivation among teachers wanting to achieve success in their work with students and the same levels of dissatisfaction with the degree of respect they received from the community. The Canadian investigation revealed that Ontario teachers in the late 1980s were satisfied with their salary levels, with the degree of autonomy they had in their work, with their relationships with their colleagues and with their overall workloads. In addition to the lack of community respect, however, these Canadian teachers were dissatisfied with promotion systems, with inadequate opportunities to participate in decision making, with professional development opportunities and with the implementation of educational change.

Further negative impacts of the results of educational change on teachers' quality of work life were also reported in a study conducted in Florida in the first half of the 1980s (McCloskey, Provenzo, Cohn & Kottkamp, 1991): a study which reported on the marked decline in American teachers' satisfaction levels in the 20 year period from 1964 to 1984. In a second American state shortly afterwards (Virginia Education Association & Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1991), Virginian teachers were described as dissatisfied with the physical facilities with which they worked and with a range of other factors which they saw as hindering their capacity to teach effectively. These factors included discipline problems, large classes and mandated innovations and professional development requirements. In this study, satisfied Virginian teachers attributed their satisfaction mainly to the good working relationship they shared with their principal, rather than to the nature of teacher-student relationships, as had been the case in studies elsewhere.

Cohn's study of teachers' perceptions of their work was conducted in the United States in the years immediately following the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission of Excellence in Education. In that context, the findings might well have been expected to show some decline in American teachers' satisfaction with their work lives. Indeed this proved to be the case, with the 73 teachers who were interviewed in the study reporting that their decreasing satisfaction was associated with less co-operative students and parents; with increased levels of accountability and paperwork; and with a loss of control over their own work which they linked to external prescription of the curriculum (Cohn, 1992).

Corcoran's (1990) meta-analysis of teachers' views of the conditions of their work revealed eleven areas about which teachers expressed significant concerns. In what he

described as a “bleak picture of the ... work environments experienced by most teachers” (1990: 149), Corcoran reported that public school teachers in the USA were dissatisfied with their salaries, with the respect they received at work, with their lack of influence in decision-making, with their heavy workloads and with how their supervisors performed. Perhaps not altogether surprisingly, these findings largely mirrored those of Corcoran and his colleagues in their earlier study of teachers in American urban schools conducted for the Institute of Educational Leadership (Corcoran, White & Walker, in Corcoran, 1990) which found physical conditions, resources, autonomy, influence, supervision, opportunities for professional growth, recognition of achievement, leadership quality and student behaviour to all have some influence on teachers’ behaviour and on their feelings about their work.

In his Dutch study Prick (1989) concluded that teachers become less satisfied with teaching after attaining around 45 years of age. In Australia, Dinham (1995b) found the same period to mark something of a watershed in teachers’ lives. Contemporary Australian studies of teacher satisfaction are, however, something of a rarity. Backen (1991) found state school teachers in Queensland to be satisfied with their professional freedom and with their relationships with others in the school setting, but particularly dissatisfied with the status and recognition afforded to the profession of teaching. Sarros and Sarros (1990) painted a gloomy picture of the quality of the work lives of Australian teachers, a picture which featured:

the sense of failure in teachers who believe their services are unappreciated both by school authorities and the general public. Additionally the imposing and often ambiguous directives from head office, combined with a salary many teachers consider is insufficient for the work they do, contribute to a deteriorating self-image and a declining sense of professional importance.

(Sarros & Sarros, 1990: 151)

It is the work of Dinham, however, (see, in particular, 1995a; 1995b) that presents the most comprehensive depiction of Australian teachers’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their work lives in the contemporary context. In Dinham’s analysis, teachers from the state of New South Wales, by far the most populous in Australia, were seen as satisfied with the relationships they share with their colleagues and with the intrinsic psychic rewards they received from student achievement. What Dinham termed “the burden of administtrivia, policies and procedures” (1995b: 71), however, constituted a considerable and growing source of dissatisfaction. Similarly, he found the issue of the pace and scope of imposed educational change to be highly dissatisfying for Australian teachers in the early 1990s.

The nature of the relationship between teacher satisfaction and their performance at work, particularly teachers' performance in relation to their responses to educational change initiatives, is at the heart of scholarly interest in teachers' feelings about the quality of their working lives. If, as it appears from the literature, satisfied teachers seem to be more efficacious and more committed to their work, then the direction of the relationship between satisfaction and performance is of particular significance. White (1992), Rosenholtz (1987) and Holdaway (1978) have held that good performance is self-rewarding and that the high levels of professional self-efficacy which derive from success both produce overall satisfaction and act as incentives to continued good performance. In terms of teachers' involvement with educational change, however, Huberman (1989) has asserted that teachers who engaged in innovations which took the form of classroom-based improvement efforts were far more likely to be satisfied subsequently with the quality of their working lives than were teachers who had been involved in large-scale, systemwide educational changes.

The extent to which satisfied teachers may be more prepared to become engaged in educational change efforts (as part of a higher degree of overall commitment to their work), with the subsequent experience of this involvement having the effect of enhancing their level of satisfaction still further; and the extent to which dissatisfied teachers may resist involvement in educational change (except when they are compelled to be involved in major systemic requirements), with this having the effect of alienating dissatisfied teachers still further, remains less than fully established. The logic, however, is compelling and the implications for proponents of educational change are inescapable.

Summary

In this literature review the key elements of what is known about teachers and the most important facets of their working lives in the current educational context have been presented in something of a distilled form in six sections:

- In section 2.1, the nature of teachers' work was examined from a number of perspectives, ranging from accounts of fiction, through the seminal work of Lortie (1975), to the studies which are emerging as the classics of the modern era, including those of Hargreaves (1994) and Huberman, Grounauer & Marti (1993). Hatton's (1988) conception of teachers' work as bricolage, or tinkering, was discussed in some

detail. Nevertheless, a key point that emerged from this section was that views of teachers' work presented in the literature prior to the time of the current study have tended to concentrate on the instructional and relational elements of teachers' work and to largely ignore the growing proportion of their work which involves non-instructional tasks.

- In section 2.2, teachers' thinking about their work was discussed in the context of the caveat that teachers do not constitute an entirely homogeneous group. Each teacher thinks, feels and acts in individual ways and applies his or her own metaphors, consciously or unconsciously, to their conception of their work and of their role. The existence of a teacher culture was established in this section, with particular attention paid to conceptions of autonomy, consensual individualism and practicality in this discussion of teacher thinking.
- In section 2.3, the links between educational change and the teacher's role were looked at from a perspective of the literature which has spanned the past three decades. The historical analyses of Fullan (1995), Miles (1993), Smith, Klein, Prunty and Dwyer (1992) and Orlosky and Smith (1972) delineate several different stylistic eras of educational innovation, each of which had implications for the role of the teacher. Only in the current decade, however, has the decision-making capacity of the individual teacher begun to be addressed in educational change strategies by acknowledging the need to link change implementation to teacher development.
- In section 2.4, the key elements of the contemporary Australian social context, as these affected the work of teachers in Australian state schools in the 1990s were described. The observations of the restructuring of Australian society made by Robertson (1996) and the critical perspective of Smyth (1995) were linked, in this section, to a number of analyses of how social change has affected the lives and work of teachers.
- In section 2.5, teachers' characteristic forms of response to mooted changes in education were described as characteristically parochial (Guskey, 1989). Almost two decades after its original publication, Doyle and Ponder's *Practicality ethic in teachers' decision making* (1977-78) is said, in this section, to retain its veracity. In this section, teachers were depicted as rational, if largely conservative and self-protective, respondents to change initiatives.
- In section 2.6, the extent of contemporary teachers' levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their work lives were examined. After considerable analysis it was agreed that satisfaction levels are related to elements of work performance; that different

factors affect teachers' levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction; and that both overall satisfaction levels and levels of satisfaction with specific elements of their work each influence teachers' satisfaction with their work lives.

This existing body of knowledge formed the base from which the research was conducted in the current study. Thus, the investigation of the study's first research question: *Which educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?* was based on delving into key features of the contemporary Australian social and educational landscape as teachers identified these as affecting their work lives in significant ways. The study's second research question: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* was investigated from a starting point derived from the literature on teachers' thinking and feeling about their own work in general and about their experiences with certain educational changes in particular. Similarly, the pursuit of the study's third research question: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their working lives in the current change context?* featured an examination of teachers' feelings in relation to the key facets of their work which had been identified in the literature as the most significant satisfiers and dissatisfiers. Given that the study's fourth research question: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?* featured an element of prediction, the pursuit of this question required an element of speculation. Even here, however, the literature related to teacher commitment, to their involvement with educational changes and to their levels of satisfaction, provided the investigation with an established theoretical base.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

In this chapter the research approach developed for the study is described and the various stages of the research process are discussed in detail. This elaboration of the study's research methods is presented in five sections:

3.1 The selection of the research approach

This section elaborates and justifies the research approach adopted in the study in the light of its advantages and limitations. The key point, in this regard, is that the research approach selected was seen as the most appropriate combination of methods which was available to the researcher in the investigations into the study's four research questions.

3.2 The development phase of the research

This section presents details of the selection of the sites where the research was to be conducted and of the processes through which the research instruments were developed to the forms in which they were applied in the study. The uses to which the findings of small-scale pilot studies were put are a focus in this regard. It is in this section that the links between the four research questions and individual items on each of the research instruments are identified. The section concludes with a description of the materials which were prepared by the researcher to assist the various groups of participants to complete their roles in the project more easily.

3.3 The sample

While the sample used in the study was not selected randomly, its demographic features, as presented in this section, suggest the sample to be representative of the relevant populations of teachers and principals employed in the two Australian state systems of education included in the study.

3.4 The data gathering phase of the research

This section details the three data gathering methods used and describes the processes through which respondents contributed data to the study.

3.5 The data analysis phase of the research

This section explains and justifies the methods through which the raw data were converted into forms suitable for detailed analysis. The various categories into which data were converted or aggregated in this stage of the research process are described and explained in detail. The methods used to interrogate the data in respect of each of the four research questions are described in this section also.

The chapter concludes with a brief orientation to the presentation of the study's findings, which were generated by the research methods outlined in this chapter.

3.1 The Selection of the Research Approach

The four research questions at the heart of the study were investigated through a multi-site, multi-method approach to research design (Kerlinger, 1986) which has been described elsewhere (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1995).

This general approach was augmented by the addition of a multi-person element. In terms of the multi-site nature of the research design, data were gathered from teachers and principals employed in schools located in South Australia and Tasmania which were under the jurisdiction of their respective state government departments of education. In terms of the multi-method nature of the research design, data were gathered using a combination of interviews and twin forms of a 28-item questionnaire for teachers and principals (Marshall

& Duigan, 1987). In terms of the multi-person nature of the research design, data were not gathered by the researcher alone, as two other people were recruited to conduct almost half of the study's interviews.

The research adopted a two-stage approach. The first stage consisted of a number of teacher workshops, pilot interviews and trials and reviews of successive versions of the twin questionnaires. This first stage of the research, which is described in detail in Section 3.2, was designed to achieve the following goals:

- to discover Tasmanian and South Australian teachers' identification of, and their names for, the educational changes which they believed had had significant impact on their work lives; and
- to apply this information in the process of constructing and trialing the research instruments which were envisaged for the data gathering phase of the study.

The second stage of the research consisted of the administration of the final versions of the interview schedule, the teacher questionnaire and the principal questionnaire to a sample of teachers and principals from state primary and secondary schools in Tasmania and South Australia.

The extension of the research beyond the researcher's Tasmanian location was taken in order to ensure that the changes and the associated effects on teachers' work which were to be reported by the participants might be more representative of the experiences of Australian government school teachers more generally, rather than only of those associated with the relatively small and isolated system of the island state. The choice of schools within the South Australian system as the second of the two research site categories was, in one sense, a pragmatic decision, based on the researcher's experience of working in that system as both teacher and principal in the past which would facilitate permission to conduct research in South Australia and more ready access to potential teacher and principal participants. On the other hand, the choice of South Australia as the second of the two main research sites was logical as well as advantageous. These two state systems operated in similar educational environments: both had relatively conservative governments elected recently, both of these governments espoused their commitment to more efficient and effective education systems; both states were experiencing widespread economic difficulties which, given the proportion of state budgets expended on education, had encouraged the

two governments to place restrictions on education funding; the administrative centres of each system were located at a similar distance from the headquarters of the federal education bureaucracy in Canberra; post-compulsory curricula had been restructured recently in both systems; and both systems had, to a similar extent, devolved certain decision-making powers to the school level.

Consistent with the checks and balances inherent in a two-stage, dual-system investigation, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather data in the second stage of the project: the study proper. Quantitative data were gathered from teachers and principals through their respective versions of a 28-item semi-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. Qualitative data were gathered from teachers through a semi-structured teacher interview schedule and through a number of open-ended items on the questionnaire.

Each of these data gathering instruments contributed an additional form of data to the study. The interviews contributed the in-depth data which teachers were prepared to disclose in a face-to-face situation; the teacher questionnaires contributed the data which a larger sample of teachers were prepared to disclose when they could remain anonymous; and the principal questionnaires contributed the opinions and judgements of key observers of teachers at work. It was intended, therefore, that this multi-method approach would provide for consistent triangulation.

The final form of data gathering used in the study involved the provision of draft interview transcripts to all interviewees, each of whom were then invited to make their own additions, deletions or other amendments on the text of the transcript. This procedure had three purposes:

- to allow the interviewees to make any amendments to the text of the draft transcripts necessary in the interests of accuracy;
- to allow the interviewees to add to, or to otherwise alter, the draft transcripts so that the final versions would include further details and the considered opinions which had occurred to them after they had had the opportunity to reflect on the issues raised in the interviews; and
- to obtain the interviewees' final consent to include the data contained in the amended transcripts in the study.

The decision to employ a dual-stage, multi-site, multi-method, multi-person approach, in the context of other temporal and financial constraints, imposed some limitations on the study. Most importantly, there were implications for the size of the sample populations. While an investigation conducted in a single location or with a single method would have allowed, for example, more interviews to be conducted or for interviews to have been conducted in greater depth, the utilisation of a range of methods over a range of sites meant that no single method or site was pursued exhaustively. Similarly, the size of the respondent samples was determined by the size which could be managed effectively in a multi-site, multi-method context, rather than on numbers which might have been totally defensible in terms of statistical robustness alone.

Hence, the main disadvantages of the multi-site, multi-method approach, as applied in this study, involved extra administrative, project management and developmental demands, together with the forgoing of a degree of depth in some aspects of the study.

Perhaps the fact that all the study's data were collected within a relatively short time frame constituted a further area of at least potential limitations. Just as in Hargreaves' study of how teachers' responded to increased preparation time:

the data in this study are reported and retrospective evidence rather than evidence collected longitudinally. Given that such evidence comes from retrospective accounts of individuals, it is also difficult to disentangle historical changes in the labour process from biographical changes in the life and career cycles of teachers over time, when maturation may bring more responsibilities, or declining physical powers a sense of reduced capacity to cope.

(Hargreaves, 1992: 104)

It was the experience in this study, however, that the advantages associated with the approach selected far outweighed any limitations it imposed or had the potential to impose. In particular, the research approach adopted facilitated:

- the contrast and comparison of data from one system with data from another;
- access to the considered views of those respondents who had been given the opportunity to reflect on their earlier views;
- the use of one form of data to check or substantiate another form of data; and
- the application of a range of data analysis techniques to interrogate the various forms of data collected.

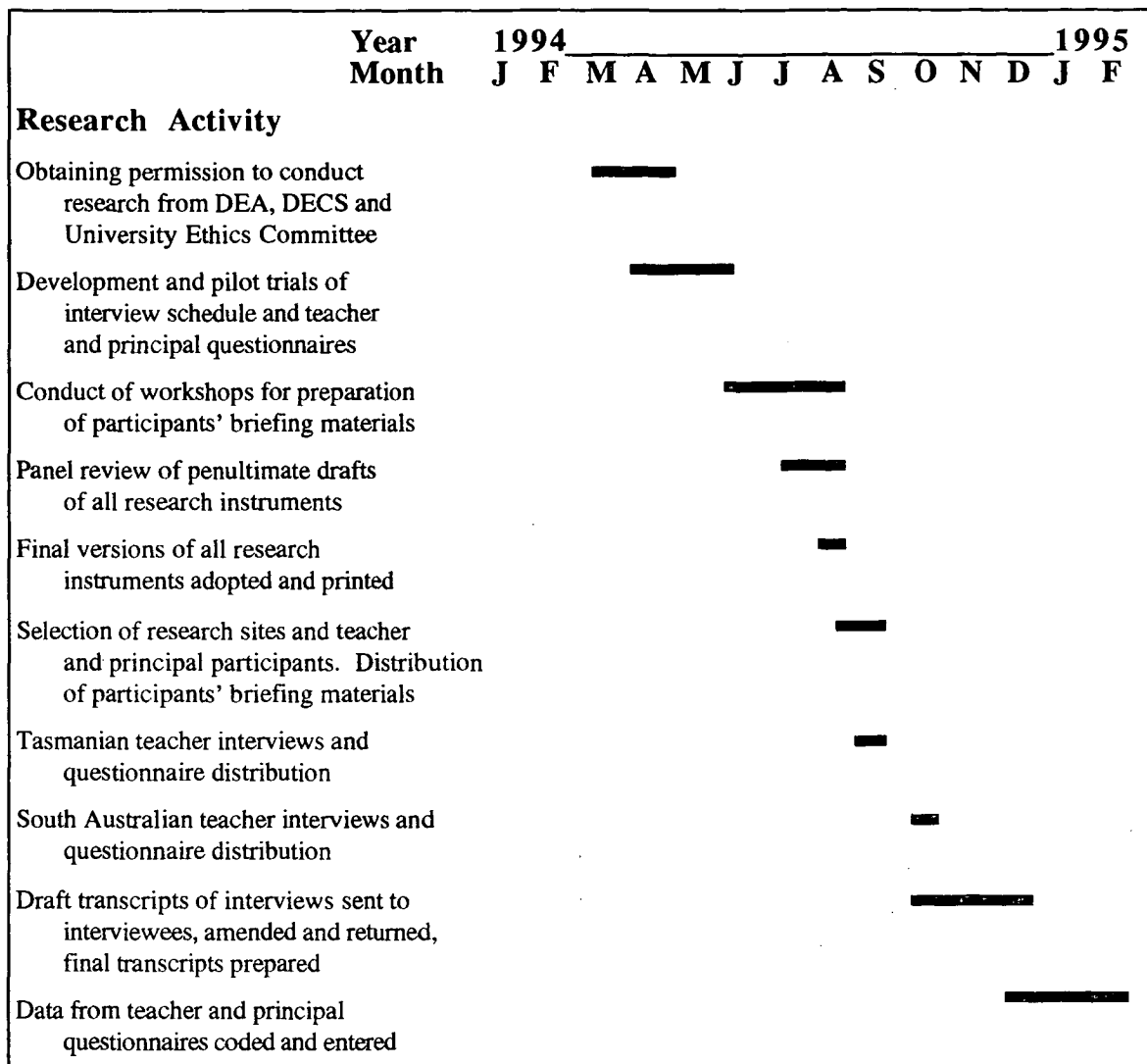
What was of greater significance, however, was that such a research approach provided a variety and richness of data that would have been achieved less easily with a more singular, albeit deeper, approach.

The research design thus featured a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in both data gathering and data analysis. The quantitative data allowed for the participants' responses to be summarised and described accurately in statistical terms. The use and application of qualitative data allowed for the respondents' views to be not only reported accurately, but for such reporting to be illustrated with the respondents' opinions and feelings being presented in their own voices. Wherever teachers' responses are quoted directly, therefore, such quotations replicate teachers' original language and expressions, as they used them in their provision of data for the study.

3.2 The Development Phase of the Research

The research processes and procedures which preceded data gathering in the study proper consisted of a combination of project management tasks: formal negotiations with responsible authorities to obtain permission to conduct the research; the selection of the schools which were to become the research sites; preparation and testing of the research instruments; development and subsequent dissemination of briefing information to potential participants; and the recruitment and training of personnel other than the researcher. These tasks were all completed during the first nine months of 1994. A chronology of the major developmental and implementation tasks associated with the study is presented in Figure 3.1.

It is apparent from Figure 3.1 that the research was characterised by a number of activities being conducted simultaneously and progressing at various rates. However, the description of the developmental phase of the research, which follows, presents each developmental task separately. While the following description of each task and phase of the research treats each of these aspects individually, this form of presentation is made in the interests only of simplicity of understanding. It is important, however, to bear in mind the caveat that the overall research process involved all the various elements as interdependent with, at times, several elements being conducted simultaneously. Figure 3.1 describes the research procedures conducted during the period between January, 1994 when the study began, to January, 1995, when all the study's data had been recorded.

Fig. 3.1 Chronology of Development and Data Gathering Phases

3.2.1 Permission to conduct research

The research design described in the previous section required that data be gathered from teachers and principals from schools within the state education systems of South Australia and Tasmania. Both authorities required that formal permission was sought prior to the commencement of the research project. Therefore, applications were made to the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts and to the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services for permission to conduct the research project in their schools. While such assent did not commit any teacher or principal at any school to

participate in the research, both state authorities gave formal approval for the conduct of the project.

Similarly, approval to undertake the investigation, given that it was to involve human subjects, was sought from the University of Tasmania Ethics Committee (Human Experimentation). Subsequently, this committee acknowledged that the research design and the proposed project management procedures complied with the university's ethical guidelines. The Ethics Committee thus granted formal approval for the project to commence.

3.2.2 Selection of the research sites

In 1994 the South Australian and Tasmanian state education systems were responsible for a total of approximately 900 schools. The South Australian system, which consisted of 650 schools, was much bigger than its Tasmanian counterpart, which administered only 250 schools. Despite this difference in size related to school numbers, the structures and school types found within the two systems were similar. Nevertheless, in the context of this overall similarity of educational organisation and delivery, a number of differences between the state systems and their schools were noteworthy. Of particular relevance in this regard were the following similarities and differences:

- both systems offered a 13-year program of teaching and learning, including part-time first years termed *Reception* in South Australia and *Preparation* or, more commonly, *Prep.*, in Tasmania;
- the transition from primary to secondary schooling took place after Year 6 in Tasmania, while in South Australia this occurred twelve months later at the completion of Year 7;
- in Tasmania, secondary education was conducted at high schools for a four year period which culminated, usually, in students moving to one of the system's seven senior secondary colleges for the final two years of schooling. A secondary education pattern involving three years at high school, followed by two years at a senior secondary college was available in South Australian settings, but it remained more common for the South Australian students to complete their five years of secondary education at a single high school; and

- in rural settings, and in this context it is worth noting the fact that the Tasmanian community is more decentralised than any other in Australia, both systems maintained students at a single school until the end of Year 10.

While both systems were responsible for schools of other types (each maintained special schools for students with disabilities and had a school of distance education, for example, while South Australia also had a number of Aboriginal schools), it was clear that equivalent structures could be discerned in both states. In this regard it was determined that the research would be conducted in schools which were representative of the types of schools found most commonly in both systems. Therefore, the research was to involve data collection from teachers and principals from primary schools (R-7 in South Australia, P-6, or sometimes Kindergarten-6 in Tasmania), with this to include one isolated rural primary school in each state; from secondary schools (Years 8-10 or 8-12 in South Australia, Years 7-10 in Tasmania); from senior secondary colleges (Years 11-12 in both settings) and from area schools (R-10) in South Australia, together with the equivalent district high schools (P-10) in Tasmania.

The selection of the schools in which the research was to be conducted was designed to ensure that the schools were representative of their respective state systems and demographic patterns on the one hand, and selected randomly on the other. Both systems published a list of schools and the 1994 versions of these lists were used as the basis for the selection of the schools which were approached to participate in the study. The principals of every third Tasmanian and every fifth South Australian senior secondary college, high school, primary school and area or district high school were approached to participate in the project. While personnel from 87 schools agreed to contribute to the study, two groups of ten schools from each state provided the key research sites with the teacher interviews being conducted in those 20 schools. In each of the two state systems these ten key research sites consisted of two senior secondary colleges, two high schools, four primary schools, one isolated primary school and one area/district high school. This mix of school types was determined in advance, based largely on the limits imposed by the resources available for the project. Hence, the ten key research sites were selected according to the order in which affirmative replies were received from principals in each group of school types. Thus, the research sites were representative of the teaching contexts and locations encountered most typically by teachers employed in the two systems. Details explaining how teachers were selected as respondents are presented later in section 3.3.

3.2.3 Development of the research instruments

As has been described earlier, three research instruments were developed for the purpose of gathering data. These instruments were an interview schedule, a teacher questionnaire and a version of the teacher questionnaire which was designed to be completed by principals. The final versions of each of these instruments are reproduced in full in Appendices I, II and III respectively. The nature and purpose of each instrument, the rationale for their contents and the processes through which they were developed to their eventual forms are described in the three sub-sections which follow.

- **The interview schedule**

Interviews were used in the study to provide in-depth data drawn from the personal experiences of teacher respondents whose work had been affected by recent educational changes. In this regard, care was taken not to identify teachers who may have been affected by educational change to any greater extent than any of their colleagues (see section 3.3).

The interview schedule consisted of 15 main items and an open-ended closing question in which teacher interviewees were invited to raise any issues of relevance to them in relation to their involvement with educational change which they felt had not been addressed in other parts of the interview. The interviews sought data from teachers in relation to three of the study's four research questions.

Research Question 1: Which educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?

The interviews probed the identity of three recent changes which had affected the interviewees in their work (Question 1), identified the one change which had had the strongest impact (Question 2) and sought the interviewees' views on the characteristics of the most significant changes as they related to the source of the change (Question 3), how the change was first presented (Question 4), implementation timelines (Question 5), perceived objectives (Question 6), factors which assisted implementation (Question 7) and factors which hindered implementation (Question 8).

Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?*

The interviews probed the effects of the changes as these were seen by the interviewees to be impacting on their work in relation to the amount of work required of them (Question 9), whether or not the changes had required the adoption of new work methods (Question 10), effects on the interviewees' relationships with others (Question 11), other effects on these teachers' work (Question 12) and any effects of the changes on students' experiences at school (Question 13).

Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?*

The interview sought teachers' views in relation to their current feelings about the change which had affected their work most (Question 14) and about whether their experiences with that change had altered the extent to which they might approach future changes more positively or negatively (Question 15).

As a significant proportion of the data related to Research Question 3 was to be of a quantitative nature, and given the relatively small number of teachers to be interviewed, it was determined that questions related to teachers' level of satisfaction with their work lives would not be included in the interview schedule, but would be examined through data generated from the questionnaires. Nevertheless, all interviewees had the opportunity of responding to all four research questions, as all interviewees were also invited to respond to the teacher questionnaire.

The interview schedule is presented in Appendix I in the form in which it was used in the study proper. This final version of the schedule resulted from an extensive process of development. This process of development involved four key stages.

Stage 1: *First draft*

A first draft of the interview schedule was based on the conceptual framework which had been generated from the literature and then adopted for study. This framework is described in detail in Chapter One.

Stage 2: *Pilot trials with teachers*

A pilot study was conducted with 20 Tasmanian primary and secondary teachers in May, 1994. These teachers were not included later in the sample for the study proper. The results of the pilot study indicated that some interview questions required clarification and that interviewees would have welcomed some degree of prior briefing on the issues to be discussed in the interviews. In response to this information a number of questions were reworded and follow-up prompts or probes were prepared for Questions 2, 3, 4, 7, 14 and 15. In response to pilot study interviewees' indication that they would have been better placed to respond more articulately had they been provided with an advance briefing, information sheets for teachers were prepared. These sheets are described in section 3.2.4 in this chapter and are reproduced in Appendix IV.

Stage 3: *Panel review*

The version of the interview schedule, as amended following the pilot study, was submitted for review and assessment of face validity to a panel of five persons with expertise in educational research. Each member of the panel held the degree of PhD in education, each had a strong record of research publications and each held an appointment at either Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor level at the University of Tasmania. The recommendations from the panel, which related to simplicity of items and consistency of question format, resulted in further refinement of the wording of several items and the omission of a number of follow-up items scheduled to follow Question 1. The panel's other recommendations touched on relevant literature related to change configurations, while one panellist questioned the assumption inherent in the research approach that teachers were good theorists about change. In this regard, the pilot study had indicated that teachers' capacities to theorise about educational change were more than adequate for the purposes of this study.

Stage 4: *Review by interviewers*

In accord with the multi-person element of the research design, two persons were recruited to conduct approximately a quarter of the interviews each, while the remainder were conducted by the researcher. The penultimate version of the interview schedule

was used by the researcher in developing and delivering a program of training for the forthcoming interviews to these two research associates. In response to their reactions to the interview schedule when its contents were spoken aloud, several minor changes were made to the wording of the introduction and Question 1.

Following this process of development the interview schedule reached its final form and the interviews, which varied in duration between 40 and 60 minutes, were held in both South Australia and Tasmania under the following conditions:

- all interviews were held in the second and third weeks of the final term of the school year;
- all interviewees were interviewed separately;
- all interviews were held in a private room at the interviewees' schools;
- all interviews were tape recorded for later transcription; and
- all interviewees were later provided with a transcript of the interview and invited to make additions, deletions or other amendments on the text of the transcript.

All teacher interviewees were invited to participate further in the study by completing a teacher questionnaire. While, as is detailed in section 3.3 of this chapter, not all interviewees completed a questionnaire, this approach provided those interviewees who participated in both data gathering approaches with three opportunities to put their views: first in the interview itself; second, after reflection, by amending or adding to the transcript of the interview; and third, again after reflection, through the questionnaire for teachers.

• The teacher questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data from a larger sample of teachers than that which had been investigated through the interviews. The instrument gathered both qualitative and quantitative data.

The teacher questionnaire consisted of 28 main items in the form in which it was used in the study proper. The questionnaire elicited demographic information from teachers initially and then proceeded to gather data in relation to the study's four research questions as follows:

Research Question 1: *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?*

The questionnaires sought data from teachers identifying those educational and social changes which had had significant impacts on their work in recent years (Items 1 and 17), identified the one change that had had the strongest impact (Item 2), sought teachers' views on the origin of that particular change (Item 5), on whose interests the change was intended to serve (Item 6), on whose interests the change had served in reality (Item 7), on the main objective of the change (Item 8) and on the extent to which they had control over decision-making in relation to the implementation of the change (Item 10).

Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?*

The questionnaire sought data on the effects on teachers' work of the recent significant changes in terms of the degree of strength of impact (Item 3), in terms of the work roles teachers played in the change processes (Item 9), in terms of how they saw their work lives had been affected by changes (Item 12) and in terms of the strategies teachers adopted in their work in response to change (Item 13).

Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their working lives in the current educational change context?*

The questionnaire sought teachers' views on a wide range of matters relating to their feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. On two items (Items 14 and 15), the impact of the most significant recent educational change on teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction was investigated, while ten aspects affecting teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the current change context in general were examined in the latter section of the questionnaire (Items 19 - 28 inclusive). These ten key aspects relating to the quality of teachers' work lives were distilled from the literature on work life satisfaction, particularly from the studies conducted by Pelsma, Richard, Harrington and Burry (1987) and by the Virginia Education Association and Appalachia Educational Laboratory (1991).

Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?*

Data in relation to this research question were gathered from four questionnaire items. These data related to teachers' perceptions of their own typical responses to educational change (Item 18), of their levels of commitment to the achievement of the objectives of the current change (Item 11), of the nature of the overall effects of the current change on their work (Item 4) and of how their involvement with a significant recent change might affect their predisposition to future changes in education (Item 16).

The teacher questionnaire is presented in Appendix II in the form in which it was used in the study proper. This final version of the questionnaire resulted from an extensive process of development. The process of development involved four key stages.

Stage 1: *First draft*

A first draft of the teacher questionnaire was based on the study's conceptual framework, which itself had been informed by the literature, with the intention of triangulating the data generated from a small sample of interviewees with data from a larger respondent group. The first draft of the questionnaire consisted of 34 items. It was recognised that the length of the questionnaire was likely to induce a degree of fatigue in some respondents and that this could well have had serious implications, both for the quality of the data generated by the questionnaire and for overall response rates. It was decided to use a combination of different forms of survey items throughout the questionnaire so that respondent interest might be maintained and fatigue, or loss of motivation to complete the entire questionnaire, might be ameliorated.

Stage 2: *Pilot trials with teachers*

A pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted with 25 Tasmanian primary and secondary teachers, none of whom participated as respondents to the questionnaire in the study proper, in June, 1994. The results of the pilot study indicated: first, that the length of the 34-item draft questionnaire was somewhat daunting for teachers who perceived that they had only limited time to devote to responding to such surveys; second, that the wording of several items was insufficiently clear; but third, that the

issues raised in the questionnaire items were seen as interesting and pertinent by teachers; and fourth, that the use of a mixture of different styles of items helped to direct respondents' attention to the content of individual items and helped to maintain the pilot trial teachers' interest in providing detailed answers to all items. In response to the experiences of the pilot study the overall length of the questionnaire was reduced from 34 to 32 items and several items were reworded to enhance clarity.

Stage 3: *Panel review*

The version of the teacher questionnaire, as amended following the pilot study, was submitted for review and assessment of construct validity to the same panel of educational researchers used in the earlier review of the interview schedule. The recommendations from the panel were to the effect that the questionnaire's length and the complexity of some of the items might well inhibit both the quality and the rate of responses. In response to the panellists' opinions, the length of the questionnaire was reduced further to 28 items and the nature of the final ten items was made less complex by the omission of a part of each of these items which had asked teachers to predict their likely levels of future satisfaction. The panel's only other comments touched on the literature related to teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. These comments put the view that it may have been more proper to distinguish between satisfaction and no satisfaction on the one hand, and dissatisfaction and no dissatisfaction on the other, rather than between satisfaction and dissatisfaction *per se*, in the final ten items. This distinction was acknowledged, but not acted upon, given the extra complexity this would have required in each of the ten relevant items. The panel's point was, however, noted and taken into consideration in the later analysis of data.

Stage 4: *Final design and layout*

The final version of the questionnaire was prepared, applying a combination of devices, including bold text, underlining, italics and various font sizes to facilitate respondents' understanding and completion of the questionnaire. The final 28 items involved five open-ended items on which teachers responded to questions by writing their own answers in their own words (Items 1, 2, 8, 12 and 13), three Likert-style items on which teachers indicated their positions on different scales (Items 3, 4 and 11), ten

items based on a continuum in which the terms *satisfied* and *dissatisfied* were regarded as a quasi semantic differential (Items 19 - 28), six items on which respondents were invited to nominate, from options provided, the responses which best represented their views (Items 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 18), and four items which presented respondents with a choice between the options of *Yes*, *No* and *Uncertain* (Items 14 - 17). On 13 of the 28 items, explanatory details underlying respondents' answers to the initial part of these items were sought through supplementary questions involving *What ... ?*, *How ... ?* or *Why ... ?* (Items 14, 15, 17 and 19 - 28).

Following this process of development the teacher questionnaire was printed and distributed, accompanied by reply-paid envelopes, to a sample of teachers from the South Australian and Tasmanian state education systems.

- **The principal questionnaire**

The principal questionnaire was designed as a device which would enable teachers' self-reports to be compared with the projections and opinions of those who had seen teachers at work.

This version of the questionnaire consisted of the same 28 items that made up the teacher questionnaire, albeit with the items and their attendant instructions being reworded in order that principal respondents might complete the questionnaire in their role of key observers of teachers.

Indicative of the differences in the wording of the two versions of the questionnaire was the single difference in the instructions on the respective cover sheets. Here, teacher participants were asked to base their replies on "your own opinions and experiences", while principal respondents were asked to base their replies on "your experiences and knowledge of the teachers at your current school". In this regard, therefore, it should be noted that the study's sample of teachers reported only their own individual experiences and perceptions, while the study's sample of principals reported their understandings of the experiences and perceptions of a wider pool of teachers, albeit a pool which included each of the teachers in the teacher sample. There was, therefore, never any intention that data from individual principal questionnaires were to be applied as a direct check against data from particular teacher questionnaires. In a sense, the role of the principals in the sample

fell somewhere between that of *participant observer*, on the one hand, and *bystander*, on the other. Perhaps, therefore, the most appropriate label for the role principals were asked to play in the research design was that of *expert witness*: able to see and to understand educational events as these impacted on teachers and to recognise teachers' responses to such events, even if from a perspective somewhat removed from that of teachers themselves.

The final version of the principal questionnaire, as this is presented in Appendix III, resulted from a development process which was subsequent to that used in the development of the teacher questionnaire. Thus, a first draft of a 28-item questionnaire (based on the final version of the teacher questionnaire) was trialed with a small pilot study group of seven school principals, four from Tasmania and three from South Australia, in July, 1994. While the length of the questionnaire provoked a similar response from these principals as had the first draft of the teacher questionnaire from its pilot sample, the most significant result of this pilot trial was that the principal participants experienced no significant difficulty in reporting their understandings of the perceptions of the teachers at their schools. The single exception to this was that principals recognised that they had to provide a "typical" or "most common" response, given that, on many items, they were being asked to report the somewhat varied perceptions of a number of teachers as a single response. The process of panel review applied in the development of the teacher questionnaire was also employed for the principal questionnaire, with the panel members feeling that it was reasonable to seek principals' views of teachers' perceptions through this device. It was therefore decided that the principal version of the questionnaire would be valid for use in the study proper.

Finally, the layout and design of the principal questionnaire mirrored that of the teacher version. The principal questionnaire was then printed and distributed by mail, accompanied by instructions and reply-paid envelopes, to a sample of primary and secondary school principals from state system schools in South Australia and Tasmania.

3.2.4 Preparation of briefing materials for participants

As discussed earlier in section 3.2.3, teachers who participated in the pilot trials undertaken as part of the development of the interview schedule indicated that their capacity to respond effectively would have been enhanced by having had access to prior information about the

nature of the issues to be probed in the study's research questions. Hence it was decided to develop a set of briefing notes for all teachers and principals who would be members of the study sample.

In order to reduce the potential for the provision of prior information to influence, and therefore to distort, the data gathered in the study, the briefing notes were based on the outcomes of two teacher workshops which were held for the purpose of developing these briefing notes. At the workshop held in Tasmania, 20 local teachers identified a number of recent changes in education which all were prepared to agree might well have had significant impacts on teachers' work. A modified nominal group technique was used in this process. The same technique produced a very similar list of educational changes when it was applied in a subsequent workshop with 12 South Australian teachers.

A final list of 13 recent educational changes, common to both locations albeit sometimes phrased in differing context-specific terminology, was incorporated into four sets of briefing notes, with a set designed for use by members of each of the four groups within the sample: Tasmanian teachers, South Australian teachers, Tasmanian principals and South Australian principals. These briefing notes, together with the introductory information which invited participation in the project, are reproduced in Appendix IV.

3.2.5 Recruitment and training of personnel other than the researcher

To eliminate the potential for distortions which might have resulted had all the interviews being conducted by the researcher himself, two research associates were contracted by the researcher to conduct half of the study's interviews with teachers. Neither of these research associates was in current employment as a classroom teacher in a school, although both possessed extensive understandings of the work of teachers: the Tasmanian research associate, who conducted eight of the 18 Tasmanian interviews, was a qualified teacher who still undertook relief teaching duties on occasion; and the South Australian research associate, who conducted nine of the 20 South Australian interviews, was employed as a school assistant in a rural primary school. Both research associates were female and aged close to the mean age of the sample of teachers involved in the study. Both research associates had undertaken a one-day training program devised and run by the researcher in preparation for their work as interviewers.

3.3 The Sample

The sample sought for the study was influenced most strongly by factors associated with the project's limited resources. It was hoped to construct sample pools of 40 teachers (two from each of 20 schools) for interview, 100 teachers (including the 40 interviewees) from 50 schools as questionnaire respondents, and 100 principals (including the principals of the participating teachers' 50 schools) as respondents to the principal questionnaire. In this design it was projected that 100 principals would agree to participate as respondents to the principal questionnaire, with half of these principals being prepared to facilitate the participation of two members of their teaching staffs as either interviewees and questionnaire respondents or as respondents to the teacher questionnaire alone. The sample pools which eventuated finally were close to those which were intended, but did not match these exactly.

In all 100 teachers and 87 school principals participated in the study proper. The sample of teacher respondents was not selected randomly. Rather, 160 schools were selected randomly, using the device of approaching every third Tasmanian school and every fifth South Australian school as published in the official lists of schools, subject to care being taken to ensure appropriate representation of the types and locations of schools found within both state education systems. The schools represented in the final sample of 87 principals were similarly representative of the mainstream schools within both systems, although special schools, aboriginal schools and distance education schools were not represented. Thus, the 87 principal respondents were those who agreed to participate from among a randomly selected pool of 160 schools. Teacher participants were chosen from those who expressed an interest in participation in the project at targeted schools from within the pool of locations represented in the principal sample. These targeted schools consisted of the 45 schools whose principals agreed to facilitate the participation of one or more of their teachers in the study. Thus, interviews were conducted and questionnaires collected from 20 schools (as described in section 3.2) and questionnaires collected from a further 25 schools. Teacher participants were chosen from among the volunteer pool to ensure that the final sample of teachers would be broadly representative (by gender, age, length of teaching experience, school type and school location) of the broader populations of teachers in South Australia and Tasmania. This process identified 165 initial teacher volunteers from 45 schools who were contacted directly by mail and invited to participate in the project. This process eventually produced the final sample of 100 teacher participants.

The study's sample of teachers had characteristics including: a mean age of just over 40 years; an average of around 16 years of teaching experience; tenure in their current schools for an average of five years; and a majority of primary teachers over secondary teachers and of females over males. It is, therefore, clear that the demographic characteristics of the teacher sample were consistent with those found within the broader population of Australian state system teachers (see, for example, Baumgart, 1995). Similarly, the characteristics of the study's sample of school principals: a mean age of 47; 10 years experience as principal; just over four years at their current school; a majority of primary over secondary principals; but a majority of males over females, demonstrate the demographic patterns of the principal sample to have been consistent with those found within the broader population of Australian school principals. The demographic details of the teacher and principal participants in the study are described in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The Sample: Demographic Details

<i>Sample Categories</i>	<i>Teachers</i> (n=100) (%)		<i>Principals</i> (n = 87) (%)	
<i>State System of Origin</i>				
South Australia	51	(51%)	44	(51%)
Tasmania	49	(49%)	43	(49%)
<i>School Level</i>				
Primary	55	(55%)	47	(54%)
Secondary	45	(45%)	40	(46%)
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	41	(41%)	63	(72%)
Female	59	(59%)	24	(28%)
<i>Mean Age (Years)</i>				
South Australia	41.6		46.5	
Tasmania	39.4		47.3	
<i>Mean Experience in Current Role (Years)</i>				
South Australia	17.8		11.6	
Tasmania	15.5		9.3	
<i>Mean Experience at Current School (Years)</i>				
South Australia	4.1		4.1	
Tasmania	5.8		5.7	

While 87 principals participated in the study as questionnaire respondents only, the 100 members of the teacher sample were divided into those who participated through both

interview and survey modes ($n = 27$), those who were interviewed but did not return a completed questionnaire ($n = 11$) and those who participated only through completing the questionnaire ($n = 62$). The 100 teacher participants therefore collectively yielded a data pool of 38 interviews and 89 completed questionnaires, with a further 87 questionnaires being completed by the principal participants. While all teacher interviewees were volunteers, and thus the rate of response was not at issue, the mail-out method of distribution used for the questionnaires also achieved a satisfactory level of response with both teacher and principal response rates being over 50 percent. The response rates are presented in more detail in Table 3.2. below.

Table 3.2 Questionnaire Response Rates

<i>Respondent Groups</i>	<i>Questionnaires Distributed</i>	<i>Questionnaires Returned</i>	<i>Response Rates</i>
Principals (Sth. Aust.)	85	43	50.6%
Principals (Tas.)	75	44	58.7%
ALL PRINCIPALS	160	87	54.4%
Teachers (Sth. Aust.)	77	45	59.7%
Teachers (Tas.)	88	44	50.0%
ALL TEACHERS	165	89	53.9%

While these response rates were judged to be satisfactory for a mail-out survey, the fact remained that over 40 percent of teacher volunteers did not return a completed questionnaire. Inquiries conducted with several of these teachers indicated that the length of the instrument and the detailed nature of many of the responses it required were the main contributing factors behind a non-response. This factor had been foreseen during the development of the research instruments and it had been accepted then that a relatively high proportion of potential respondents might find the questionnaire daunting in terms of the demands it placed on respondents. Nevertheless, the decision had been taken to proceed with a complex and lengthy questionnaire and to accept lower response rates as part of the price of obtaining detailed survey data. Therefore, while the relatively low level of response was considered unfortunate, it was not considered to have any impact on the validity of the study.

The nature of the final teacher and principal samples reflected those characteristics found most commonly within the respective populations from which they were drawn. Nevertheless, the size of both sample pools being somewhat smaller than that which might have been considered ideal in terms of robustness, together with the volunteer nature of the teacher sample, placed limitations on the extent to which it might be reasonable to view the study's sample as truly representative of the total populations of Tasmanian and South Australian teachers and principals. To an even greater extent, therefore, generalisation from these samples to the broader Australian populations of state system teachers and principals could only be undertaken with considerable wariness.

3.4 The Data Gathering Phase of the Research

School principals were the initial point of contact between the researcher and each of the research site schools. Once the first such contact by mail and principals' replies had established the sample of 87 schools to be used as research sites and, therefore, the study's sample of principals, the principals of a stratified selection of 20 of these 87 schools were contacted by telephone to seek these principals' agreement to further assist the research study through agreeing to identify one or more volunteer teachers from their schools to participate in the study as interviewees and, furthermore, to play a gatekeeping role in the identification of teacher volunteers so that the interviewees would collectively reflect typical demographic patterns for teachers, particularly in relation to gender and length of teaching experience.

Once these 20 principals (10 from each of South Australia and Tasmania) had agreed to these arrangements, they were contacted by facsimile message in late August, 1994, and asked to supply the names of teachers who had agreed to participate in the study as interviewees. A reply slip was included on the facsimile message for this purpose. All principals responded to this approach. With the teacher interviewees thus identified, these teachers were each contacted by mail and supplied with the background briefing notes contained in Appendix IV. Finally, the teachers' willingness to participate as interviewees was confirmed through subsequent telephone contacts with the respective school principals.

Arrangements for the conduct of the actual interviews also were negotiated with school principals by telephone. Through this process it was made possible for all of the 38

interviews to be held during the second and third weeks of the final term of the 1994 school year. The three term structure of the school year in Tasmania and the four term system in operation in South Australia meant that the interviews were actually spread over a total timespan of seven weeks in order that they could all be held during the same two week period of each state's respective final term of the 1994 school year. This was seen to be important, given that the possible end-of-year departure of senior secondary students in one system, but not the other, might well have skewed the data from the teachers from the senior secondary sector had the interviews in one state preceded student departure while those in the other state had taken place in the context of reduced teaching loads.

Once the arrangements for the conduct of all interviews were in place the two research associates, who were each to conduct a quarter of the interviews, participated in separate one-day training sessions conducted by the researcher. At these sessions common methods for administering the interview schedule were agreed and practised.

All interviews were conducted at convenient times during the school day, in private rooms at each of the interviewees' schools during September (in Tasmania) and October 1994 (in South Australia). With the permission of each of the subjects, the 38 interviews were audio-tape recorded for subsequent transcription.

The interviews ranged in length from 15 to 60 minutes and followed the interview schedule reproduced in Appendix I. It was apparent from the interview transcripts that all three interviewers adhered to the wording on the interview schedule, although occasional follow-up questions or requests for clarification were asked. The data gathered by each of the three interviewers were consistent in content, thus indicating that the study demonstrated appropriate inter-rater reliability. However, the interviews conducted by the researcher tended to be of the longest duration (averaging around 40 minutes each), those conducted by the South Australian research associate were of medium length (averaging around 30 minutes each), while those conducted by the Tasmanian research associate were the briefest (averaging around 20 minutes each).

At the conclusion of each interview, the interviewee was issued with a copy of the teacher questionnaire and asked to complete it within the following ten days and to return it to the researcher in the reply-paid envelope provided. Only 27 of the 38 interviewees (71.1 percent) returned completed questionnaires. Anecdotal reports indicated that several of the

11 interviewees who did not return a completed questionnaire felt that the request to complete a lengthy questionnaire, in addition to participating in an interview, amounted to more than they were prepared to contribute to the study.

A further 127 teacher questionnaires were distributed to teacher volunteers identified by their principals at a total of 45 schools: the 20 schools where interviews had been conducted, 12 other Tasmanian schools and 13 other South Australian schools. The process of distributing these questionnaires by mail, accompanied by the relevant briefing notes and reply-paid envelopes, resulted in the return of 62 completed teacher questionnaires.

The data gathered in the study thus consisted of 38 audio-tape recorded and transcribed interviews with teachers, 27 completed questionnaires from teachers who were also interviewed, 62 additional completed questionnaires from teachers who had not been interviewed, and 87 completed questionnaires from school principals.

Once the 38 recorded interviews had been transcribed, these draft transcripts were printed and then mailed to the interviewees who were invited to make any amendments they felt warranted. This opportunity to amend the draft transcripts was not designed merely to ensure that the transcripts accorded with the subjects' recollections of the interviews: rather, it was intended that this process and invitation would allow the interviewees a second opportunity to express their views and, significantly, that this opportunity would come after they had had a chance to reflect on the issues raised in the original interviews. It transpired that 20 of the 38 interviewees made significant amendments to their respective draft transcripts, with these amendments taking the form of alterations, explanations and deletions, but, most commonly, the addition of extra information. Therefore, this opportunity to amend the draft transcripts resulted in final data which the interviewees saw as not only more accurate, but, importantly, also more complete. The opportunity to review and amend the initial transcript was also reported by several participants to have constituted a useful form of feedback. An example of a draft transcript, together with the final version of the same transcript after amendment by the interviewee is presented in Appendix V. By the end of December, 1994, all 38 interview transcripts were finalised and the data collection phase of the study was thus complete.

While not strictly part of the data collection process *per se*, it was considered important that

each of those involved in the study who had not participated anonymously (with this group consisting of interviewed teachers and all principal respondents) be contacted by mail in November, 1994 and thanked for their contribution to the study.

3.5 The Data Analysis Phase of the Research

The multi-method nature of the research design used in the study had produced three sets of data: the transcripts of the 38 teacher interviews; the 89 responses to the teacher questionnaire; and the 87 responses to the principal questionnaire. The interview data were analysed qualitatively, while the questionnaire data were analysed through both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Although there were three sets of data gathered in the study, detailed data analysis plans were prepared for only the data from the teacher interviews and the teacher questionnaires. The data from the principal questionnaires were gathered only for the purposes of comparison with the information from the teacher questionnaires.

3.5.1 Analysis of the Interview Data

The approach taken to the analysis of the interview data was underpinned by what might be best described as a modified form of grounded theory. Thus, processes of open coding and subsequent axial coding were undertaken, in styles similar to those described by Strauss and Corbin (1990). This approach was crucial particularly in the analysis of the data related to Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?*

Each of the interview recordings was, initially, discussed with the two other interviewers, acknowledging the importance of inter-rater reliability. The transcripts were then read many times; on each occasion with a specific research question as the focus of the inquiry. This process involved using a reworded version of each research question as a primary coding device. Subsequently, the relevant sub-items from the conceptual framework were applied to consideration of the data as predetermined secondary codes. Finally, in seeking to identify a third level of response categories which would be apparent in the transcript data, rather than predetermined, a number of "emergent codes" were applied as they came to the surface at various times in the overall process of consideration of the interview data. In relation to each of the three research questions probed in the interviews, these procedures resulted in the following data category coding structures.

- Research Question 1: *Which educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?*

Major Code: Changes having most impact on teachers

Secondary Codes: Perceived origin of the change
Form of presentation of change
Implementation timeline expectations
Perception of objectives
Support for implementation
Factors hindering implementation

Emergent Codes: Internal or external sources of origin
Work domain most affected
Degree of familiarity with change expectations
Opportunity to participate in decision-making
Combination of many changes simultaneously
Time pressures and stress

- Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?*

Major Code: Effects of major change on teachers' work

Secondary Codes: Amount of work required
New methods of working
Relationships with others

Emergent Codes: Complexity and intensity of teachers' work
Shifting focus of the core work of teachers
Collaboration - voluntary and required
Effects on quality of teachers' teaching
Effects on quality of students' learning

- Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?*

Major Code: Current change experiences and predictions about future changes

Secondary Codes: Current attitude to most significant change
Impact of current change determining nature of future response?

Emergent Codes: Influence of domain of current/future changes
Influence of teachers' role in current change
Influence of nature/purpose of future changes

The transcript data were, therefore, analysed manually, rather than with the assistance of any computerised qualitative analysis tool, although the style of analysis used was not entirely dissimilar to that applied in many of the range of available software programs (see, for example, Tesch, 1990). Thus, the major codes were based on the research questions; the secondary codes were based on the sub-items predicted in the conceptual framework; and the third level of emergent codes became apparent to the researcher through continued analysis of the trends and tendencies contained in the data.

Similarly dependent on the researcher's individual judgement was the selection of direct quotations from the text of the various transcripts. These selections, which depended on the researcher's judgement of those statements which best illustrated a particular finding, were made according to the extent to which the following two selection criteria were met: first, the extent to which the quotation was truly indicative of the views of most teachers interviewed; and, second, the extent to which the quotation was truly indicative of the very strongly held views, albeit views not necessarily held or expressed by a large number of teachers interviewed.

3.5.2 Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Data

On receipt of the 89 completed teacher questionnaires a manual collation and analysis of the responses to Items 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 was conducted, and through this process response categories for each of these items were identified. Response categories for the other 20 items were predetermined and presented in the questionnaire as response options.

Following the manual analysis, therefore, response categories suitable for quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data had been determined and these categories were applied in the construction of a spreadsheet on which the data were entered. The computer package *StatView Version 4.02* was used for this purpose. The use of computer-based quantitative analysis facilitated comparisons between the various sub-groups in the teacher sample and between the teacher and principal samples.

In a number of cases, questionnaire data were reclassified according to categories which had emerged from the processes used in the analysis of the teacher interviews. Thus, for example, the responses for Items 1 and 2 were subsequently reclassified according to the work domain seemingly most affected by the particular changes nominated.

The analysis of the quantitative data generated by the teacher questionnaire consisted of single item analyses and of cross-run comparisons and correlations between items. Both parametric and non-parametric statistical devices were used in analysing the quantitative data, as tests for skewness and kurtosis revealed that data from some items were distributed normally, while data from other items were not distributed normally.

In relation to each of the study's four research questions, the data from specific items from the teacher questionnaire were interrogated within the following categories.

- Research Question 1: *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?*

Identity and work domain of significant changes	(Items 1, 2 and 17)
Source or origin of significant changes	(Item 5)
Intended beneficiaries of such changes	(Item 6)
Actual beneficiaries of such changes	(Item 7)
Main objective of significant changes	(Item 8)
Degree of teacher influence on decision-making	(Item 10)

- Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?*

Degree of impact of change on work life	(Item 3)
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Teachers' roles in the change process	(Item 9)
Perceived change effects on work life	(Item 12)
Strategies adopted in response to change effects	(Item 13)

- Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their working lives in the current educational change context?*

Impact of change on sources of satisfaction	(Item 14)
Impact of change on sources of dissatisfaction	(Item 15)
Teachers' feelings about:	
working relationship with principal	(Item 19)
working relationships with teacher colleagues	(Item 20)
interactions with students	(Item 21)
parental and community support	(Item 22)
education system policies	(Item 23)
industrial conditions of employment	(Item 24)
decision-making opportunities at work	(Item 25)
capacity to control impact of change	(Item 26)
quality of available facilities and resources	(Item 27)
effort needed to meet all expectations	(Item 28)

- Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?*

Nature of overall impact of current change	(Item 4)
Level of commitment to current change	(Item 11)
Impact of current change on future response	(Item 16)
Usual style of response to educational change	(Item 18)

Aspects of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and responses from teachers in the study's interviews both suggested that relationships could exist between several of the various elements contained within each of the four major research questions. A number of tests were conducted to determine the extent to which any such relationships were apparent in the questionnaire data. The more significant of these correlation analyses are described overleaf in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Inter-Item Correlation Analyses

Variable (Item Number)	Correlated Variables (Item Numbers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work domain most affected by an educational change (Item 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength of impact of change on teachers' work (Item 3) • Nature of overall impact of change on teachers' work (Item 4) • Degree of teachers' commitment to the achievement of change goals (Item 11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity of the source of origin of an educational change (Item 5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of overall impact of change on teachers' work (Item 4) • Degree of teachers' commitment to the achievement of change goals (Item 11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles played by teachers in their involvement with an education change (Item 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of overall impact of change on teachers' work (Item 4) • Nature of predicted response to future changes in education (Item 16)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of opportunities to influence decision-making related to a change (Item 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of teachers' commitment to the achievement of change goals (Item 11) • Nature of predicted response to future changes in education (Item 16)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of teachers' satisfaction with key aspects affecting the quality of their work lives (Items 19-28) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of teachers' commitment to the achievement of change goals (Item 11) • Nature of predicted response to future changes in education (Item 16)

Additionally, particularly in the investigation of research Question 1, there were extensive comparisons conducted between the responses from the various sub-groups within the teacher sample. Simple parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U) measures were used in these comparisons, as factors of space and ease of understanding were thought to outweigh the possible advantages which might have accrued from the employment of analyses of variance.

The extensive procedures undertaken in the development of the twin versions of the questionnaire had established a *prima facie* case for the instrument having sufficient construct validity (Burns, 1994). Once the data had been collected it was found that the responses to the set of Items 19-28, which measured teachers' levels of satisfaction with key elements of their work lives, revealed an internal consistency reliability co-efficient (Cronbach alpha) of 0.68. This co-efficient was found to be the same for both the principal and the teacher responses. While this level of internal consistency was not altogether unsatisfactory (especially given that scales consisting of relatively low numbers of items tend not to rate particularly well in terms of internal consistency reliability), it was decided that it would not be prudent to interpret the total of the scores allocated to the responses to Items 19-28 as an indication of teachers' overall levels of satisfaction with their work lives.

The qualitative data generated by the teacher questionnaire, particularly that given in response to the second part of each of Items 19-28, were analysed in the same way as were the interview data, in that the responses were read several times until the dominant themes emerged through a combination of their prevalence and the seeming strength of the feelings which had been expressed.

3.5.3 Analysis of the Principal Questionnaire Data

The data classification categories which had resulted from the quantitative procedures adopted in preparation for detailed analysis of the teacher questionnaire data were applied also to the principal questionnaire data. While these categories were clearly appropriate for those items with predetermined response categories appearing on the questionnaire itself (Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 16, 18 and 19- 28), a manual check of the pattern of principal responses to the other eight items revealed that the categories determined from the teacher responses were equally suitable for the encoding of principals' responses.

The data from the principal questionnaires were, therefore, entered onto the same *StatView* spreadsheet as the teacher questionnaire data, thus enabling statistical comparisons to be made between the two groups. No analysis was planned of the principal data in its own right, as it was gathered for purposes related to the triangulation of the teacher data: the teacher data contained, *This is what I, the teacher, say I do and feel*, while the principal data contained, *This is what I see you, the teacher, doing and feeling*.

In effect, only one question was asked of the data from the principal questionnaires: *To what extent do the observations of teachers by principals concur with or diverge from the self-reports of teachers?* As the data were sometimes distributed normally and sometimes not, both parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U) devices were applied to the two sets of quantitative data in making the comparisons needed to answer this question.

The qualitative data from Items 19- 28 were also analysed through the same procedures as those which were applied to the equivalent teacher data. However, while the analysis processes were the same, the themes which emerged most often or most strongly in the principal data were often different from those which emerged from the teacher data. These differences are described and discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

Orientation to the Findings of the Study as Presented in Chapters 4 - 7

The research design adopted for the study clarified the nature of educational change in South Australian and Tasmanian state schools from the perspective of those teachers charged by education systems with the implementation of such changes. The mixture of forced-choice quantitative questionnaire items and open-ended questionnaire and interview items enabled the researcher to investigate the extent to which key concepts from the international and emerging Australian literature could be detected or confirmed in the South Australian and Tasmanian contexts under investigation.

Underpinning the study were two of the researcher's own beliefs: first, that teachers were able to reflect thoughtfully on, and to theorise about, their own experiences of work and educational change; and second, that perceptions constituted reality for the participating teachers.

Thus the study sought information about what teachers believed and how they reacted in changing educational contexts: it did not seek to describe teachers' work or the impact of educational change from any other viewpoint. For this reason, teachers were asked about their own feelings, beliefs and recollections as these forms of data were seen as most consistent with the beliefs at the heart of the study.

The study, therefore, operated within the parameters of kinds of knowledge that were limited to the beliefs and perceptions of the teachers and principals who participated in the study. In that sense, the study's conclusions were couched in terms related directly to only these teachers and principals. Nevertheless, even though the multi-site, multi-method, multi-person nature of the research design imposed restrictions on the size of the sample, the data gathering and analysis approaches were seen as sufficiently rigorous to enable the researcher to draw some implications for the wider populations of Australian state system teachers from the results.

The findings of the study are presented in the following four chapters. Each single chapter in the sequence of Chapters Four to Seven presents the findings related to one of the study's research questions. Consistent with the notions underlying the study's multi-method approach, the results obtained from qualitative and quantitative data are interspersed and combined throughout the four chapters.

In general, the qualitative findings are presented as descriptions of the themes identified in teachers' and principals' responses. These are accompanied by direct quotations, taken either from the transcripts of the teacher interviews or copied, word-for-word, from the questionnaires. The quantitative results are usually presented in the form of tables, citing raw numbers and percentages.

Several of the tables present the quantitative results in ways which facilitate comparisons between the various sub-groups of the teacher sample and between the responses of teachers and principals. Where such comparisons were undertaken, both parametric procedures (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric tests (Mann Whitney U or Kruskal-Wallis as appropriate) were applied to the data. The decision to apply both types of tests reflected the mixture, across the data sets collectively, of normally distributed data and data which were not distributed normally. Furthermore, not all of the data satisfied each of the three conditions necessary for the use of parametric forms of analysis alone (Burns, 1994: 132-

133): use of interval measures; normal distribution of scores and homogeneity of variance. In this context, it was decided that it would be prudent to adopt a conservative criterion for determining statistically significant differences for the purposes of this study: thus, only in those instances where differences were identified at less than the .05 level on both of the parametric and non-parametric measures were those differences considered to be statistically significant.

Although it has been cogently established elsewhere (see, for example, Thompson, 1996) that the establishment of statistical significance through the application of probability values should be undertaken with considerable care and, perhaps, some scepticism, the results presented here as being significant in a statistical sense are those results for which the p values were at less than the .05 (*), .01 (**) or .0001 (***) levels. Nowhere in the presentation of these results, however, is there any inference that statistical significance should be equated with either effect size or educational significance.

Throughout Chapter Four the data from teachers are presented collectively (from all the teachers in the sample) and further examined according to each of the demographic sub-groups of the teacher sample as a whole. These demographic sub-groups reflected the teachers' state system (South Australia or Tasmania); their gender (female or male); their grade level of teaching (primary or secondary); and the length of their teaching experience (less than 10 years, 11 to 20 years, or more than 20 years). The comparison tests conducted for differences between these sub-groups in Chapter Four revealed virtually no significant differences between the views of these teachers according to their state system of origin, gender, grade level taught or teaching experience. Thus it emerged that these teachers reacted very similarly to changes in education and that these reactions were not influenced by any demographic sub-group characteristics. For this reason, the findings presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven do not include results for each of these separate sub-groups. For the same reason, the quotations associated with the findings deduced from the qualitative data are introduced with limited identifying information only throughout the four chapters of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?

Introduction

The findings of the study which relate to the first of the study's research questions, *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?* are presented in this chapter.

The results which were obtained from questionnaire and interview data are presented as findings which describe much more than the mere identity of those changes seen by teachers as impacting most on their work. The nature and characteristics of these changes are described in terms of the work domain most affected by the changes (a distinction between the organisational and teaching/learning domains of a teacher's work, similar to the Getzels-Guba (1957) model of the organisation as a social system is applied here); in terms of the perceived source of the change (a distinction between sources which are either internal or external to teachers' work contexts is applied here); and in terms of a range of other factors including implementation timelines, perceived objectives and degree of teacher influence in relevant decision-making processes.

In the process of investigating the first of the study's four research questions, the following main single item analyses were conducted on the data generated by the questionnaires:

- Identity and work domain of significant changes (Items 1, 2 and 17);
- Source or origin of significant changes (Item 5);
- Intended beneficiaries of such changes (Item 6);
- Actual beneficiaries of such changes (Item 7);
- Main objective of significant changes (Item 8);
- Degree of teacher influence on decision-making (Item 10).

The interview data were analysed manually through a modified grounded theory approach which involved the procedures described in section 3.5.1 of Chapter Three. The coding categories developed and used in the analysis related to Research Question 1 were as follows:

- Changes having most impact on teachers;
- Perceived origin of the change;
- Form of presentation of change;
- Implementation timeline expectations;
- Perception of objectives;
- Support for implementation;
- Factors hindering implementation;
- Internal or external sources of origin;
- Work domain most affected;
- Degree of familiarity with change expectations;
- Opportunity to participate in decision-making;
- Combination of many changes simultaneously;
- Time pressures and stress.

These codes were developed from the responses to the first eight questions posed in the interviews (see Appendix I). These questions sought information about the identity of three recent changes which had affected the interviewees in their work (Question 1) and identified the one change which had had the strongest impact (Question 2). The interviewees' views were then sought on the characteristics of the most significant changes as these related to the source of the change (Question 3); how the change was first presented (Question 4); implementation timelines (Question 5); perceived objectives (Question 6); factors which assisted implementation (Question 7); and factors which hindered implementation (Question 8).

The findings related to Research Question 1 are presented in this chapter under three sub-headings:

- 4.1 Changes affecting teachers' work;
- 4.2 Characteristics of changes most affecting teachers' work; and
- 4.3 Relationships between perceived change characteristics and teachers' perception of changes' effects on their work.

Both qualitative and quantitative results are presented and discussed in these three sections before a summary of the findings of the study in relation to Research Question 1 is presented at the conclusion of the chapter.

It is, therefore, those elements of the study's conceptual framework which were shown in Figure 1.3 to link most directly to Research Question 1, namely *teachers' work in the contemporary social, political and economic context* and *recent changes in education affecting teachers' work*, which come under examination in this chapter.

4.1 Changes Affecting Teachers' Work

The 100 teachers who participated in the study identified 79 different educational changes as affecting them significantly in their work in the first half of the 1990s. The change cited most commonly by both interview and questionnaire respondents was *systemic cuts to education funding*, but the introduction of *national curricula*, the introduction of *new policies relating to social justice and equity issues*, matters associated with the *restructuring of senior secondary curricula* and *new models for assessing and reporting on students' work* were also cited by many teachers.

Interviewees from the two state systems nominated many changes in common in their responses to the first interview question, but also often cited other changes which were unique to the context of their respective state systems. Only South Australian teachers nominated the introduction, and then the subsequent withdrawal, of the local system of *Attainment Levels* and the introduction of the *South Australian Certificate of Education* (a new structure for the final two years of education in that state); while Tasmanian teachers cited the results associated with the implementation of the recommendations of the *CRESAP Report* (a major review of resourcing, personnel structures and related policies

and procedures) and the revamping of education in years 9 to 12 associated with the introduction of the *Tasmanian Certificate of Education* with its attendant system of *criterion-based assessment*.

Questionnaire respondents each cited an average of five changes as having had significant effects on their work lives. The results from the questionnaire data are presented below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Recent Educational Changes Affecting Teachers' Work

<i>Educational Changes</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited</i>		
	<i>Sth. Aust.</i> (n=45)	<i>Tas.</i> (n=44)	<i>All Teachers</i> (n=89)
Results of systemic cuts to funding of education	28 (62%)	33 (75%)	61 (69%)
Introduction of national statements and curriculum profiles	30 (67%)	18 (41%)	48 (54%)
Policies in fields of social justice and equity	28 (62%)	19 (43%)	47 (53%)
Restructuring of senior secondary curricula	17 (38%)	22 (50%)	39 (44%)
Introduction of new personnel policies and procedures	26 (58%)	8 (18%)	34 (38%)
Students becoming increasingly difficult to manage	15 (33%)	17 (39%)	32 (36%)
Increased teacher accountability requirements	10 (22%)	16 (36%)	26 (29%)
Devolution of decision-making to schools	9 (20%)	16 (36%)	25 (28%)
New models for assessment and reporting	3 (7%)	19 (43%)	22 (25%)
70 other individual educational changes	46	48	94 *
TOTAL CITATIONS	212	216	428

* Occasionally, more than one of the 70 other individual changes were cited by individual respondents, hence 94 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 89 respondents.

Interviewees from both South Australia and Tasmania expressed concerns about the number of different change initiatives being promoted simultaneously. They felt typically

that there was little acknowledgment of the effect of this multiplicity of innovations on teachers who already saw themselves as fully committed to the day-to-day tasks associated with working with their students. Perhaps more than anything, these teachers saw this situation as counter-productive in the sense that the multiplicity of demands, in their view, limited the extent to which they could implement any one innovation effectively.

In the South Australian context, comments from a secondary teacher, followed by remarks from a primary school colleague, typified those teachers' perceptions of the situation in October, 1994:

The range of change is so much, it's so unco-ordinated and it comes from a variety of places. It's very, very hard: it makes things very complex, makes people very frustrated and probably doesn't work efficiently either.

I just want to be a teacher for a while. Just leave me and the children alone for a while; let us be comfortable. We have been trying so hard over the last five years we haven't really let anything settle. Sometime, somewhere, they have got to stop banging the side of the chook shed. You know, it's bombardment all of the time.

Tasmanian teachers interviewed saw the situation in the same light. The first three of the following comments were made by secondary teachers, while the fourth remark is typical of the responses from the ten Tasmanian primary teachers interviewed.

You are not just talking about a change in isolation, it's in combination. If there is something else suddenly thrown in at you, as there always is, you just go into overload. So it's not really the change itself that creates that feeling, it's just the fact that it's another change in a succession of changes.

It was just that it was this change on top of everything else that you were supposed to be doing anyway - and there was no real attempt made to treat that seriously.

There is such a lot of change going on and in some ways the negative side of that can be that you just don't have the time to spend on what you want to do.

It's just so hard when there is so much being imposed as well as these other things that we have to respond to in the classroom just for survival. It is an enormous amount to take on board and nobody can possibly do it all at once.

Item 17 on the teacher questionnaire invited respondents to nominate any social or other changes which had affected them in their work as teachers. The 89 respondents collectively identified 49 such changes, with the loss of parental influence associated with

the *increased prevalence of family breakdown* being nominated by almost half of all respondents. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Other Changes Affecting Teachers' Work

<i>Other Changes</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited</i>		
	<i>Sth. Aust.</i> (n=45)	<i>Tas.</i> (n=44)	<i>All Teachers</i> (n=89)
Increased prevalence of family breakdown; loss of parental influence	21 (47%)	16 (36%)	37 (42%)
Increased unemployment rates and resultant poverty	11 (24%)	12 (27%)	23 (26%)
Increased focus on social justice and equity issues	12 (27%)	2 (5%)	14 (16%)
20 other specific social problems	19	23	42 *
26 other individual social changes	18	19	37 *
TOTAL CITATIONS	81	72	153

* Occasionally, more than one of the 20 other specific social problems and the 26 other individual social changes were cited by individual respondents, hence 42 and 37 citations respectively are not expressed as percentages of the 89 respondents.

On both the questionnaire and the interview schedule the second item invited teachers to nominate the one educational change that had affected them most strongly in their work. The 100 teachers in the overall sample collectively nominated 12 different changes in response to this question, with the most common response across the sample as a whole being the *increased workload resulting from cuts to the funding of education*. This response was, however, more prevalent in Tasmania, as a consequence of the CRESAP Report, while major *curriculum changes*, in the guise of the introduction of national curricula and the South Australian Certificate of Education, was put forward most often in the South Australian responses. The nature of the results for the interview respondents was entirely consistent with the results from the questionnaire data which are presented in Table 4.3. In their responses to both questionnaire and interview instruments these teachers often used forms of words which varied somewhat from those depicted in Table 4.3. While it was possible to clarify the responses from interviewees through the processes of amendment involved in how the transcripts were developed, this was more problematic in the case of unclear responses to Item 2 on the questionnaires. As it was

imprudent to attempt to predict that respondents who used differing terms may well have been referring to the same or similar changes, the responses were accepted at face value and only grouped together when it was clear that respondents were describing the same issue. Thus, for example, “students becoming increasingly difficult to manage” appears in Table 4.3 as a separate item from “inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular class” even though it may have been the case that certain respondents felt that the inclusion of students with disabilities had made the management of student behaviour more difficult.

Table 4.3: Educational Changes Having Most Impact on Teachers’ Work

<i>Changes Having Most Impact</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited</i>		
	<i>Sth. Aust. (n=45)</i>	<i>Tas. (n=44)</i>	<i>All Teachers (n=89)</i>
Increased workload resulting from cuts to funding of education	3 (7%)	18 (41%)	21 (24%)
Introduction of restructured senior secondary curricula	10 (22%)	6 (14%)	16 (18%)
Introduction of national statements and curriculum profiles	10 (22%)	1 (2%)	11 (12%)
Introduction of new personnel policies and procedures	7 (16%)	1 (2%)	8 (9%)
New models for assessment and reporting	3 (7%)	4 (9%)	7 (8%)
Inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular class	2 (4%)	4 (9%)	6 (7%)
Impact of Departmental policy decisions on schools	6 (13%)	-	6 (7%)
Students becoming increasingly difficult to manage	2 (4%)	2 (5%)	4 (4%)
Increased teacher accountability requirements	-	3 (7%)	3 (3%)
Devolution of decision-making to schools	-	3 (7%)	3 (3%)
Change in teacher’s own teaching methods	2 (4%)	-	2 (2%)
Introduction of new computing technology	-	2 (5%)	2 (2%)
TOTAL CITATIONS	45	44	89

While Table 4.3 presents the most significant changes nominated solely in response to Item 2 on the questionnaire, only 11 interviewees did not also complete a questionnaire and none of these 11 nominated a change outside those presented in Table 4.3 as most significant for their work.

4.2 Characteristics of Changes most Affecting Teachers' Work

Each of the 12 changes cited by these teachers as affecting their work most significantly was understood as affecting them most strongly in either their direct work with students (the *Teaching/Learning* domain) or in their work as whole school staffs and as employees of large education systems (the *Organisational* domain). This distinction between work domain emerged from interviewed teachers' discourse about a difference between *real teaching* (i.e., work with and for students) and *paperwork* (i.e., work required by their employing system, but seen by teachers as not related directly to their teaching or to students' learning). The bipartite distinction is not dissimilar to that inherent in the Getzels-Guba (1957) model of the organisation as a social system, through which organisations are seen to have a nomothetic dimension and an idiographic dimension.

Of the 12 changes nominated as most significant, six were classified as belonging to the Teaching/Learning domain: the introduction of restructured senior secondary curricula; the introduction of national statements and curriculum profiles; the introduction of new models for assessing and reporting on students' progress; inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular class; increasing difficulty in the management of student behaviour and changes in teachers' own teaching methods. Five of the changes were classified in the Organisational domain: increased workloads resulting from funding cuts; new systemic personnel policies and procedures; the impact at school level of systemic policy decisions; increased systemic requirements for teacher accountability and the devolution of decision-making to school level. One change, the introduction of new computing technology, was not classified as affecting either one or other domain predominantly.

When the most significant changes were classified according to this distinction between work domains and the teacher sample was divided into its various sub-groups, it was apparent that both the Teaching/Learning and Organisational domains of teachers' work have been affected significantly by recent changes in education. These results are reported in Table 4.4, with the inclusion of the changes nominated by principals as affecting

teachers most significantly in their work subjected to the same classification into the two work domains.

Table 4.4: Work Domain Most Affected by Most Significant Educational Change

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Work Domain</i>	
		<i>Teaching/Learning</i>	<i>Organisational</i>
<i>State:</i>			
South Australia	(n=45)	29 (64%)	16 (36%)
Tasmania	(n=42) *	17 (40%)	25 (60%)
<i>Level:</i>			
Primary	(n=51)	27 (53%)	24 (47%)
Secondary	(n=36) *	20 (56%)	16 (44%)
<i>Gender:</i>			
Female	(n=54)	31 (57%)	23 (43%)
Male	(n=33) *	16 (48%)	17 (52%)
<i>Experience:</i>			
< 10 Years	(n=15)	7 (47%)	8 (53%)
10 - 20 Years	(n=42) *	21 (50%)	21 (50%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	19 (63%)	11 (37%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=87) *	47 (54%)	40 (46%)
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=85)	50 (59%)	35 (41%)

* The 2 changes cited earlier in Table 4.3 as relating to the introduction of new computing technology were not classified into either the Teaching/ Learning domain or the Organisational domain. On both occasions this change was cited by Tasmanian, male, secondary teachers of 10-20 years experience.

The results presented in Table 4.4 were subjected to parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U or Kruskal-Wallis) comparison tests conducted between each of the subgroupings contained within the study's sample. While no statistically significant differences were identified between teachers according to grade level taught, gender or experience; differences on the basis of teachers' state system of origin were significant. In their identification of the changes that had affected them most in their work, South Australian teachers nominated changes from the Teaching/Learning domain more often than did their Tasmanian colleagues, while Tasmanian teachers nominated changes from the Organisational domain more often than did South Australian teachers. These differences were statistically significant at less than the .05 level on both the parametric and the non-parametric measures. Nevertheless, despite the detection of the single significant difference

between the responses of the South Australian teachers and those of their Tasmanian colleagues, the clear absence of any other such variation in the responses of any of the sub-groups of teachers was striking. Furthermore, the categorisation of principals' responses accorded with those for the full teacher sample. The results of these comparison tests are presented in Table 4.4(a).

Table 4.4(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Work Domain Affected by Change

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z/H-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = 2.51	p = .01	z = 2.10	p = .04 *
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary: Secondary	t = .24	p = .81	z = .21	p = .84
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female: Male	t = .80	p = .42	z = .70	p = .49
<i>Experience:</i>				
<10: 10-20	t = .22	p = .83)	
<10: >20	t = 1.06	p = .30	)H = 1.63	p = .44
10-20: >20	t = 1.12	p = .27)	
<i>Role:</i>				
Teacher: Principal	t = .54	p = .59	z = .47	p = .64

Teacher interviewees (via Question 3) and questionnaire respondents (via Item 5) were asked about the source or origin of the changes which had affected them most in their work. Interviewees often distinguished between changes which originated from *external sources* (which they saw as removed from the realities of day-to-day teaching in schools) and *internal sources* (which came from and related to their own specific work contexts). Thus, *external sources* were interpreted to include the two education systems and their bureaucracies, and state and federal governments; while *internal sources* were interpreted to include the teachers themselves, their principals and their schools and local communities.

While there has been ample evidence available, from, for example, the National Schools Network, that Australian teachers have engaged in a considerable level of locally-based innovation efforts, the teachers in this study described the changes which they thought had

affected their work most significantly as being externally imposed by central administrative authorities and governments. For these interviewees, changes which originated outside their work settings, and which were presented as mandatory, were seen as most problematic for their work lives as teachers.

When they discussed the origins of significant changes and how these changes were first presented to them, interviewees gave two types of responses. The first type of response was brief and to the point, as in the following three typical examples:

The stuff came out of the blue really. Here it was - and then we had to implement it all by a set date.

I was told to do it, if it really comes down to the nitty gritty.

It's just fed down through the system. "Here it is, go and do it!" To me it always seems to be from high-up in the hierarchy.

The second type of response was generally more lengthy, but no less explicit about teachers' perceived lack of ownership of most innovations. Three comments from Tasmanian teachers were illustrative of this position.

It was very much pushed on you. It was almost, "Well too bloody bad - it's coming in and you've got to put up with it". And although it was sugar-coated a lot - they weren't that rude - you couldn't get away from the fact that the changes were being forced on you.

Certainly it was, "No correspondence will be entered into". And having been told that, it was then up to us to make it work, so that we could continue to function within a new system and so that the students wouldn't suffer in the transition. But I don't ever feel that if we had made enough noise that anything would have changed - it was a 'fait accompli'.

It was mandatory. Teachers on the whole are against it. It's more work individually programming for special needs children and even special ed. teachers are reluctant to get into full inclusion because they're worried about their jobs.

When this distinction between external and internal sources emerged from the interview data, it was applied as a bipartite system of categorisation through which to examine the responses to the questionnaires. Thus, external sources included the two education systems and their bureaucracies, and state and federal governments; while internal sources included the teachers themselves, their principals, and their schools and local communities.

As can be seen in Table 4.5, the overwhelming majority of the changes having the most impact were seen by teachers as emanating from external sources. Indeed, 72 teachers (81 percent of the questionnaire sample) nominated a place, person or organisation from outside their work context as the source of the one change that had affected them most.

Table 4.5: Perceived Source of Origin of Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Origin Domain</i>		
		<i>Internal</i>	<i>External</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>State:</i>				
South Australia	(n=45)	8 (18%)	35 (78%)	2 (4%)
Tasmania	(n=44)	6 (14%)	37 (84%)	1 (2%)
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary	(n=51)	10 (20%)	41 (80%)	-
Secondary	(n=38)	4 (11%)	31 (82%)	3 (8%)
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female	(n=54)	12 (22%)	41 (76%)	1 (2%)
Male	(n=35)	2 (6%)	31 (89%)	2 (6%)
<i>Experience:</i>				
< 10 Years	(n=15)	2 (13%)	13 (87%)	-
10 - 20 Years	(n=44)	9 (20%)	33 (75%)	2 (5%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	3 (10%)	26 (87%)	1 (3%)
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>				
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	10 (21%)	35 (74%)	2 (4%)
Organisational	(n=40)	3 (8%)	37 (93%)	-
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	14 (16%)	72 (81%)	3 (3%)

When the results presented in Table 4.5 were subjected to parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U or Kruskal-Wallis as appropriate) comparisons, no differences were identified between teachers according to their state system, grade level taught, experience, or the work domain most affected by the change. Only in relation to teachers' gender was there an indication, via the parametric test, that the female teachers in the sample were more likely than their male colleagues to identify internal sources as the origin of the change, but this difference was not indicated in the non-parametric test result and, in the light of the criterion adopted in the study, this apparent difference was not seen as statistically significant. On the face of the results displayed in Table 4.5 it seemed possible that changes in the Teaching/Learning domain were more likely to have been perceived by these teachers as having originated in sources internal to their work contexts,

while changes in the Organisational domain were almost exclusively seen as originating externally. While such a trend seemed apparent, the two comparison tests conducted revealed no statistically significant difference according to work domain. The results of the comparison tests conducted on the results displayed in Table 4.5 are presented in Table 4.5(a). It should be noted here that, as had largely been the case in the results of the comparison tests which were presented earlier in Table 4.4(a), the lack of discernible statistically significant differences between the responses of any of the respondent sub-groups was, in itself, seen as an important finding.

Table 4.5(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Perceived Source of Origin

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z/H-value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = .58	p = .56	z = .37	p = .71
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary: Secondary	t = 1.00	p = .32	z = .64	p = .52
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female: Male	t = 2.05	p = .04	z = 1.29	p = .20
<i>Experience:</i>				
<10: 10-20	t = .67	p = .50)	
<10: >20	t = .29	p = .77	)H = 1.64	p = .44
10-20: >20	t = 1.22	p = .23)	
<i>Domain Affected:</i>				
Teach/Learn: Organisational	t = 1.90	p = .06	z = 1.17	p = .24

It has been well-established in the literature related to teacher implementation of innovations (see Chapter Two) that teachers' perceptions of the likely effects of a change are important in determining their response to any educational innovation. In particular (see, for example, the seminal work of Doyle & Ponder, 1978) it was accepted that teachers respond differently to those changes which they see as having benefits for their own teaching or for their students' learning than they respond to changes which they do not see as serving the ends of those closely involved with their work contexts. Thus, using the same internal/external distinction described earlier, teachers, students and parents were classified as *internal* beneficiaries; while industry, politicians and educational administrators were classified as *external* beneficiaries.

Teachers' views of the intended beneficiaries of the most significant changes are presented in Table 4.6 and their perceptions of the actual beneficiaries appear in Table 4.7. While not a specific focus of the study it was noted from examination of the results in Table 4.6 that these teachers believed that the rhetoric or theory associated with almost half of the changes (47 percent) could be interpreted as meaning that such changes were intended to serve the interests internal to teachers' work contexts (i.e., students, teachers and parents) and that another significant proportion of changes (17 percent) were intended to include internal groups among a range of beneficiaries.

Table 4.6: Perceived Intended Beneficiaries of Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Proximity of Intended Beneficiaries to Teachers' Work Context</i>		
		<i>Internal</i>	<i>External</i>	<i>Mixed</i>
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.	(n=45)	24 (53%)	14 (31%)	7 (15%)
Tasmania	(n=42)	17 (40%)	17 (40%)	8 (19%)
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary	(n=49)	27 (55%)	16 (33%)	6 (12%)
Secondary	(n=38)	14 (37%)	15 (39%)	9 (24%)
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female	(n=52)	27 (52%)	17 (33%)	8 (15%)
Male	(n=35)	14 (40%)	14 (40%)	7 (20%)
<i>Experience:</i>				
< 10 Years	(n=15)	7 (47%)	7 (47%)	1 (7%)
10 - 20 Years	(n=42)	19 (45%)	15 (35%)	8 (19%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	15 (50%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>				
Teaching/Learning	(n=46)	31 (67%)	8 (17%)	7 (15%)
Organisational	(n=39)	9 (23%)	23 (59%)	7 (18%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=87)	41 (47%)	31 (36%)	15 (17%)

When the results presented in Table 4.6 were subjected to parametric and non-parametric comparison tests, no statistically significant differences were identified between teachers according to their state system, grade level taught, gender, or length of teaching experience. On the other hand, the work domain most affected by the change was clearly significant (at less than the .0001 level on both tests), with these teachers associating internal intended

beneficiaries with changes in the Teaching/Learning domain and external intended beneficiaries with changes which impacted most strongly in the Organisational domain. The results of these comparison tests are presented in Table 4.6(a).

Table 4.6(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Intended Beneficiaries

Sub-Group Categories	Comparison Test Results			
	Parametric		Non-Parametric	
	t-value	p-value	z/H-value	p-value
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = 1.16	p = .25	z = 1.09	p = .28
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary: Secondary	t = 1.27	p = .21	z = 1.21	p = .23
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female: Male	t = .96	p = .34	z = .90	p = .37
<i>Experience:</i>				
<10: 10-20	t = .34	p = .74)	
<10: >20	t = .68	p = .50	)H = .48	p = .79
10-20: >20	t = .50	p = .62)	
<i>Domain Affected:</i>				
Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 4.85	p = <.0001	z = 3.96	p = <.0001 ***

It can be seen from the results in Table 4.6 that almost half (47 percent) of all these teachers felt that the most significant changes were *intended to serve* the interests of individuals and groups internal to teachers' work contexts, while just over a third (36 percent) felt that these changes were intended to serve the interests of external individuals and groups.

However, when asked whose interests had *actually been served* by the implementation of these changes (via Item 7), the pattern of the collective replies from questionnaire respondents reflected opposite proportions, with external beneficiaries (47 percent) clearly outnumbering internal beneficiaries (31 percent).

Perhaps even more significantly, eight of the 88 respondents (9 percent) who completed the relevant questionnaire item felt impelled to write in their own response to the effect that there had been no actual beneficiaries of the change which had most affected them in their work. These results are presented in Table 4.7 on the following page.

Table 4.7: Perceived Actual Beneficiaries of Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Proximity of Actual Beneficiaries to Teachers' Work Context</i>			
		Internal	External	Mixed	None
<i>State:</i>					
Sth. Aust.	(n=45)	17 (38%)	20 (44%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)
Tasmania	(n=43)	14 (33%)	21 (49%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)
<i>Level:</i>					
Primary	(n=50)	18 (36%)	24 (48%)	3 (6%)	5 (10%)
Secondary	(n=38)	13 (34%)	17 (44%)	5 (13%)	3 (8%)
<i>Gender:</i>					
Female	(n=53)	19 (36%)	25 (47%)	4 (8%)	5 (9%)
Male	(n=35)	12 (34%)	16 (46%)	4 (11%)	3 (9%)
<i>Experience:</i>					
< 10 Years	(n=15)	6 (40%)	8 (53%)	1 (7%)	-
10 - 20 Years	(n=43)	15 (35%)	19 (44%)	4 (9%)	5 (12%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	10 (33%)	14 (47%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>					
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	27 (57%)	13 (28%)	2 (4%)	5 (11%)
Organisational	(n=39)	3 (8%)	28 (72%)	5 (13%)	3 (8%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=88)	31 (35%)	41 (47%)	8 (9%)	8 (9%)

When the results presented in Table 4. 7 were subjected to parametric and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests, the pattern of results (see Table 4.7(a) on the following page) was almost identical to that which emerged from the equivalent analysis of the responses related to intended beneficiaries displayed in Table 4.6(a). Thus, no differences were identified between teachers according to their state system, grade level taught, gender, or length of teaching experience. As had been the case with the overwhelming majority of all sub-group comparisons to this stage, the lack of any significant discernible differences was strongly indicative of a considerable degree of agreement, whether conscious or unconscious, on these issues among the teachers who participated in the aspects of the study investigated by questionnaire.

On the other hand, the work domain most affected by the change was clearly a significant (less than the .01 level) factor in terms of these teachers' views of the actual beneficiaries of the changes nominated. Those internal to teachers' work contexts were seen as beneficiaries of changes in the Teaching/Learning domain, while Organisational changes were associated with external beneficiaries.

Table 4.7(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Actual Beneficiaries

Sub-Group Categories	Comparison Test Results			
	Parametric t-value	p-value	Non-Parametric z/H-value	p-value
State: Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = .46	p = .64	z = .42	p = .67
Level: Primary: Secondary	t = .25	p = .80	z = .27	p = .79
Gender: Female: Male	t = .07	p = .94	z = .09	p = .93
Experience: <10: 10-20	t = .60	p = .55	)H = .45	p = .80
<10: >20	t = .61	p = .55		
10-20: >20	t = .03	p = .98		
Domain Affected: Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 4.22	p = <.0001	z = 3.40	p = .0007 **

In response to Question 6 on the interview schedule, the participating teachers gave a range of replies to describe their understanding of the main objective of the change that had most affected their work. These ranged from ‘Keep educational administrators in jobs’ and ‘Keep students out of the unemployment statistics’ to ‘Provide success for all students’. The most common response from interviewees, however, was ‘To save money’.

Thus, interviewees saw these changes as most often serving organisational purposes, such as *managing the system better* or *saving money*; while considerably less often being designed to *improve the quality of teachers’ teaching or students’ learning*.

When questionnaire respondents were asked (via Item 8) to nominate what they understood to be the main objective of the change that had affected their work most strongly, they cited 32 different main objectives. When these perceptions of the objectives were classified according to their proximity to teachers’ work settings, it was apparent that these teachers perceived that an overwhelming majority of the objectives of such changes related to factors external to their work settings. The results for the perceived proximity of change objectives to teachers’ work contexts are presented overleaf in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Perceived Main Objective of Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Proximity of Main Objective to Teachers' Work Context</i>		
		Internal	External	Other
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.	(n=43)	13 (30%)	28 (65%)	2 (5%)
Tasmania	(n=44)	7 (16%)	33 (75%)	4 (9%)
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary	(n=50)	14 (28%)	33 (66%)	3 (6%)
Secondary	(n=37)	6 (16%)	28 (76%)	3 (8%)
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female	(n=53)	14 (26%)	37 (70%)	2 (4%)
Male	(n=34)	6 (18%)	24 (71%)	4 (12%)
<i>Experience:</i>				
< 10 Years	(n=14)	3 (21%)	11 (79%)	-
10 - 20 Years	(n=43)	9 (21%)	30 (70%)	4 (9%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	8 (27%)	20 (67%)	2 (7%)
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>				
Teaching/Learning	(n=46)	18 (39%)	26 (56%)	2 (5%)
Organisational	(n=40)	2 (5%)	35 (88%)	2 (5%)
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal	(n=14)	10 (71%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)
External	(n= 70)	10 (14%)	56 (80%)	4 (6%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=87)	20 (23%)	61 (70%)	6 (7%)

When the results presented in Table 4.8 were subjected to parametric and non-parametric comparison tests, it transpired again that no significant differences were identified between teachers according to their state system, grade level taught, gender, or length of teaching experience, while the work domain most affected by the change was clearly significant (at a level of at least less than .01 on both tests) and, similarly, teachers' perception of the source of the origin of the change was significant (also at least at the .01 level on both tests) in their subsequent perceptions of the proximity of the change objectives to their work contexts. Hence these teachers associated changes in the Organisational domain with objectives external to their work contexts to a far greater extent than they did with changes in the Teaching/Learning domain where the perception of the proximity of objectives was more evenly distributed between internal and external goals. It was, perhaps, only to be expected that these teachers associated changes emanating from internal sources with

objectives internal to their work contexts and changes emanating from external sources with objectives external to teachers' work settings. The results of these comparison tests are presented in Table 4.8(a).

Table 4.8(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Proximity of Main Objective to Teachers' Work Context

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z/H-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = 1.55	p = .12	z = 1.16	p = .24
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary: Secondary	t = 1.10	p = .28	z = .86	p = .39
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female: Male	t = .56	p = .58	z = .34	p = .73
<i>Experience:</i>				
<10: 10-20	t = .32	p = .75)	
<10: >20	t = .67	p = .51	)H = .64	p = .73
10-20: >20	t = .52	p = .61)	
<i>Domain Affected:</i>				
Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 4.10	p = <.0001	z = 2.90	p = .004 **
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal: External	t = 5.32	p = <.0001	z = 3.63	p = .0003 **

Question 4 on the interview schedule and Item 10 on the questionnaire sought teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they were able to participate meaningfully in decision-making related to the change which they judged to have affected them most strongly in their work.

The questionnaire data on teacher participation in decision-making, as these are presented on the following page in Table 4.9, show that the great majority of these teachers (88 percent) perceived that they had no influence over whether or not such changes were to be adopted: on the contrary, they saw adoption as mandatory. Furthermore, just under half (44 percent) of teachers and just over half (57 percent) of principals felt that adoption of such changes was mandatory, even if teachers were allowed some flexibility in determining the methods of implementation. Teacher interviewees' comments mirrored similar views.

Table 4.9: Degree of Control Over Teacher Influence in Decision-Making Related to Most Significant Educational Change

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Decision-Making Categories</i>			
		<i>Adoption & Specific Method both Mandated</i>	<i>Adoption Mandated: Method not Prescribed</i>	<i>Specific Method Mandated: Adoption Optional</i>	<i>Neither Adoption nor Method Prescribed</i>
<i>State:</i>					
Sth. Aust.	(n=45)	21 (47%)	17 (38%)	3 (7%)	4 (9%)
Tasmania	(n=44)	18 (41%)	22 (50%)	-	4 (9%)
<i>Level:</i>					
Primary	(n=51)	23 (45%)	21 (41%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)
Secondary	(n=38)	16 (42%)	18 (47%)	-	4 (11%)
<i>Gender:</i>					
Female	(n=54)	25 (46%)	22 (41%)	2 (4%)	5 (9%)
Male	(n=35)	14 (40%)	17 (49%)	1 (3%)	3 (9%)
<i>Experience:</i>					
< 10 Years	(n=15)	8 (53%)	7 (47%)	-	-
10 - 20 Years	(n=44)	19 (43%)	19 (43%)	-	6 (14%)
> 20 Years	(n=30)	12 (40%)	13 (43%)	3 (10%)	2 (7%)
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>					
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	18 (38%)	23 (49%)	1 (2%)	5 (11%)
Organisational	(n=40)	21 (53%)	15 (38%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)
<i>Origin Source:</i>					
Internal	(n=14)	4 (29%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)	6 (43%)
External	(n=72)	34 (47%)	34 (47%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	39 (44%)	39 (44%)	3 (3%)	8 (9%)
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	32 (37%)	50 (57%)	1 (1%)	4 (5%)

When the results presented in Table 4.9 were subjected to parametric and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests, it transpired again that no differences were identified between teachers' views of their opportunities to participate in decision-making related to the adoption or method of implementation of significant change in respect of any of their state systems, grade levels taught, gender, length of teaching experience or the work domain most affected by the change. Only in the case of changes emanating from external or internal sources was a difference apparent in these teachers' responses. In this case those changes emanating from internal sources were associated with less restrictions on teacher decision-making than were the changes emanating from external sources which

were perceived by these teachers as being associated with mandatory adoption. This difference was significant at a level of less than .05 on both tests. There were no significant differences between the perceptions of the teachers and the principals surveyed in this study in regard to the degree of control over decision-making imposed on teachers implementing major educational changes. The results of these comparison tests are presented below in Table 4.9(a).

Table 4.9(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Control of Decision-Making

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z/H-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>State:</i>				
Sth. Aust.: Tasmania	t = .00	p = •	z = .23	p = .82
<i>Level:</i>				
Primary: Secondary	t = .15	p = .88	z = .17	p = .87
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female: Male	t = .18	p = .86	z = .30	p = .76
<i>Experience:</i>				
<10: 10-20	t = 1.40	p = .17)	
<10: >20	t = 1.45	p = .16	)H = 1.46	p = .48
10-20: >20	t = .06	p = .95)	
<i>Domain Affected:</i>				
Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 1.19	p = .24	z = 1.11	p = .27
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal: External	t = 4.31	p = <.0001	z = 2.52	p = .01 *
<i>Role:</i>				
Teacher: Principal	t = .35	p = .73	z = .25	p = .80

In the interviewees' responses to the questions related to the identity and nature of the changes which had most affected teachers in their work, two further elements were characteristic of both the content and tenor of these replies. In addition to teacher perceptions of *external imposition* and the existence of *multiple simultaneous innovations*, discussed earlier, interviewed teachers identified *unfamiliar practices replacing established work patterns*; and *abbreviated timelines* as key features of those changes which they saw as having the greatest impact on their work. These features were apparent in teachers'

responses regardless of the specific identity of the one change nominated by individual teachers as affecting their work most significantly

In terms of unfamiliar practices replacing established work patterns, interviewees felt most affected by educational changes when their confidence related to being in control of factors related to their work was threatened or disrupted by expectations about which they felt uninformed. When they felt denied the opportunity of making sense and meaning out of new challenges, regardless of the nature of the innovation, these teachers felt the effects of changes to a considerably greater extent than they might otherwise had if they been able to become familiar with the true nature of the expectations and procedures associated with such changes.

Comments indicative of this perception included the following from three South Australian primary teachers, each of whom had nominated the introduction of nation curriculum profiles as the single change that had most affected them in their work as teachers:

There's nothing to say, "Well this is how you go about doing it". Nobody really knows yet exactly what the uses will be and I think that's probably what's scaring people - it makes it very difficult to get implementation because you get blockers thinking, "Oh, they are going to use this against us if a student hasn't achieved a certain level".

A lot of your so-called free time - your extra time - is taken up with just deciphering what you are supposed to be doing.

I reckon they just designed them and said, "Okay, we've done our job - now it's your job to implement them - off you go!". Nobody really knew what to do.

Differences between the perceptions held by teachers and those held by external advocates of particular changes in relation to the length of time which might be seen as appropriate for the implementation of innovations, have been discussed in the recent literature (see, for example, Hargreaves 1994a). In this study, it was clear in the views expressed by the teachers who were interviewed that they (and, they claimed, their colleagues) also saw implementation timelines proposed or assumed by others to be unrealistically short. In relation to the implementation processes associated with the introduction of a new Maths curriculum in South Australia, for example, one primary teacher said:

There was all this new jargon and no-one knew what it was about. You could go to a P.D. [professional development] session, but then you were supposed to be doing it

the next week in your room. We had to take it on board straight away. The inservice was too intensive in too short a time and there was no time for reflecting, internalising or evaluating what you'd learned.

Tasmanian primary teachers spoke more generally of the difficulties they saw as related to a lack of sufficient time for the different phases involved in change implementation processes:

There just wasn't time to come to grips with the issues involved; there was a lack of time to work collaboratively, a lack of time to implement, and a lack of P.D.

Over the last six to eight years I have seen a lot of people going through a lot of emotional turmoil because a lot of change has been pushed on them fairly quickly.

In relation to these perceived abbreviated timelines, not a single interviewee felt that sufficient time had been available for effective implementation, regardless of the specific nature of the change each had nominated as affecting their work most significantly.

4.3 Relationships Between Perceived Change Characteristics and Teachers' Perception of Changes' Effects on their Work

Three correlation analyses were conducted (by Fisher's $r - z$) to test the association between various characteristics of the educational changes seen as affecting these teachers' work most strongly and how these changes were viewed by teachers as affecting them in their work.

The first such association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the work domain most affected by significant educational change (Questionnaire Item 2 responses classified into *Teaching/Learning* and *Organisational* domains) and teachers' perceptions of the overall impact of that change on their work life (Questionnaire Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a 5-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .501$ ($p = .0002$), indicating that the overall impacts of changes in the *Teaching/Learning* domain were described consistently by these teachers in positive terms, while the impacts of changes in the *Organisational* domain were described consistently in negative terms.

The second association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the work domain most affected by significant educational change and these teachers'

perceptions of the strength of the impact of that change on their overall work lives (Questionnaire Item 3 responses ranging from *Very Little Impact* to *Very Strong Impact* on a 4-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = -.307$ ($p = .03$), indicating the existence of only a relatively small, although statistically significant, correlation between changes in a particular work domain and the strength of the impact of those changes on these teachers' work. Although the correlation itself was relatively modest, its negative direction indicated that teachers who felt most affected in the Organisational domain perceived a stronger impact on their working lives than was the experience of teachers who felt most affected in the Teaching/Learning domain.

The third association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the perceived source of origin of significant educational changes (Item 5 responses, categorised into *Internal* or *External* sources) and teachers' perceptions of the overall impact of that change on their work life (Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a 5-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .431$ ($p = <.0001$), indicating that the teachers in this sample described the overall impact of changes which had emanated from external sources as being significantly more negative for their work lives than were changes which had emanated from sources internal to their work contexts.

Summary of the Findings Related to Research Question 1

The major findings of the study related to Research Question 1: *Which educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?* can be summarised briefly as follows:

- These teachers had experience of a great number of educational change initiatives in the first half of the 1990s;
- Large scale system-wide changes such as the results of funding cuts, the introduction of national curricula and of policies in the area of social justice and equity were recognised by over half of all the teachers in the sample as changes which had affected their work significantly; while the restructuring of senior secondary curricula in the guises of the South Australian and Tasmanian Certificates of Education were recognised as major changes affecting the work of almost all secondary teachers in the sample;

- The Tasmanian teachers in the sample perceived that the on-going results from the funding cuts (a reduction of around 20 percent) and resource-shedding (a reduction in teacher numbers of 17 percent) associated with the implementation of the CRESAP Report through the first half of the 1990s had been the one change that had affected them most significantly in their work, while the study's South Australian teachers felt most affected in their work by the introduction of either national curriculum profiles or the South Australian Certificate of Education;
- These teachers saw the social context of the first half of the 1990s as affecting their work lives, with those aspects of social change involving family breakdown and poverty having particular implications for the changes in the nature of the role of the teacher;
- The changes nominated as affecting these teachers' work most significantly were spread relatively evenly in terms of which of the Teaching/Learning or Organisational categories of teachers' work domains was more affected by each of the individual changes;
- A significant difference was found between teachers from the two state systems in relation to which domain was more affected by the nominated changes, with Tasmanian teachers nominating changes affecting the Organisational domain (most indicatively, the impacts of the CRESAP Report) and South Australian teachers nominating changes affecting the Teaching/Learning domain (most indicatively, major curriculum change). There were no other differences within any of the other sub-groups of the teacher sample (grade level taught, gender or length of teaching experience) in terms of the particular changes identified or the work domain which was more affected by the nominated changes;
- Regardless of the identity of the changes seen as affecting teachers most in their work, the overwhelming majority of these changes were perceived by the study's teachers as emanating from sources which were external to their work contexts. There were no significant differences in this perception across any of the sub-groups in the sample;
- Changes affecting the Teaching/Learning domain were seen by these teachers as intended to serve the interests of those teachers, students or parents who were internal to the teachers' work contexts, while changes affecting the Organisational domain were seen as intended to serve the interests of politicians or educational administrators external to teachers' work contexts. Actual beneficiaries were perceived in the same light, although there was a noticeable tendency for these teachers to believe that some

changes had failed to deliver much at all in the way of worthwhile benefits;

- These teachers saw changes which affected them more in the Organisational domain of their work as designed to achieve objectives external to their work contexts. Similarly, changes which had emanated from external sources to impact on teachers' work also were seen as designed to achieve external goals;
- Changes emanating from external sources were associated by these teachers with mandatory adoption and implementation requirements, while changes which had emanated from internal sources were viewed as less prescriptive;
- Changes in the Organisational domain were associated by these teachers with much more negative overall effects on their work lives than were changes in the Teaching/Learning domain;
- Changes seen by these teachers as emanating from sources which were external to their work contexts were associated with perceptions of much more negative overall effects on their work lives than were changes which were perceived to have emanated from sources internal to teachers' work contexts;
- These teachers felt that their work lives had been most affected by educational change, regardless of the identity of the one change that they saw as most affecting their work, when the change context involved unfamiliar practices replacing established work patterns, external imposition, multiple simultaneous innovations and abbreviated timelines;
- The key elements of these findings relating to teachers' perceptions of the characteristics they associated with nominated changes were interpreted in the same ways across the sample pool as a whole. The marked lack of substantial differences evident in the response patterns from any of the sample's sub-groups was indicative of a considerable level of homogeneity in these teachers' thinking about educational changes;
- The opinions of the school principals surveyed in the study were in accord with those expressed by the participating teachers. Clearly, these two groups of education workers viewed the issues of educational change and teachers' work from a similar perspective.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?

Introduction

The findings of the study which relate to the second of the study's research questions, *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* are presented in this chapter. The findings related to the nature and the extent of the effects on teachers' work which were perceived to have resulted from their experiences with the particular educational changes which were identified in the Chapter Four were deduced from the data obtained from the interviews and the teacher questionnaires. Results obtained from relevant items of the principal questionnaires are also presented and discussed at appropriate points.

In the analysis of the data from which the findings which follow were derived, the following main single item analyses were conducted on the data generated by the questionnaires:

- Degree of impact of change on work life (Item 3);
- Nature of overall impact on teachers' work life (Item 4);
- Teachers' roles in the change process (Item 9);
- Perceived change effects on work life (Item 12);
- Strategies adopted in response to change effects (Item 13).

The analysis of the teacher questionnaire's quantitative data consisted of cross-run comparisons and correlations between items in addition to the item analyses. As in the findings described in Chapter Four, both parametric and non-parametric statistical devices were used in analysing the quantitative data. Again, findings were regarded as statistically significant only when the results of the analyses were at less than the .05 level on both the parametric and the non-parametric measures.

The interview data were analysed manually through the same modified grounded theory approach and procedures described in Section 5 of Chapter Three and used in Chapter Four. The coding categories developed and used in the analysis of the data related to Research Question 2 were as follows:

- Effects of major change on teachers' work;
- Amount of work required;
- New methods of working;
- Relationships with others;
- Effects on students' experiences;
- Complexity and intensity of teachers' work;
- Shifting focus of the core work of teachers;
- Collaboration - voluntary and required;
- Effects on quality of teachers' teaching;
- Effects on quality of students' learning.

These codes were developed from the responses to interview questions which investigated the effects of the most significant changes as these were seen by the interviewees to be impacting on their work. In this regard, the interviews sought information from teachers in relation to the amount of work required of them (Question 9); in relation to whether or not the change had required the adoption of new work methods (Question 10); in relation to any effects on interviewees' relationships with others which these teachers attributed to their involvement with a significant change in education (Question 11); in relation to any other effects on teachers' work (Question 12); and in relation to any effects of the change on students' experiences at school (Question 13).

The findings related to Research Question 2 are presented in this chapter under four sub-headings:

- 5.1 Degree and overall nature of change effects on teachers' work;
- 5.2 Actions taken and roles played by teachers involved with educational change;
- 5.3 Effects of educational changes on teachers' work; and
- 5.4 Relationships between perceived change characteristics and processes and teachers' perception of how changes have affected their work.

Both qualitative and quantitative results are presented and discussed in these four sections before a summary of the findings of the study in relation to Research Question 2 is presented at the conclusion of this chapter.

It is, therefore, those elements of the study's conceptual framework which were shown in Figure 1.3 to link most directly to Research Question 2: *changes in the dynamics of teachers' work lives and teachers' responses to recent change in education*, which come under review in this chapter.

In the results presented in Chapter Four it emerged that, with the single exception of Tasmanian teachers nominating changes in the Organisational domain to have affected their work most while South Australian teachers were more often affected by changes in the Teaching/Learning domain, there were no significant differences detected between the responses of the demographic sub-groups of the teacher sample on any of the issues investigated. For this reason, the findings presented in this, and in succeeding, chapters treat the teacher sample as a demographic whole, with distinctions for comparison purposes drawn only between the key characteristics associated with changes (i.e., Organisational or Teaching/Learning domain affected; internal or external source of origin). Comparisons are also drawn between the perceptions of teachers and principals at appropriate times.

5.1 Degree and Overall Nature of Change Effects on Teachers' Work

All three data gathering instruments sought information about how teachers' work lives had been affected by their experiences with the particular significant educational changes which were identified in the results presented in Chapter Four. Data obtained from the interviews and teacher questionnaires were highly congruent, with virtually all teachers reporting that

they were faced by more harried, demanding and stressful work contexts as a direct result of their involvement with educational change.

Teachers thus perceived that particular educational changes had had considerable impact on their work. Principals concurred with this perception. Item 3 on the questionnaire used a 4-point scale to obtain an estimate of the strength of this overall effect. The results which are presented in Table 5.1 were obtained by scoring the scale options *Very Little Impact*, *Some Impact*, *Significant Impact* and *Very Strong Impact* as 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The results for teachers overall (and for each of the sub-groups within the full teacher sample although these are not displayed separately), were all considerably above the arithmetic mean of 2.5 for scales scored in this fashion. The median scores, however, indicated that changes affecting the Teaching/Learning domain and those perceived as originating internally may have had less severe implications for teachers' work than Organisational changes or those which were seen as emanating from external sources. It was clear, nonetheless, that these teachers felt that recent educational change had had considerable impact on their work as teachers.

Table 5.1: Perceived Degree of Impact of Most Significant Changes on Teachers' Work

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Degree of Impact</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>			
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	3.34	2
Organisational	(n=40)	3.60	3
<i>Origin Source:</i>			
Internal	(n=14)	3.29	2
External	(n=72)	3.53	3
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	3.47	3
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	3.58	3

When the results presented in Table 5.1 were subjected to parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U) comparison tests, it emerged that, according to the criterion of statistical significance adopted for the study, there was no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and principals. The key point remains, therefore, that the results which are presented in Table 5.1(a) relate to high levels of perceived impact

across all categories of respondents and all types of changes. There was some indication ($p = .05$ on both tests) that changes in the Organisational domain may have been perceived by these teachers to have had more significant impacts on their work lives than had changes in the Teaching/Learning domain, but the criterion of $p = <.05$ was not attained.

Table 5.1(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Degree of Impact

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>Domain Affected:</i> Teach/Learn: Organ'l	$t = 1.96$	$p = .05$	$z = 1.98$	$p = .05$
<i>Origin Source:</i> Internal: External	$t = 1.37$	$p = .17$	$z = 1.30$	$p = .19$
<i>Role:</i> Teacher: Principal	$t = 1.17$	$p = .25$	$z = .86$	$p = .39$

Item 4 on the questionnaire sought to determine the extent to which the overall effects of a significant change were viewed as positive or negative by these teachers. Item 4 employed a 5-point scale which was scored 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for the respective responses *Very Positive*, *Positive*, *Mixed/Neutral*, *Negative* and *Very Negative*. The results of this combination of data gathering and scoring procedures are displayed below in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Perceived Nature of Overall Impact of Most Significant Changes on Teachers' Work

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Nature of Overall Impact</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i> Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	3.58	4
Organisational	(n=40)	2.30	2
<i>Origin Source:</i> Internal	(n=14)	4.21	4
External	(n=72)	2.75	3
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	3.01	3
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	2.99	3

It is apparent in the results presented in Table 5.2 that changes in the Teaching/Learning work domain were viewed by these teachers as having markedly more positive overall effects than changes which affected teachers in the Organisational domain of their work. Similarly, changes seen as emanating from internal sources were seen by these teachers to have had much more positive effects than changes which were viewed as emanating from external sources. It should be noted, however, that only 14 of the 86 categorised changes were perceived to have come from internal rather than external sources.

When the results presented in Table 5.2 were subjected to parametric and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests, the apparent difference between the perceived effects of changes in the Organisational domain, on the one hand, and changes which impacted mostly in the Teaching/Learning domain, on the other was confirmed. The similar apparent difference between the perceived effects of changes which emanated from external sources, on the one hand, and those emanating from internal sources, on the other also was confirmed statistically. Again, there were no differences detected between the responses of any of the demographic sub-groups in the teacher sample. Similarly, no significant difference was detected between the responses of teachers and principals. The results of these comparison tests are presented below in Table 5.2(a).

Table 5.2(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Nature of Overall Impact

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>Domain Affected:</i> Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 5.47	p = <.0001	z = 4.08	p = <.0001 ***
<i>Origin Source:</i> Internal: External	t = 4.38	p = <.0001	z = 3.87	p = <.0001 ***
<i>Role:</i> Teacher: Principal	t = .13	p = .90	z = .14	p = .89

5.2 Actions Taken and Roles Played by Teachers Involved with Educational Change

It was accepted as a premise which underpinned the study that both attitudes and perceptions influence behaviour, and also that behaviour can have an effect on attitudes.

Hence the roles played by teachers in the processes associated with significant changes were investigated (via Item 9) through the questionnaires. The roles offered as multiple options through which teachers and principals could describe the roles played by teachers in their involvement with significant educational change were later classified into four role categories: *Supportive Roles* (including 'initiator', 'adviser' and 'supporter'); *Compliant Roles* (including 'collaborator' and 'implementer'); *Resistant Roles* (including 'opposer', 'reluctant participant' and 'passive resister'); and *Other Roles* (with this category including those teachers who suggested a range of roles mixing the three other categories, or different roles altogether, as in the case of one respondent who described her role as 'victim'). It was acknowledged that the teachers surveyed may well have played a variety of roles in the various change processes in which they were involved and, furthermore, that the nature of these roles may have changed over time. It transpired, however, that when multiple roles were nominated, these roles were all within one or other of the single role categories described above. The results of the process of role categorisation are presented below in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Roles Played by Teachers Responding to Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Role Categories</i>			
		<i>Supportive Roles</i>	<i>Compliant Roles</i>	<i>Resistant Roles</i>	<i>Other Roles</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>					
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	22 (47%)	16 (34%)	8 (17%)	1 (2%)
Organisational	(n=40)	3 (8%)	8 (20%)	26 (65%)	3 (8%)
<i>Origin Source:</i>					
Internal	(n=14)	4 (29%)	9 (64%)	1 (7%)	-
External	(n=72)	16 (22%)	20 (28%)	32 (44%)	4 (6%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	26 (29%)	25 (28%)	34 (38%)	4 (4%)
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	9 (10%)	33 (38%)	30 (34%)	15 (17%)

In order to compare the extent to which the various sub-groups in the teacher sample may have seen the roles they played differently, or whether different types of changes were associated with teachers adopting different roles, it was necessary to convert the category data for these roles into continuous data. Thus *Supportive* roles were allocated a score of 3, *Compliant* roles were allocated a score of 2 and *Resistant* roles were allocated a score

of 1, while *Other* roles were not included. The data obtained from principals' observations of the roles played by teachers were categorised in the same ways, in order to facilitate comparisons between teachers' collective self-perceptions and those held of them by their principals. In no sense, however, was the numerical score ascribed to each role category understood to be associated with any real value, the scores were ascribed merely as a device to allow comparisons to be made between sub-groups and between types of changes. Thus, the results presented in Table 5.3 were converted to continuous data and then subjected to parametric and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests. The results of these tests are presented in Table 5.3(a), below.

Table 5.3(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Categories of Roles Played

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>Domain Affected:</i> Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 5.92	p = <.0001	z = 4.68	p = <.0001 ***
<i>Origin Source:</i> Internal: External	t = 3.48	p = .0008	z = 3.05	p = .002 **
<i>Role:</i> Teacher: Principal	t = 1.58	p = .12	z = 1.27	p = .20

No significant differences were detected between the perceptions of the study's samples of teachers and principals. Again, however, significant differences were apparent between teachers' role behaviour in changes which impacted in the Organisational domain and their role behaviour in changes which impacted in the Teaching/Learning domain. The teachers involved in the study reportedly adopted supportive roles much more often with changes in the Teaching-Learning domain, while they took resistant roles reputedly much more often in changes in the Organisational domain.

Similarly, significant differences were identified between teachers' reported role behaviour in changes which originated from external sources and their role behaviour in changes which emanated from internal sources. The changes from internal sources were associated with these teachers' adoption of supportive roles more often than was the case in their involvement with changes they perceived as having arisen externally. The corollary of this

observation was also apparent, with teacher adoption of resistant roles being reported far more often in response to external changes than was the case with changes from internal sources.

5.3 Effects of Educational Changes on Teachers' Work

When they were asked (via Questions 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) to describe the various effects that significant recent educational change had had on their work, interviewed teachers typically referred to four areas in which their work had been affected. Two of these four types of effects were welcomed by interviewees, while two were regarded as decidedly unwelcome. These teachers reported a distinctly unwelcome *intensification* of their work, and a similarly unwanted *shift in the focus* of what they regarded as the core elements of their work. On the other hand, they welcomed an apparent *increase in collaboration* with their colleagues, and were similarly positive about perceived *improvements in aspects of teaching and learning* which were associated with particular changes.

The teachers interviewed in this study offered considerable support for Hargreaves' (1994) thesis that there has been a considerable intensification in the work demands placed on teachers in recent years. These teachers claimed that there was both a greater amount of work expected of them, and of their teacher colleagues, and that the nature of the teacher's role had become more complex, encompassing a range of functions which they did not see as being expected of teachers only a decade or so ago.

In terms of a perceived increase in the amount of work required, four primary teachers' comments were representative of the views of many interviewees:

We are expected to do more and more and we are getting less and less time, staff and money. It's supposed to be positive, but the classes are getting bigger and we haven't got the money to resource them, so how could that be positive?

I'm working a lot harder now than I did fifteen years ago.

On average I would spend two hours a night working at home of a week night. It really goes down well when you read in the papers that teachers start at nine and finish at three and only work two hundred days a year!

You spend a lot more 'free' time at home working on your classroom planning and marking and on your other school requirements because it just can't be done in the

school day, and it can't even be done in the time before school or the time after school, or in any of the time you would be at school for staff meetings and professional development sessions. It's still extra time on top of all that which just has to be found to get through all the things that now have to be done.

The increased demands on teachers to take on new welfare and support roles were reflected in responses from interviewed teachers from both systems. Two Tasmanian primary teachers' remarks illustrated this perception:

For me, the biggest change is the increased demand to act as social worker and counsellor.

Society's values have broken down and because that's happened we have got children coming to school who are hungry, who are emotionally disturbed, who have got parents involved in split-ups: there are enormous problems that we have to deal with more and more every day.

The same phenomenon was reported in South Australian settings. A teacher from a dockside urban high school described the effects on his work as follows:

You have a lot more one-to-one contact with people which is non-educational - it's education-related, but it's actually talking about problems students bring with them from outside. Again, there's more time lost whenever someone says, "Look, I'm having a few problems. Can I have a chat with you?"

The second category of unwelcome effects, for many interviewees, involved an apparent shift in focus away from their contacts with students in the classroom and toward an emphasis on documentation and administration. This was a particularly unwelcome effect of educational change, and reference to it emerged as a recurring theme, amounting to teachers mourning the loss of that which they had long claimed as the *raison d'être* of their role: working constructively with students. The comments of teachers from both states included the following:

I spend too much time hassling with the paperwork instead of actually teaching. If you're spending more time doing the written work, you've got less time to put into actually teaching and preparing.

It has changed my attitude to teaching compared to my attitude when I first started teaching. The focus then was on working in the classroom and on getting things done in the classroom. The focus now has shifted to the paperwork associated with classrooms.

Absorption in things other than what I might call straight teaching is significant, and therefore the energy levels and the interest are not there, because they are undermined by the other things.

While the intensification of their work and the shift in its focus from classroom to administrative matters were regarded by interviewees as unwelcome effects of educational change, both increased collaboration with their colleagues and perceived improvements in aspects of teaching and learning were seen in a positive light.

Somewhat ironically, it was their perception of shortcomings in systemic implementation strategies that allowed teachers in the sample to make a virtue out of a necessity in that they turned increasingly to their colleagues for assistance when faced with insufficient assistance elsewhere. Indeed, when questioned about factors which had most assisted teachers in their efforts to implement change initiatives, respondents almost universally referred to the assistance they received as a consequence of discussing matters with their colleagues at their own school.

Indicatively, a Tasmanian primary teacher put it simply as:

You become more dependent on your colleagues. If you want help, you turn to them, rather than to whoever the consultants used to be.

In a similarly low-key and matter-of-fact tone, two South Australian primary teachers from outer-suburban contexts, described co-operative arrangements which were functional, but not formalised.

People have seen a need to share their work - to share ideas and materials. Before that, everyone was teaching what they wanted to teach when they wanted to teach it, how they wanted to teach it - but now we're thinking more professionally together.

We work together collaboratively pretty well - we swap around - he takes the boys sometimes while I take the girls, he does Science with my kids and I do Art with his - we work on each other's strengths.

Proponents of systemic and pedagogical reform could well take some comfort from some of the interviewees' reports of significant improvements in their teaching practices and in their students' learning experiences. These improvements were apparent in relation to clearer and more objective assessment practices, and there were reports of children

participating more meaningfully and actively in determining the nature of their own learning experiences.

Most typically, it was claimed that such improvements had resulted after interviewees had reconstrued the teacher's role in the teaching-learning process.

I find myself being more a co-worker with the kids than a director.

As the teacher I've become the facilitator of what the children themselves choose they want to learn about.

For others, the extra hours spent planning activities and establishing clear assessment criteria were seen as worthwhile:

I feel more relaxed with my students because we all know what we are looking for and so it's not me and them, it's much easier - I can give them good feedback all the time.

While it's probably doubled the time I would normally spend on programming and assessment details, it's improved the way I assess things and made it more positive.

The 89 teachers who responded to Item 12 on the questionnaire collectively cited 27 different effects on their work lives which had resulted from their involvement with recent significant educational change. Just under three different effects on their work were nominated, on average, by each of the 89 teachers who were surveyed.

As had been the case with the results of the interviews, most teachers (73 percent) who replied to the questionnaire reported that they had experienced effects associated with increased workloads, time pressures and stress which they saw as resulting from their involvement with such a change.

It transpired that there appeared to be no necessary connection between the identity of any one particular change, or any category of changes, and any specific pattern of effects which might have been associated with particular types of change alone. On the contrary, these teachers perceived that the overwhelming majority of significant recent educational changes had generated an increase in the amount of work required of them; had increased the complexity of their work; had increased the demands their work placed on their time; and, perhaps as a consequence of these three common effects, had increased the amount of stress they felt related to their work. These results are presented overleaf in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Effects of Most Significant Change on Teachers' Work Lives

<i>Effects on Teachers' Work Lives</i>	<i>Times Cited</i>	
	<i>Teachers (n=89)</i>	<i>Principals (n=86)</i>
Experienced increased workload, time pressures, stress	65 (73%)	59 (69%)
Required to adopt new work methods, roles, tasks	38 (43%)	48 (56%)
Experienced increasingly negative feelings about teaching	38 (43%)	26 (30%)
Generally worse teaching context, work context	34 (38%)	22 (26%)
Generally better teaching context, work context	22 (25%)	20 (23%)
22 other specific effects on teachers' work lives	31 *	25 *
TOTAL CITATIONS	228	200

* Occasionally, more than one of the 22 other effects were cited by individual respondents; hence 31 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 89 teacher respondents and 25 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 86 principal respondents.

While no statistical comparison of the responses of teachers and principals relating to how recent educational changes had affected teachers' work lives was conducted, the two sets of data are very similar. High proportions of both teachers (73 percent) and principals (69 percent) perceived increases in teacher workloads, time pressures and stress levels; while around half of both groups (43 percent of teachers and 56 percent of principals) felt that teachers had been required to adopt new methods, roles or tasks at work. Only around a quarter of both teachers (25 percent) and principals (23 percent) felt that recent significant educational change had brought general improvements to teachers' work contexts.

These teachers were able, collectively, to suggest 33 different strategies which they had adopted in their response to the impact of significant educational change on their work lives. The strategy cited most commonly, by both these teachers and these principals, was the development and adoption by teachers of new methods for the completion of work tasks. These results are presented in Table 5.5 on the following page.

Table 5.5: Strategies Adopted by Teachers in Response to Most Significant Change

<i>Strategies Adopted by Teachers</i>	<i>Times Cited</i>	
	<i>Teachers (n=89)</i>	<i>Principals (n=84)</i>
Develop and adopt new methods for achievement of work tasks	44 (49%)	50 (60%)
Initiate, or participate in, program of stress management	32 (36%)	7 (8%)
Reduce level of effort and commitment to teaching	26 (29%)	24 (29%)
Prioritise tasks and concentrate on efficiency	21 (24%)	22 (26%)
Work harder, accept increased demands and work pressures	19 (21%)	12 (14%)
28 other specific strategies adopted by teachers	33 *	26 *
TOTAL CITATIONS	175	141

* Occasionally, more than one of the 28 other strategies were cited by individual respondents, hence 33 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 89 teacher respondents and 26 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 84 principal respondents.

While it was not possible to deduce from these data how and where 36 percent of these teachers had participated in some form of stress management program, it is reasonable to infer that stress management programs for teachers were either not often visible in the school setting, or perhaps not even available at school sites, given that only 8 percent of these principals perceived that their teachers had engaged in such programs. A possible explanation for this may lie in the fact that both systems provided employees with some access to a small number of centrally-located counsellors, with such counsellors being available to teachers (albeit on a limited basis) with no requirement for principals to be consulted in, or even aware of, a teacher's involvement in any counselling or stress management program. Logically enough, the counsellors in the employ of each system were in the habit of meeting with their clients away from these teachers' schools, even if only for the reason that elements of whatever problems were at issue had links, almost invariably, to one or another aspect the teachers' work contexts.

5.4 Relationships Between Perceived Change Characteristics and Processes and Teachers' Perceptions of how Changes have Affected their Work

Three correlation analyses were conducted (by Fisher's $r - z$) to test the association between various characteristics of the educational changes seen as affecting these teachers' work most strongly and the ways in which these changes are viewed by teachers as affecting them in their work. In order to conduct such analyses it was necessary to convert some category data, such as *Teaching/Learning* and *Organisational*, or *Internal* and *External*, into continuous data, such as 1 and 2.

The first such association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the work domain most affected by significant educational change (Questionnaire Item 2 responses classified into *Teaching/Learning* and *Organisational* domains) and teachers' perceptions of the level of their commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with that change (Questionnaire Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a 4-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .319$ ($p = .03$), giving some indication that changes in the Teaching/Learning domain were associated with stronger levels of commitment from these teachers to the achievement of the changes' goals than were changes which impacted on teachers' work in the Organisational domain.

The second association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the perceived source of origin of the change (Item 5 responses classified into *Internal* and *External* sources) and the nature of the overall effects of the change on teachers' work lives (Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a 5-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .439$ ($p = <.0001$), indicating that changes seen as originating from internal sources tended to be associated with perceptions of positive overall effects on these teachers' work, while changes seen as originating from external sources tended to be associated with negative perceptions of such overall effects.

The third association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the nature of the roles played by teachers involved with a change (Item 9 responses categorised as *Supportive*, *Compliant*, or *Resistant* and then ascribed scores of 3, 2 and 1 respectively, and with those respondents who nominated *Other* roles not being included in the analysis) and these teachers' perception of the change's overall impact on their work (Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a 5-point scale). The resulting

correlation obtained was $r = .685$ ($p = <.0001$), indicating a clear association between the playing of supportive roles by these teachers and their subsequent perception of positive overall effects resulting from a significant educational change and, as a corollary, an equally clear association between the playing of resistant roles by these teachers and the subsequent perception of negative overall effects on their work.

Summary of the Findings Related to Research Question 2

The major findings of the study related to Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* can be summarised briefly as follows:

- Recent educational changes were perceived by the teachers involved in this study as having had significant and strong impacts on their work lives. The study's principals felt similarly that teachers' work had been affected strongly by the educational changes of the first half of the 1990s;
- In almost equal proportions, these teachers reported that their involvement with recent significant educational change had had either positive, mixed or negative effects on their work overall. This pattern of equally-divided perception was consistent among all demographic sub-groups of the teacher sample, in the responses of all teachers across the sample as a whole, and in the observations of the effects on teachers as these were observed and reported by principals;
- While none of the demographic characteristics of any of the sub-groups of the teacher sample were seen to be associated with any differences in how the impact and effects of educational changes were perceived, the work domain affected and the source of such changes both affected teacher perceptions significantly. Changes which impacted more on the Organisational domain of teachers' work were perceived as having negative overall effects: changes which impacted on the Teaching/Learning domain were perceived as having more positive effects. Similarly, changes perceived as emanating from external sources were perceived as engendering negative overall effects on these teachers' work, while changes perceived as originating from internal sources were more likely to be viewed as producing positive effects on these teachers' work overall;
- These teachers adopted *supportive*, *compliant* or *resistant* roles in approximately equal proportions in their involvement with the significant educational changes of the early 1990s. However, these teachers adopted resistant roles more often when involved with

changes which impacted on the Organisational domain of their work or which emanated from external sources, while they adopted supportive or, at the very least, compliant roles in their involvement with changes which impacted on the Teaching/Learning domain of their work or which emanated from internal sources.

- These teachers reported that their involvement with recent significant educational change had affected their work lives considerably. In terms of two categories of effects which they perceived as undesirable, these teachers reported: first, an intensification of their work lives as the nature of the teacher's role became more complex and its attendant demands and expectations increased; and second, an unwanted shift in the core focus of their work away from their day-to-day classroom-based interactions with students toward administrative tasks associated with increased accountability and documentation provisions. In terms of two categories of effects which they perceived as more positive, these teachers reported: first, an increase in the extent to which they were able to collaborate with teacher colleagues from the same school for their mutual professional benefit; and second, that certain improvements in teachers' pedagogy and in students' learning experiences were associated with some educational changes. Almost invariably, the changes viewed as promoting collaboration and as having positive implications for teaching and learning were classroom-related innovations which had been developed in the local school context.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 3

How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their work lives in the current educational change context?

Introduction

The findings of the study which relate to the third of the study's research questions, *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their work lives in the current educational change context?* are presented in this chapter.

The findings deduced from the data gathered from Items 14, 15 and 19-28 on the teacher and principal questionnaires are presented and discussed in the following pages. The results which describe how the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for teachers at work have been effected by these teachers' experiences with recent significant educational changes are presented and discussed also. Next, the findings from teachers' and principals' responses to Items 19-28 on their respective questionnaires, relating to levels of teacher satisfaction with ten key aspects related to the quality of their work lives, are presented. The quantitative aspects of these particular findings are depicted in Figures 6.1 - 6.10, accompanied by the results of parametric and non-parametric comparisons between the responses of teachers and principals. The qualitative aspects of the findings are described and discussed in conjunction with the quantitative findings.

This chapter is comprised of three main sections, with the second of these sections consisting of ten sub-sections:

- 6.1 The impact of educational change on teachers' sources of work satisfaction and dissatisfaction;
- 6.2 Teachers' satisfaction with key aspects of their work lives:
 - The working relationship between teacher and principal;
 - Working relationships with teacher colleagues;
 - The nature of teacher-student interactions;
 - Level of parental and community support for teachers;
 - The policy directions of education systems;
 - Conditions of employment as teachers;
 - Opportunities to maintain control over educational decision-making;
 - Capacity to influence the impact of educational change on teachers' work;
 - The quality of available resources and equipment;
 - Effort needed to meet all expectations and requirements in teachers' work;
- 6.3 Relationships between elements of teachers' experiences with an educational change and their levels of satisfaction with key aspects of their work lives.

It is, therefore, those elements of the study's conceptual framework which were shown in Figure 1.3 to link most closely to Research Question 3: *teachers' responses to recent change in education, teachers' feelings about the quality of their work lives* and, some less directly, *teachers' dispositions toward future changes in education* which come under consideration in this chapter.

A summary of the findings of the study in relation to Research Question 3 is presented at the conclusion of the chapter.

6.1 The Impact of Educational Change on Teachers' Sources of Work Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Items 14 and 15 gathered data about the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for teachers in their work and on how these had been affected by recent significant educational changes. The results from the Item 14 data, in which teachers described those aspects from which they derived their satisfaction at work are presented in Table 6.1 on the following page.

Table 6.1: Teachers' Sources of Work Satisfaction

<i>Response Categories</i>	<i>Times Cited by Teachers (n=78)</i>	
Contacts and teaching/learning relationships with students	27	(35%)
Sense of self-efficacy associated with 'doing the job well'	22	(28%)
Seeing students improve, learn or achieve personal or learning goals	22	(28%)
Working relationships with colleagues, principals, parents and community members	21	(27%)
14 other sources of work satisfaction for teachers	16 *	
TOTAL CITATIONS	108	

* Occasionally, more than one of the 14 other sources of work satisfaction were cited by individual respondents, hence 16 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 78 teacher respondents

It was clear from these results that teaching/learning relationships, in their various forms, were the most important source of work-related satisfaction for these teachers.

The overwhelming majority of participating teachers (n=78, 88 percent of the questionnaire respondents) were clear in their perception that educational changes had direct implications for the nature of their feelings about the aspects of their work from which they derived most satisfaction.

Those teachers who had expressed the opinion that their involvement with a significant change had had some appreciable impact on some or all of their sources of satisfaction at work were asked to describe the ways in which their sources of satisfaction had been affected. The results are presented in Table 6.2 on the following page. Table 6.2 shows the various effects nominated by the questionnaire respondents after classification into two categories labelled *Positive Effects* and *Negative Effects*. A total of 87 effects were cited, with 50 of these (57 percent) being classified as *Negative Effects*, while the remaining 37 citations (43 percent) were classified as *Positive Effects*. The single effect which was said to have affected teachers' sources of work satisfaction most often was the negative effect of a perception of certain limitations or obstacles being placed in the path of teachers attempting to 'do the job well'.

Table 6.2: Impact of Change on Sources of Work Satisfaction

<i>Response Categories</i>	<i>Times Cited by Teachers (n=78)</i>	
<i>Positive Effects (37 citations)</i>		
Produced improvements in students' experience of education	16	(21%)
Assisted, enhanced capacity to 'do the job well'	10	(13%)
8 other effects, having positive implications for sources of work satisfaction	11 *	
<i>Negative Effects (50 citations)</i>		
Hindered, impaired capacity to 'do the job well'	26	(33%)
18 other effects, having negative implications for sources of work satisfaction	24 *	
TOTAL CITATIONS	87	

* Occasionally, more than one of the 8 other positive effects and the 18 other negative effects on work satisfaction were cited by individual respondents, hence 11 and 24 citations are not expressed as percentages of the 78 teacher respondents

Item 15 asked teachers to describe those aspects of their work which generated dissatisfaction for them. *Frustration* was the word which appeared most commonly in the responses, which are presented as the results displayed below in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Teachers' Sources of Work Dissatisfaction

<i>Response Categories</i>	<i>Times Cited by Teachers (n=71)</i>	
Restricted, impaired capacity to 'do the job well'	39	(55%)
Workload, work stress and time pressures	31	(44%)
Perceived lack of support from parents, community, education system	17	(24%)
Confrontations, other negative experiences, interactions with students	9	(13%)
8 other sources of work dissatisfaction for teachers	10 *	
TOTAL CITATIONS	106	

* Occasionally, more than one of the 8 other sources of work dissatisfaction were cited by individual respondents, hence 10 citations are not expressed as a percentage of the 71 teacher respondents

Interestingly, there was little support in these data for those elements of the literature (see, for example, the works discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter Two, including Dinham, 1995b; Holdaway, 1978; Sergiovanni, 1967) which have claimed that teachers see different aspects of their work lives as 'satisfiers' and 'dissatisfiers', with aspects related to being able to *do the job well* and *relationships with students* appearing both as satisfiers in Table 6.1 and as dissatisfiers in Table 6.3.

Those teachers who felt that their involvement with a significant change had had some impact on their sources of dissatisfaction at work (n=71, 80 percent of the 89 questionnaire respondents) were asked to describe the ways in which their sources of dissatisfaction had been affected. The results, classified into *Positive Effects* and *Negative Effects*, are presented below in Table 6.4. The overwhelming majority (n=68, 87 percent of 76 citations) of the effects felt by teachers on their sources of dissatisfaction at work were negative. For most, their involvement with educational change had made these teachers' work lives more difficult (through increased workloads, stress and time pressures), more problematic (through casting doubts on their own capacity to 'cope'), and less efficacious.

Table 6.4: Impact of Change on Sources of Work Dissatisfaction.

<i>Response Categories</i>	<i>Times Cited by Teachers (n=71)</i>
<i>Positive Effects</i> (8 citations)	
Enhanced level of community respect for teachers	2 (3%)
6 other effects, having positive implications for sources of work dissatisfaction	6 *
<i>Negative Effects</i> (68 citations)	
Has increased problems of workload, work stress, time pressures	24 (33%)
Has reduced feelings of self-efficacy and cast doubt on capacity to "cope"	19 (27%)
Hindered, impaired educational outcomes for students	13 (18%)
8 other effects, having negative implications for sources of work dissatisfaction	12 *
TOTAL CITATIONS	76

* Occasionally, more than one of the 6 other positive effects and the 8 other negative effects on work dissatisfaction were cited by individual respondents, hence 6 and 12 citations are not expressed as percentages of the 71 teacher respondents

6.2 Teachers' Satisfaction with Key Aspects of their Work Lives

Items 19-28 gathered data about teachers' feelings in relation to ten key aspects affecting the quality of their working lives. Data were gathered in two forms: first, respondents were asked to use a continuum to indicate their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with each of the ten aspects of teachers' work lives; and second, respondents were asked to give the reasons which accounted for each of these levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The respective ends of the semantic differential scale as it was used in this study were labelled *satisfied* and *dissatisfied*. The results are presented here using the same style of scale as that used in the twin versions of the survey.

The responses on the continuums were allocated a numerical value between 0 and 10. Values relatively close to zero indicated a high level of teacher satisfaction in relation to the relevant aspect of their work lives. Conversely, values in the range between 5 and 10 were taken to indicate progressively lower levels of teacher satisfaction.

Principals' and teachers' responses on the continuums were scored and the data were analysed for skewness and kurtosis. While much of the data were normally distributed, on a number of items the data were noted to be not distributed normally. Consequently both parametric measures (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric devices (Mann-Whitney-U tests) were used when comparing the responses from teachers and principals.

The data were, however, described in parametric terms in Figures 6.1 - 6.10, which follow. The two mean responses, together with the respective standard deviations for both teacher and principal data sets, are indicated through bars on each of the scales, thus displaying the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the spread of the indicative responses for both teachers and principals. The results of the parametric and non-parametric comparison tests are presented in each of Figures 6.1 - 6.10. As had been the case with all comparisons conducted previously, for any apparent difference between teachers and principals to be deemed significant in a statistical sense, a difference at the $p = <.05$ level was required on both tests.

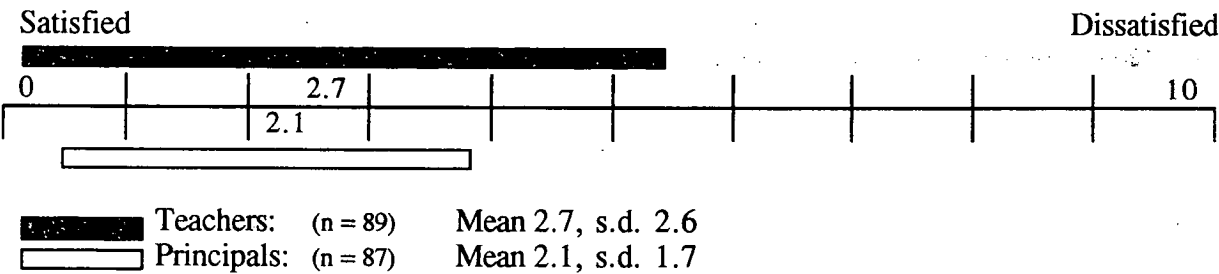
Finally, the reasons posited by teachers and principals to account for the levels of teacher satisfaction indicated on each of the continuum scales were collated manually and a search for recurring factors was conducted. It was, therefore, possible to compare and contrast

the levels of teacher satisfaction with the perceptions of teacher satisfaction held by principals; and, similarly, to examine the extent to which teachers and principals attributed these levels of satisfaction to identical, or similar, or to different factors. These qualitative factors are described and discussed in turn for each of the ten aspects investigated, in conjunction with the presentation of the respective quantitative results.

• The working relationship between teacher and principal

Analysis of the data from Item 19 on the questionnaires showed these teachers to have been highly satisfied with the nature and quality of the working relationships they had with their principals. Furthermore, principals were accurate in their perception of their teachers as being satisfied with this relationship. Figure 6.1 presents these results.

Fig. 6.1: Teachers’ feelings about the working relationship between teacher and principal.



(t = 1.78, p = .08 z = .63, p = .53)

Teachers satisfied with this aspect of their work life referred to principals as being *supportive* or *approachable*, and as having *created a positive environment*. Principals who saw their teachers as satisfied attributed this to their own *ability to listen*, to their *supportiveness* and to their *preparedness to trust teachers*. However, despite the respondents being asked about the relationship *between* teacher and principal, virtually all teachers and principals saw the nature and quality of the relationship being *determined by characteristics and behaviours demonstrated by the principal alone*. It might be reasonable to speculate that the power differential between teacher and principal may offer at least a partial explanation of this finding.

When teachers saw their principals as *supportive*, they made comments such as the following from a 46-year-old female primary teacher from South Australia:

He understands how you feel. He supports you every step of the way. He has excellent counselling skills and is positive with you and shows this. You are not left to tackle anything that is too hard by yourself.

When teachers saw their principals as *approachable*, indicative comments included the following from a 32-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania:

The principal is very approachable, always prepared to listen, and is conscious of not putting undue pressure on staff.

When teachers saw their principals as having *created a positive environment*, they talked in terms similar to the comments made by a 39-year-old female primary teacher from Tasmania:

He provides support for both teachers and students. He creates a positive environment in the school and yet is firm and assertive with students when needed.

In the few cases where teachers were dissatisfied with their working relationship with their principal, they were highly critical of the principal's performance and of how this then affected teachers. A 42-year-old female primary teacher from Tasmania made the following comments:

He has poor people management skills, is unpredictable, prone to outbursts in public, has a stronger focus on the administrative needs of the school to the detriment of the classroom, and keeps changing his mind adding unnecessary stress to the teaching staff.

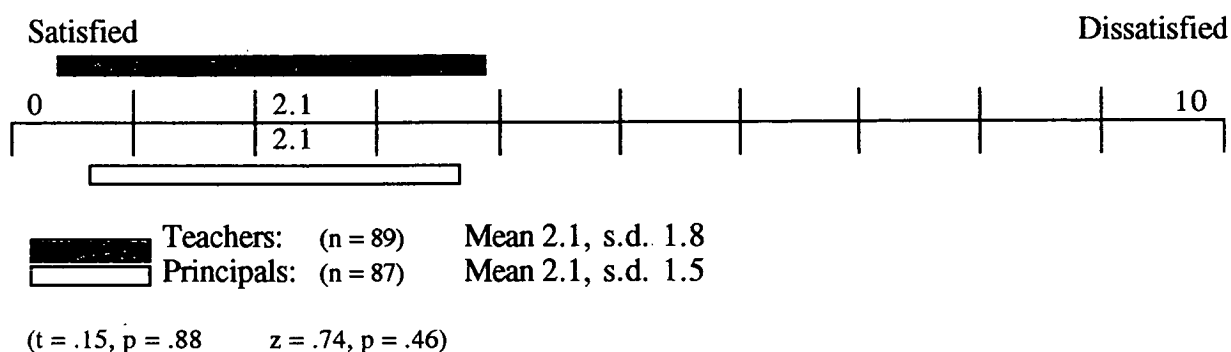
- **Working relationships with teacher colleagues**

In their responses to Item 20 on the questionnaire teachers reported very strong levels of satisfaction with the nature and quality of the working relationships they shared with other teachers at their schools. However, teachers considered that the nature and quality of their collegial relationships were determined largely by the characteristics of the other parties to the relationship. These results are presented in Figure 6.2 on the following page.

While it can be seen in Figure 6.2 that school principals interpreted their teachers' levels of satisfaction very accurately in this area, teachers and principals did not advance the same set of explanatory factors. Hence, teachers were satisfied with these relationships because their colleagues *believe in what they are doing* and were *supportive*, while principals saw the satisfaction emanating from *consensual professional respect* and *team approaches*. Where

teachers and principals concurred, however, was in their shared view that positive collegial relationships resulted from teachers turning inwards and *looking to each other for support* in the face of what they saw as *a hostile broader educational context outside the school*.

Fig. 6.2: Teachers' feelings about the working relationships with teacher colleagues.



In terms of a perception that colleagues *believed in what they were doing*, the comments of a 27-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania were representative:

The vast majority are good people who work hard at their jobs and really believe in what they are doing, although they usually pretend they don't.

With regard to teachers' perceptions of their colleagues as *supportive*, they made the sort of comments that were typified by the following remarks from a 34-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania:

Generally staff are very supportive, remain fairly stable (not a lot of changes each year - as against mentally stable!!) and we listen to each other. Relatively small numbers (10 classes) makes for a big family rather than a workplace.

When teachers expressed satisfaction with their working relationships with their teacher colleagues because they could *look to each other for support in the face of a hostile educational context outside the school*, the words used by a 55-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania were representative of this view:

Because of the lack of support from outside services, teachers have formed a close bond within the school to assist one another.

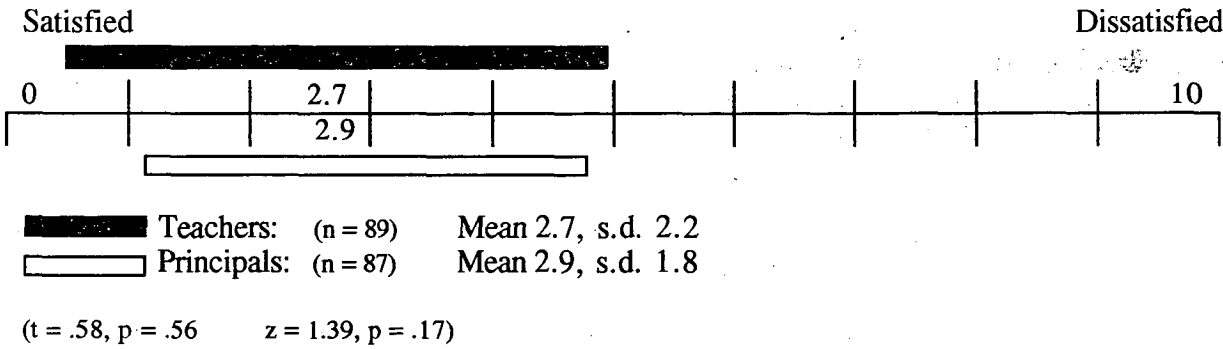
The views of those few teachers who were dissatisfied with their working relationships with their colleagues were typified by the remarks made by a 43-year-old, male secondary teacher from South Australia:

Many are complacent, having been here for a long time. The atmosphere is parochial and “clique-ish”.

• The nature of teacher-student interactions

As was the case with their relationships with principals and colleagues, in their responses to Item 21 on the questionnaire, teachers reported that they were satisfied with the nature of the interactions they had with students. Principals' perceptions of teachers' feelings were in accord with teachers' reports. These results are presented in Figure 6.3.

Fig. 6.3: Teachers’ feelings about the nature of teacher-student interactions.



Even though principals perceived teachers' level of satisfaction accurately in this area, they attributed this satisfaction to factors other than those nominated by teachers. While teachers again attributed the quality of teacher-student relationships to others, in this case to the *responsive and generally positive students* with whom they worked in a *supportive atmosphere*; principals saw teachers' characteristics and approaches as the key factor. Principals said *teachers with good skills* had satisfying relationships while those who were *inflexible and confrontationist* did not.

When teachers talked of students as being *responsive and generally positive*, they tended to use words similar to those used by a 40-year-old, female secondary teacher from Tasmania:

My students are generally very pleasant people and working with them, as a group or on a one-to-one basis, is the most enjoyable thing I do.

In a similar vein, teachers who perceived that a *supportive atmosphere* underpinned their interactions with students accounted for their satisfaction in terms like those used by a 40-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia:

I love my class! They're bright, responsive, motivated and great to work with. There's a really supportive atmosphere in our room - we're all there to help each other achieve success.

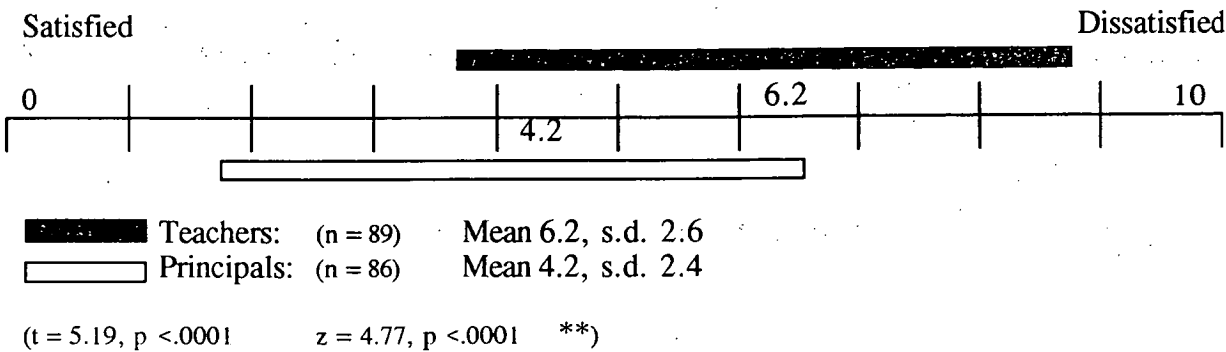
The few teachers who reported that they were dissatisfied with the nature of their interactions with students reflected a view that the management of student behaviour had become increasingly difficult. While this response was common among secondary teachers who saw it, primarily, as an unwelcome consequence of increased retention rates, primary teachers also reported concerns related to the nature of their interactions with students. The comments made by a 36-year-old, male primary teacher from Tasmania were indicative of this position:

The more unpleasant side of interactions with students - dealing with disruptive behaviour - has increased so much that much of the enjoyment of interacting with students has disappeared.

• Level of parental and community support for teachers

In their responses to Item 22 on the questionnaire teachers reported that they were not satisfied with the overall level of support they received from parents and the wider community. These results are presented below in Figure 6.4.

Fig. 6.4: Teachers' feelings about levels of parent and community support.



Principals underestimated significantly the degree of concern felt by teachers in this regard. Although it appears that community support for teachers was viewed as less than satisfactory by both respondent groups, principals failed to recognise that teachers perceived virtually all outside groups (i.e., parents, government, media and general community) as displaying inadequate levels of support for them in their work. Indeed, teachers listed some of the parents of the children they taught themselves as the only exceptions to a community-wide lack of support for teachers, while principals had expected teachers would see themselves as well supported by a much broader spread of the school community.

Teachers saw *some of the parents of the children they taught* as *supportive and appreciative*, while others of the same group were described as *accepting less and less responsibility* for their own children's development and *expecting more and more of teachers*. Teachers described the *wider community* as *overly critical* of teachers and as having *no real understanding of teachers' work*. Several teachers singled out the attitudes of the media and of politicians as distressing. Principals acknowledged teachers' views of the wider community as *lacking knowledge and understanding*, but they saw parents, particularly *those involved at School Council level*, as *supportive* of teachers.

Even those teachers who believed that the *parents of the children they taught were supportive and appreciative* felt that the work of teachers was not well understood or valued in the community. This position was typified in the remarks of a 44-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia:

Many people in the wider community have a limited understanding of the amount of time and effort put into teaching and, in particular, do not seem to understand that we act in the best interests of students in our care. Generally, however, I find the parents who I work closely with to be supportive and appreciative.

Those teachers who felt that parents were *accepting less and less responsibility* for their own children's upbringing, commented in terms similar to those used by a 44-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania.

They expect us to teach the things that previously were taught at home before children started school - manners, hygiene, care and respects for others, etcetera.

The perception that parents and the community were *expecting more and more of teachers* was resented by many of these teachers. The words used by a 44-year-old, male secondary teacher from South Australia were representative of this position.

Parents support our school, but in the community there is a perception that we get it easy - they don't know that our work expectations have risen and that the collapse of morality / employment / economy has had direct effects in the classroom. We have to work harder than ever before and they take time away for training and development, reduce holidays, no pay rises.

A 31-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania who saw the wider community as *overly critical of teachers*, expressed a view held in common with many of her fellow respondents:

The vast majority of the community do not understand the present situation of teachers and ridicule the profession.

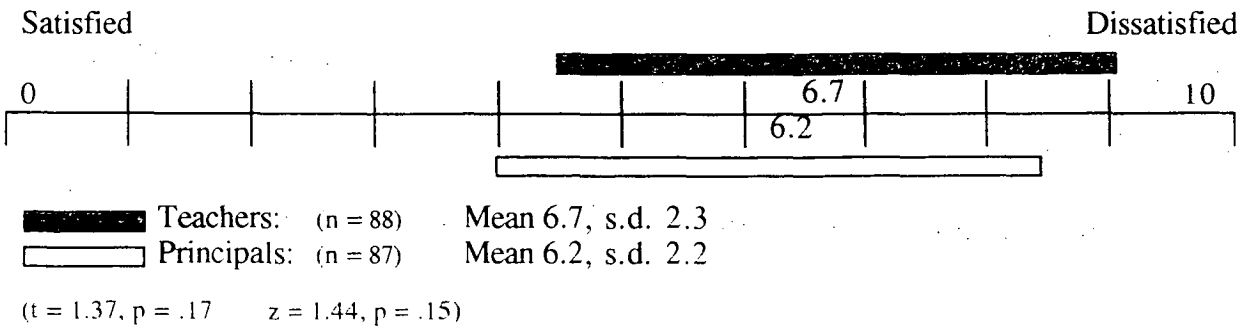
The view that people outside schools had *no real understanding of teachers' work* was typified in the remarks made by a 39-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania:

Some people have a narrow-minded view of teachers and their work - long holidays, short hours, etcetera. I don't think they have any idea of the workload: preparation, planning, evaluation, class displays, reports, etcetera, etcetera.

• The policy directions of education systems

In their responses to Item 23 teachers exhibited very little satisfaction with the nature of the policy directions of their education systems. The principals surveyed clearly recognised their teachers' lack of satisfaction in this area. These results are presented in Figure 6.5.

Fig. 6.5: Teachers' feelings about policy directions of their education system.



Both teachers and principals accounted for teachers' feelings in relation to systemic policy directions by citing a view that there were *too many simultaneous policy initiatives* emanating from a *bureaucracy which was out of touch with school and classroom realities*. Teachers went further than their principals however, and slated departmental policy initiatives as *not being in the best interests of children*; complained of a *lack of follow-through after initial dissemination*; questioned the *real motives of policy advocates*; and criticised *policy requirements which took them away from their core role of working with their students*.

The view that there were *too many simultaneous policy initiatives* is typified in the following two teachers' comments: the first comments are from a 36-year-old, male primary teacher from Tasmania, while the second example is taken from the remarks of a 41-year-old, male primary teacher from South Australia:

There is never an "end point". We are on a cycle of policy directions and priorities that will continue to turn. We will never be able to say, "We've done that ... we are doing well ...". The on-going nature of changes from the Department's policy planners will make a sense of achievement hard to obtain.

Too many, too soon, too open, etcetera. South Australia needs to let schools "settle" for a few years to work a lot of the new directions through.

The notion that the educational *bureaucracy was out of touch with school and classroom realities* was expressed by teachers from both state systems. These views were typified by the remarks of a 42-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania:

Too many bureaucrats are too remote from the classroom impact of their decisions. Teachers generally do the best they can, but directions from "above" can be confusing or without much meaningful purpose, and little support is felt.

When teachers expressed the view that departmental policy initiatives were often *not in the best interests of children*, apparent paradoxes and contradictions between policy initiatives were advanced as evidence. The comments made by a 44-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania indicate the emotional power with which such views were expressed:

I think the Department is on a teacher-bashing spree: school-based decision-making lacks funding; increase student retention, but cut staff; inclusion but no supporting funding; new behaviour management, but take away any teeth we ever had; equity at the expense of the male career teacher; social justice is seen to be a joke when we can

only appeal on technical grounds; accountability for teachers and schools, but not Departmental senior administrators - what a joke: and "It's all for the benefit of the kids" - never.

Those teachers who were dissatisfied with systemic policy initiatives were also critical of the each system's *lack of follow-through after initial dissemination* of information relating to innovations, as in the following comments from a 34-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania:

The policies are not well disseminated and the expectation on teachers to understand and implement is unrealistic.

These teachers called the *real motives of policy advocates* into question, but nowhere more clearly than in the nevertheless representative remarks of a 40-year-old, female secondary teacher from Tasmania:

They are either only about saving money or they jump onto the latest jargon-led bandwagon. I wish that they would truly believe in the principle of providing quality education.

When criticising *policy requirements which took them away from their core role of working with their students*, the views of these teachers were typified by the opinions expressed by a 43-year-old, male secondary teacher from South Australia:

A history of half-baked initiatives that very rarely are continued. Too much change. The requirements for administration take teachers away from teaching.

Even those teachers who supported the directions and intentions of departmental policies seemed to believe that little of consequence would be achieved as a result. The views expressed by a 36-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania reflected this:

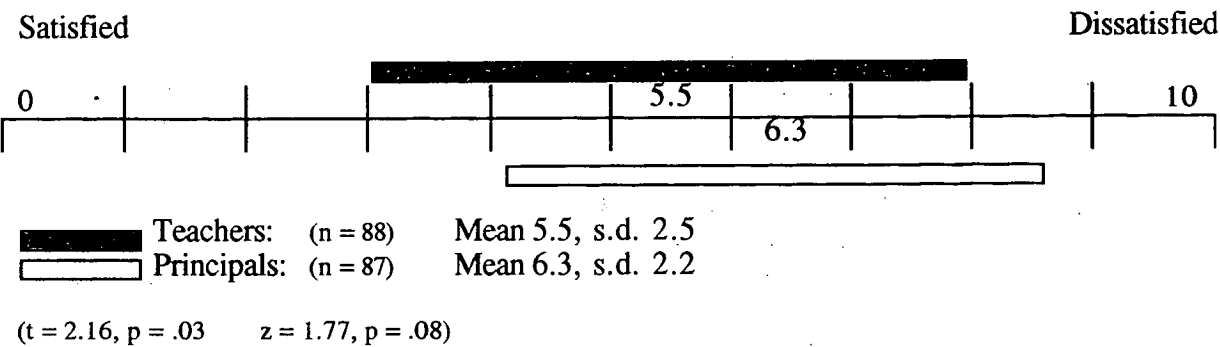
In the end, like most teachers, I believe the more things change, the more they stay the same. The Department seems to have some fine projects, but does little for the classroom teacher other than produce longer lists of acronyms.

- **Conditions of employment as teachers**

In their responses to Item 24 on the questionnaire teachers expressed a general lack of satisfaction with issues related to the conditions under which they were employed by the

respective education systems. These issues might be best summarised as those relating to industrial award conditions of employment, but should also be understood to include each system's personnel policies and procedures. If anything, principals saw their teachers as even less satisfied than teachers described themselves, but this difference was not significant statistically on the non-parametric test, although significant at the .05 level when the unpaired t-test was applied to the data. In terms of the criteria adopted for the study, therefore, this difference was not determined to be significant statistically. These results are presented in Figure 6.6.

Fig. 6.6: Teachers’ feelings about the conditions of their employment.



Both teacher and principal samples cited teachers' concerns about *temporary appointments*, *vulnerability to transfer* at short notice and a *lack of job security* as reasons for a low level of teacher satisfaction. Similarly, both groups expressed teachers' *lack of faith that the merit principle was applied genuinely* in promotion procedures. Despite the fact that they were, if anything, less negative about their employment conditions than they were perceived to be by their principals who noted nothing in relation to teachers' remuneration levels, teachers expressed a lack of satisfaction with *mediocre salaries, considering the expectations and qualifications of teachers*.

The concerns held by teachers about *temporary appointments* related to temporary appointments to a particular school as well as to temporary appointments to the teaching service more generally. The comments of a 43-year-old, male primary teacher from Tasmania were typical:

For “non-permanent” staff it’s very unsatisfactory working on a twelve months (or less) basis. Salaries are reasonable, but some of the trade-offs to achieve this were not really acceptable.

Their *vulnerability to transfer* was felt keenly by many of these teachers, and never more so than when this was combined with a general perception of teachers' work becoming increasingly difficult, as in the remarks of a 33-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania:

Teaching has become much harder in the ten years I have been teaching. Although I am a permanent teacher the Department can transfer me to any school they wish.

The combination of temporary appointments and vulnerability to transfer combined in many of the minds of these teachers to generate a *lack of job security*. A 28-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania expressed this view in his remarks:

Job security is now a threat with increased transfers. It destabilises your future and makes you commit yourself much less to your school. After all, if you're going in five years, why bother getting too attached?

The notion of security was linked in many of these teachers' responses to the degree to which they could trust the system to implement the procedures associated with promotion on merit in a fair and transparent fashion. In this regard, a *lack of faith that the merit principle was applied genuinely* was a common feature of many teachers' comments, with this being typified by the remarks of a 36-year-old, female secondary teacher from South Australia:

Security is declining rapidly. Salary is okay for now. Promotion prospects are limited, and the "merit principle" is really a bit of a game to be played for appearances only.

While it was apparent that these teachers were not unduly dissatisfied with the levels of their salaries, *per se*, in late 1994, there was a clear undercurrent of belief that their *salaries were mediocre, considering the expectations and qualifications of teachers* and that others, less well qualified were better rewarded. These views were apparent in the representative remarks of a 40-year-old, female secondary teacher from Tasmania:

I'm basically in a dead-end job with little opportunity for promotion and with the threat of transfer always hanging over my head. The salary is barely enough - plumbers and carpenters as well as shift workers earn well above my salary as a highly experienced and competent teacher.

As the size of the standard deviation indicates, not all teachers were dissatisfied or even ambivalent about their employment conditions, but those who described themselves as

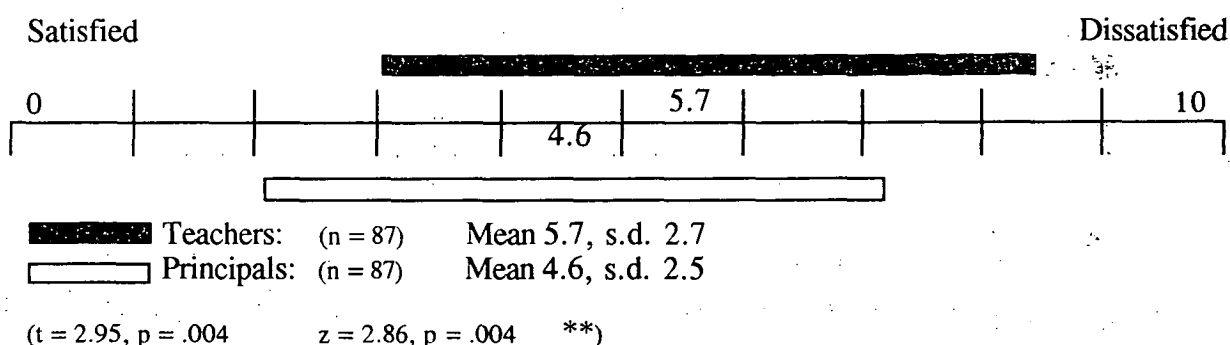
satisfied with this aspect of the working life did so in the briefest terms, as in the remarks of a 33-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania:

Merit principle, recent salary rise and permanency all contribute to my satisfaction.

- **Opportunities to maintain control over educational decision-making**

In their responses to Item 25 on the questionnaire many teachers reported that they were often far from satisfied with the extent to which they were able to exercise control over educational decision-making in matters which related to their work. Principals underestimated the extent to which their teachers were not satisfied. These results are presented in Figure 6.7.

Fig. 6.7: Teachers' feelings about their opportunities to maintain control over educational decision-making.



In this key area, made all the more important in the context of the widespread devolution of educational decision-making to the school level in both systems under consideration in this study, both teacher and principal groups felt that teachers had *little opportunity to influence decisions at the system level*, but *more opportunity to do so at the school level*. Both respondent groups agreed that the *decision-making rules were made at the administrative centre of the system*.

However, while principals felt that teachers would see their schools as *participatory, democratic environments* in which teachers had *considerable autonomy*, teachers did not perceive their school contexts in these ways. Indeed, teachers often felt that they could *influence decision-making only at the level of their own classrooms*, while at the school level, they saw staff meetings as merely *rubber stamping decisions made elsewhere* and

that principals and other senior staff retained the real decision-making power, despite a *surface veneer of teacher participation*.

While the size of the standard deviation apparent in the teacher responses was large, there was little divergence from the perception that teachers had *little opportunity to influence decisions at the system level*. The views expressed by a 30-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia were both forthright and representative of the opinions expressed by other teachers in the sample:

I feel like a pawn on a chess board - never know what the next move/change will be. The system isn't aligned to its grass roots!!! A lot of bigwigs "think" without trying or wanting to be attached to the grass roots.

While these teachers saw little chance to influence decision-making at the system level, they did perceive that there was *more opportunity to do so at the school level*. A 35-year-old female primary teacher from South Australia, expressed views that were common in the responses of many others:

I have a say, but control is ultimately not mine. At the local level we practise as much "democracy" as we can, but you still feel you're just puppets for the Education Department.

It was clear from the overall tenor and content of the responses that these teachers held an understanding that the *decision-making rules were made at the administrative centres* of their respective education systems. This perception was exemplified in the comments of a 38-year-old, male primary teacher from Tasmania:

Control is becoming more centralised despite devolution. "Centre" makes the rules - we "play" only within these enforced boundaries of autonomy.

Furthermore, many of these teachers felt that the realities of what they saw as the limitations on their autonomy meant that they could *influence decision-making only at the level of their own classrooms* in any meaningful sense. What this meant, however, for a 42-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania and for the others who shared his view, was considerable power being attached to the role of teacher as final arbiter:

While we may have little control over "edicts from above", we generally have considerable control over how to put them into practice.

Even the procedures put in place by the two systems and their schools to promote more decisions being taken at school level were not perceived as effective by these teachers, many of whom saw these procedures as merely *rubber stamping decisions made elsewhere*. The comments of a 46-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania typified this perception:

It may appear we are making decisions at school but these have really been made further up. School decision-making is in the hands of a select few irrespective of the general lack of ability of our senior staff; staff meeting is a rubber stamp for minor matters - and even then only if it agrees with the principal.

This view that reality reflected only a *surface veneer of teacher participation* in decision-making was expressed clearly in many teachers' response, with the exercise of power by the principal remaining an unresolved issue for a 42-year-old female primary teacher from Tasmania:

Opportunities in decision-making in my experience are restricted by the principal's view of the teaching staff - often the principal thinks he knows best and changes, redirects or leaves out input by staff.

On the other hand, a minority of these teachers felt that decision-making at the school level was working well. A 36-year-old, male primary teacher from Tasmania said:

We practise school-based decision-making and all staff have the opportunity to contribute. We are able to promote or dispute policies openly.

Whether or not formal decision-making processes were effective in these teachers' eyes, at least one teacher, a 28-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania indicated that he, and he implied his colleagues as well, retained considerable decision-making power regardless of what might have happened elsewhere. He said:

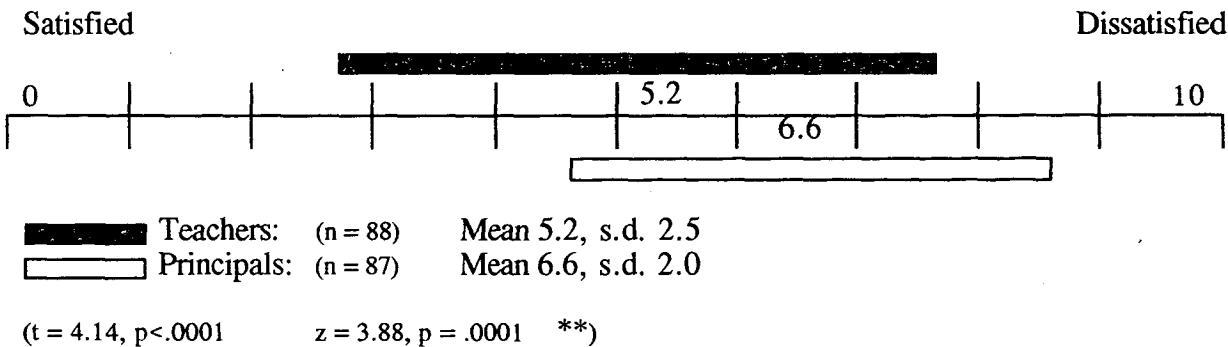
Officially, you have very little opportunity, but you usually manage to twist things to suit you. If not, do what you really want and just lie about what you're doing - professional aren't we! It's the only way to cope with decisions which are patently stupid.

This teacher's ironic use of "professional" is illuminating. On the one hand he clearly believed that it was appropriate for him to exercise his judgement about particular changes and then (in the local vernacular) to 'fudge' the relevant documentation. At the same time, he was clearly aware of the doubts this raised in respect of 'professionalism'.

• Capacity to influence the impact of educational change on teachers’ work

In their responses to Item 26 on the questionnaire, teachers expressed a lack of satisfaction with their capacity to control the impact of change, in general, on their work, but the extent of this lack of satisfaction expressed by teachers was not as pronounced as that projected by their principals. Teachers were ambivalent about this aspect of their work lives, while principals had thought them to be significantly less satisfied than teachers' self-reports showed them to be. These results are presented in Figure 6.8.

Fig. 6.8: Teachers’ feelings about their capacity to influence the impact of educational change on their work.



Teachers and principals agreed on a number of factors which limited teachers' capacity to control the impact of change on their work. These factors included a *shortage of time for teachers to come to terms with multiple simultaneous change forces* and a lack of recognition, outside the school, of the *complexity of the teacher's role*. Where teachers and principals diverged, however, was in the principals' apparent lack of recognition of teachers' capacity to see the situation somewhat stoically. Teachers claimed that they felt able to *accept that they could not control broad social changes*. Even more interestingly, perhaps, teachers were quite willing to assert that they *simply ignored many minor issues* and some of the requirements associated with some change initiatives.

When these teachers referred to a *shortage of time for teachers to come to terms with multiple simultaneous change forces*, their comments, like those of a 44-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania were unequivocal:

Cannot control the impact when there is too much innovation, too many initiatives, at any one time.

This perception of a problem associated with time pressures and multiple, simultaneous innovations was compounded, for many respondents, by a lack of understanding, on the part of others, of the *increasing complexity of the teacher's role* in the 1990s. A 54-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania expressed this view cogently when he said:

Too much pushed on us by people who do not understand the ramifications both to teachers and students.

Permeating many of these teachers' responses to this item was a sense of fatalistic acceptance that they could not control broad social changes and that they should not exhaust themselves by trying to do so. A 43-year-old, male secondary teacher from South Australia's response was indicative of this feeling:

You can't really expect to be able to control all the effects of so many social changes - all you can do is try to survive in the new circumstances.

Nevertheless, these teachers were not necessarily disempowered by either social or educational changes. One strategy employed by some respondents appeared to mean that they *simply ignored many minor issues* or, as was apparent in the words of a 52-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania, evaded others:

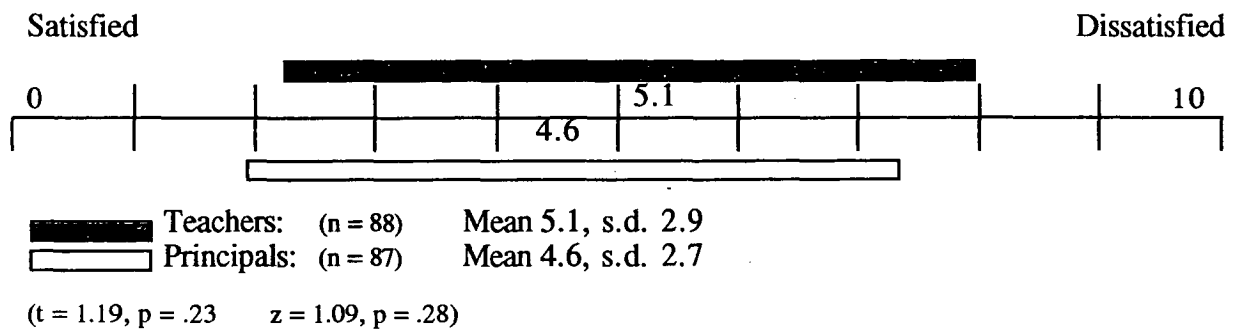
I have been around a long time and on many matters have found the strategies to keep the "ridiculous" at bay.

- **The quality of available resources and equipment**

In their responses to Item 27 on the questionnaire the teachers in this study reported that they were not particularly satisfied with the quality of the resources, facilities and other equipment which were available to them for use in their work. Principals' perceptions of teachers' views in this area were not markedly at variance with those expressed by the teachers themselves. These results are presented in Figure 6.9 on the following page.

Both teachers and principals expressed concern that funding cuts had resulted in a *general lack of maintenance* of facilities and equipment, and that *available funds were insufficient* for the sorts of resources required if students were to receive an adequate preparation for the future. In this regard, furthermore, teachers complained that *funds were often directed to purposes other than real educational priorities*. Teachers, but not principals, often saw the upgrading of schools' administrative equipment and office facilities in this light.

Fig. 6.9: Teachers' feelings about the quality of available facilities and resources.



The perception of the running down of facilities and equipment associated with a *general lack of maintenance*, perhaps a result of the financial problems experienced by both state governments around the time of the study, was seen as distressing by the teachers in this study. One set of indicative remarks came from a 48-year-old, male secondary teacher from Tasmania:

Okay now, but rapidly getting worse. No funds to replace ageing equipment in reality. Many buildings in poor condition. Head Office would never work in school conditions. Increasing expectation is to spend time raising money elsewhere.

What distressed many respondents even more than the lack of maintenance on buildings and equipment was their view that *available funds were insufficient* to provide the resources and equipment necessary to provide an appropriate preparation for students. The comments of a 40-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia exemplified this view:

What resources? Our school has 600 kids and about eight out-of-date computers. Most of the library books are 20 years old.

Given a universal acceptance that the prevailing conditions of economic stringency had had an impact on the funding of education in general, these teachers express disappointment when they felt that *funds were often directed to purposes other than real educational priorities*. A 42-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania was one of many who expressed this view. She said:

Since schools have had to manage their own finances many principals have used school funds to improve the technological equipment used in the administration of the school and the classroom equipment has been run down because money in general has been

cut. Clear evidence of this is to walk into schools and see comfortable administration areas and then classrooms which are messy, unpainted and poorly equipped.

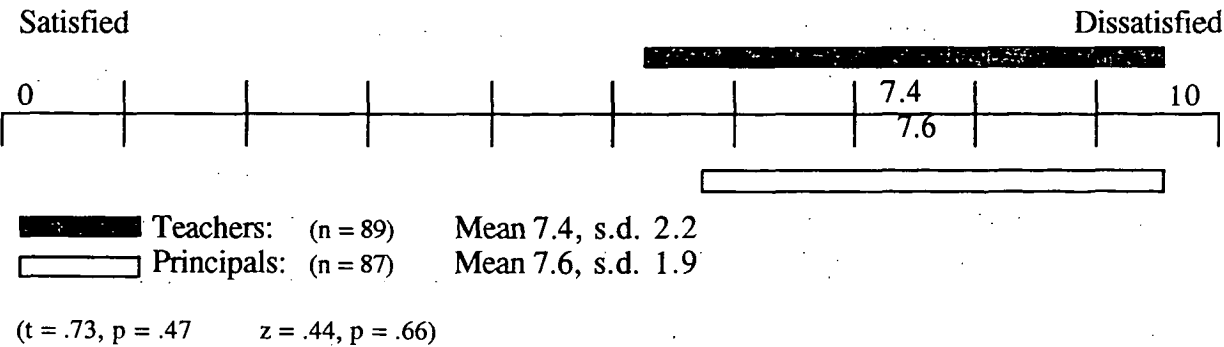
The size of the standard deviation in the teachers’ responses to this item indicated that teachers’ views on this issue varied considerably and that age of, and the facilities available in, their particular current school was a strong influence on the nature of their responses. One 34-year-old, female primary teacher from Tasmania said:

The schools that I have worked in have always been well resourced due to Priority Projects and extra funding.

• **Effort needed to meet all expectations and requirements in teachers’ work**

In their responses to the final questionnaire item teachers reported a clear and consistent lack of satisfaction with the amount of effort needed from them in order that they might meet all expectations and requirements in their work as teachers. School principals had no illusions about teachers' views in this area and projected accurately the level of dissatisfaction that teachers themselves reported. Figure 6.10 presents these results.

Fig. 6.10: Teachers’ feelings about the effort needed to meet all expectations and requirements in their work.



There was similar concurrence between the reasons advanced by teachers and principals to account for teachers' feelings in relation to this aspect of teachers' work lives. Most commonly, teachers and principals cited *massive workload increases* associated with the *increasingly complex nature of the teacher's role*, together with a *lack of time available to respond appropriately* to the plethora of innovations and other expectations, as factors which had led teachers to feel dissatisfied.

Virtually all teacher, and principal, respondents reported a perception of *massive workload increases* for teachers. For all the teachers in this sample, simply participating in this study was an additional task to undertake in an already demanding work schedule. A 41-year-old, male primary teacher from South Australia said:

I'm too tired to answer this question properly. It's 10 o'clock at night, I've had a two-hour staff meeting after school, yard duty at recess time, two letters of complaint from parents, one sick child and a student teacher. Need I go on?

However, it was not only an increase in the amount of work expected or required that generated the high levels of dissatisfaction evident in these teachers' responses. The *increasingly complex nature of the teacher's role* was perceived as particularly problematic by many respondents whose comments were exemplified by the following from a 51-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia:

Teachers are expected to take on board many issues of social justice that parents should be addressing. Our personal time is being taken over more and more by the needs of the job. This is not always seen or acknowledged by the community - sometimes the actions of some slack and/or radical teachers often colour the public's attitudes toward the rest of us who quietly get on with our work and more. Many primary teachers are doing more and more after hours work these days.

Consistent with perceptions of expectations of increases in both the amount and complexity of work demands, these teachers believed that there was a *lack of time available to respond appropriately* to the full range of expectations and requirements of them in their work. This perspective was exemplified in the remarks of a 36-year-old, female secondary teacher from South Australia:

Meeting personal expectations is hard enough, but now there seems to be more to do, more demands on my time in class and out of it, and society sees education as a panacea! No amount of effort could see me meet all expectations.

While all teachers in the sample saw that there was an increasing range of expectations and requirements of them in their work, some of these teachers, as exemplified in the comments of a 37-year-old, female primary teacher from South Australia, perceived the situation in a fatalistic sense:

I realise I can only do the best I can. I'm not growing ulcers for someone else's benefit!

It is clear from the results presented in Figures 6.1 - 6.10, and from the respective qualitative findings, that these teachers were well satisfied with the relationships they shared with their respective principals, with their teacher colleagues and with their students. Furthermore, albeit in a qualified sense, they were satisfied with the relationships shared with, and the level of support received from, the parents of the children they taught.

On the other hand, these teachers were far from satisfied with what they viewed as uninformed criticism and a lack of support for teachers in the wider community in general and from the media and political leaders in particular. These teachers also reported low levels of satisfaction in each of the areas where they were subject to the regulations and expectations of the education systems which employed them. This was evident particularly in teachers' resentment of the amount of work expected of them by their employers and in their lack of enthusiasm for their employers' policy initiatives and the nature of the arrangements under which they were employed as teachers in their respective states. In a similar vein, the study's sample of teachers could be described as at best ambivalent about the quality of the facilities and resources available to them in their work.

These teachers were also less than satisfied in relation to their capacity to exert some degree of influence over educational and social matters which affected their work, with many harbouring resentment about their perceived lack of influence in decision-making processes at both system and school levels.

The principals in this study showed themselves, generally, to be cogent and perceptive observers of teachers at work. In seven of the ten aspects investigated these principals were able to recognise accurately the levels of satisfaction which their teachers were to indicate in their self reports.

There were, however, three aspects in which significant differences between teachers' feelings and principals' understandings of teachers' feelings were detected. These different perspectives related to feelings about levels of community support for teachers; to the level of opportunity available for teachers to influence decision-making in matters related to their work; and to the extent to which teachers felt able to control the impact of change on their work.

In relation to the first of these three differences, principals underestimated the extent to which these teachers were unhappy with the level of support they received from all

members of the community, with the sole exception of parents of the children they taught. Principals felt that teachers would recognise support from the parents and community members with whom the principal had dealings, but this was not the case from the teachers' perspective.

In terms of the second of the three observed differences, principals underestimated the extent to which these teachers were unhappy with the extent of their opportunities to influence educational decision-making in matters related to their work. While both groups agreed that teachers had little opportunity to influence decision-making at the system level, principals clearly felt that teachers had considerable opportunity to do so at the school level. For their part, however, the study's teachers did not perceive that such opportunities existed to any meaningful extent.

Finally, principals overestimated the extent of these teachers' unhappiness with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work. Both groups concurred in the view that the study's teachers could not control the impact of each and every change force, but the principals seemed to be unaware of their teachers' willingness to simply ignore minor changes or requirements when they felt this was necessary.

6.3 Relationships Between Elements of Teachers' Experiences with an Educational Change and their Levels of Satisfaction with Key Aspects of their Work Lives

Three sets of ten correlation analyses were conducted (by Fisher's $r - z$) to test the association between three elements of teachers' experiences of the educational changes seen as affecting their work most strongly and the level of their satisfaction with ten key aspects of their work lives.

The first such association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between teachers' level of commitment to a change's objectives (Questionnaire Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a 4-point scale) and teachers' perceptions of the level of their satisfaction with each of the ten key aspects affecting the quality of their work lives (Responses to Items 19-28 ascribed values from 0 for *Satisfied* to 10 for *Dissatisfied*). Table 6.5, which is presented on the following page, displays the resulting correlations.

Table 6.5: Correlations Between Teachers' Levels of Commitment to the Achievement of Change Objectives and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives.

<i>Items Correlated with Item 11</i>		<i>Correlations</i>	
		<i>r value</i>	<i>p value</i>
Item 19	(Relationship with principal)	.086	.56
Item 20	(Relationships with colleagues)	-.048	.75
Item 21	(Interactions with students)	.351	.01 *
Item 22	(Parent/community support)	.276	.06
Item 23	(Education system policies)	.318	.03 *
Item 24	(Conditions of employment)	.042	.78
Item 25	(Decision-making opportunity)	.377	.008 **
Item 26	(Influence on change impact)	.463	.0008 **
Item 27	(Resource/equipment quality)	.337	.02 *
Item 28	(Degree of effort required)	.230	.12

These results gave some indication that low levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals of a particular change tended to be associated with higher levels of dissatisfaction with the nature of teachers' interactions with students (Item 21), with the nature of the policies of their education systems (Item 23), with the level of opportunity to maintain control over decision-making in matters related to their work as teachers (Item 25), with their own capacity to control the impact of change on their work (Item 26), and with the quality of resources and equipment available to them in their work as teachers (Item 27)..

The second association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between teachers' degree of opportunity to influence decision-making related to change implementation (Item 10 responses ascribed the following values: *Adoption and Method Mandated* = 4; *Adoption Mandated, Method Optional* = 3; *Adoption Optional, Method Mandated* = 2; *Adoption and Method Optional* = 1) and teachers' perceptions of the level of their satisfaction with each of the ten key aspects affecting the quality of their work lives. The logical possibility investigated in this regard was that there might well be a positive association with the extent to which teachers were allowed to participate meaningfully in decision-making related to the implementation of educational change and the extent to which they would feel satisfied with key facets of the quality of their work lives. The resulting correlations are presented on the following page in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Correlations Between Teachers' Opportunities to Influence Decision-Making Related to Change Implementation and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives.

<i>Items Correlated with Item 10</i>		<i>Correlations</i>	
		<i>r value</i>	<i>p value</i>
Item 19	(Relationship with principal)	.206	.16
Item 20	(Relationships with colleagues)	.020	.89
Item 21	(Interactions with students)	.246	.09
Item 22	(Parent/community support)	.169	.25
Item 23	(Education system policies)	.318	.03 *
Item 24	(Conditions of employment)	.018	.90
Item 25	(Decision-making opportunity)	.380	.007 **
Item 26	(Influence on change impact)	.360	.01 *
Item 27	(Resource/equipment quality)	.243	.10
Item 28	(Degree of effort required)	.354	.01 *

These results gave some indication that low levels of opportunities to influence decision-making relating to the implementation of a significant change (as a consequence, for example, of mandated adoption and implementation requirements) tended to be associated with high levels of dissatisfaction with the policy directions of their education system (Item 23), with opportunities available to maintain control over decision-making in matters related to work as a teacher (Item 25), with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work (Item 26), and with the amount of effort necessary to meet all the expectations and requirements in their work as teachers (Item 28).

The third such association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the nature of the overall effects of the change on teachers' work lives (Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a scale of 1 - 5) and teachers' perceptions of the level of their satisfaction with each of the ten key aspects affecting the quality of their work lives. Merely a logical possibility underpinned this set of correlation tests: it seemed reasonable to predict that a teacher reporting positive effects from involvement with an educational change would report higher levels of work life satisfaction than would teachers who had reported negative effects resulting from their involvement with a significant change. Table 6.7, which appears on the following page, displays the results of the relevant correlation analyses.

Table 6.7: **Correlations Between Teachers’ Perceptions of the Overall Impact of a Significant Change on their Work and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives.**

<i>Items Correlated with Item 4</i>		<i>Correlations</i>	
		<i>r value</i>	<i>p value</i>
Item 19	(Relationship with principal)	.089	.55
Item 20	(Relationships with colleagues	- .067	.65
Item 21	(Interactions with students)	.309	.03 *
Item 22	(Parent/community support)	.226	.12
Item 23	(Education system policies)	.284	.05
Item 24	(Conditions of employment)	.001	.98
Item 25	(Decision-making opportunity)	.268	.07
Item 26	(Influence on change impact)	.563	<.0001 ***
Item 27	(Resource/equipment quality)	.147	.32
Item 28	(Degree of effort required)	.428	.002 **

These results gave some indication that reports of positive or negative effects on teachers’ work lives resulting from a recent significant change tended to be associated with higher levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction respectively with the nature of teachers’ interactions with their students (Item 21), with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work as teachers (Item 26), and with the amount of effort necessary to meet all the expectations and requirements in their work as teachers (Item 28). Furthermore, these findings indicated that the impact of the implementation processes involved with certain educational changes may well have had significant implications for how these teachers felt about these two aspects of their work lives.

Summary of the Findings Related to Research Question 3

The major findings of the study related to Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their work lives in the current educational change context?* can be summarised briefly as follows:

- These teachers derived their work-related satisfaction from the teaching-learning relationships they shared with students and from a sense of self-efficacy which came from a belief that they had performed well in the teacher role. The effects of recent

significant educational change on these sources of satisfaction were mixed, although negative effects outnumbered positive effects;

- The sources of dissatisfaction at work for these teachers related to frustrations associated with obstacles which impaired their capacity to perform well in the role of teacher. The effects of recent significant educational change on these sources of work-related dissatisfaction were perceived to magnify these obstacles to self-efficacy, including increased workload pressures and consequent difficulty in coping with the demands of the teacher role;
- These teachers reported high levels of satisfaction with three key aspects of their work lives: the working relationship between teacher and principal; working relationships with teacher colleagues; and the nature of teacher-student interactions;
- These teachers reported ambivalent feelings about five key aspects of their work lives: the level of parent and community support for teachers; their conditions of employment; their opportunities to maintain control over educational decision-making; their capacity to influence the impact of educational change on their work; and the quality of the facilities and resources available to them in their work;
- These teachers reported that they were dissatisfied with two key aspects of their work lives: the policy directions of their respective education systems; and the amount of effort needed for them to meet all of the expectations and requirements of the teacher's role;
- These teachers most commonly attributed their levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with each of the ten key aspects of work life investigated to actions taken, or characteristics possessed, by others, and hence to matters which these teachers saw themselves as unable to influence to any meaningful extent;
- Reports of low levels of teacher satisfaction with the opportunities available to them to maintain control over decision-making in matters related to their work were associated with reports of very low levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals of particular educational changes;
- Reports of low levels of teacher satisfaction with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work were associated with reports of very low levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals of particular educational changes;
- Reports of low levels of teacher satisfaction with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work were associated with reports that their experiences of particular educational changes had produced negative overall impacts on their work lives; and

- Similarly, reports of teacher dissatisfaction with the amount of effort needed to meet all the expectations and requirements of them in their work were associated with reports that their experiences of the processes involved in particular educational changes had produced negative overall impacts on their work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 4

How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?

Introduction

The findings of the study which relate to the fourth of the study's research questions, *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?* are presented in this chapter.

The findings which describe teachers' own perceptions of the extent of their commitment to the achievement of change objectives, of the nature of the overall effect of change on their work lives, and of their own typical mode of response to change initiatives are presented here. These results are accompanied by those which describe teachers' claims about how they might be likely to respond to future changes in education.

The findings presented in this chapter were obtained from all three of the data gathering instruments which were employed in the study. In the interrogation of the data from which the findings related to Research Question 4 were derived, three main single item analyses were conducted on the questionnaire data. These three main analysis categories were as follows:

- Level of commitment to current change (Item 11);
- Usual style of response to educational change (Item 18);
- Impact of current change on future response (Item 16).

The interview data were analysed manually through the modified grounded theory approach and procedures described earlier in Section 3.5.1 of Chapter Three. The coding categories developed and used in the analysis related to Research Question 4, as this was investigated by the teacher interviews, were as follows:

- Current change experiences and predictions about future changes
- Current attitude to most significant change
- Impact of current change determining nature of future response?
- Influence of domain of current/future changes
- Influence of nature/purpose of future changes

These codes were developed from the responses to interview questions which investigated teachers' views in relation to their current feelings about the change which had affected their work most (Question 14) and about whether their experiences with that change had altered the extent to which they might approach future changes more positively or negatively (Question 15).

The findings related to Research Question 4 are presented in this chapter under four sub-headings:

- 7.1 Teachers' level of commitment to the achievement of change objectives;
- 7.2 Teachers' perceptions of their typical responses to educational change initiatives;
- 7.3 Influence of experiences with significant change on teachers' predicted responses to future changes in education; and
- 7.4 Relationships between elements of teachers' experiences with an educational change and their predicted likely response to future changes in education.

It is, therefore, that element of the study's conceptual framework which was shown in Figure 1.3 to link directly to Research Question 4, namely *teachers' dispositions toward future changes in education* which comes under examination in this chapter.

A summary of the findings of the study in relation to Research Question 4 is presented at the conclusion of the current chapter. The links which bring together the findings of the study in relation to each of its four research questions are identified and discussed subsequently in Chapter Eight.

7.1 Teachers' Levels of Commitment to the Achievement of Change Objectives

The degree of commitment felt by teachers to the achievement of the goals associated with the change that had most affected them in their work was investigated in Item 11 on the questionnaire. The response options *Completely Committed*, *Firmly Committed*, *Partially Committed* and *Not at all Committed* were ascribed values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively on a 4-point scale, with an arithmetic mean of 2.5. The results of this process, as presented in Table 7.1, seem to indicate markedly higher levels of teacher commitment to the achievement of the goals of changes in the Teaching/Learning domain than to the achievement of the goals of changes in the Organisational domain, and considerably higher level of commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with changes which emanated from internal sources than to the achievement of the goals associated with changes from external sources.

Table 7.1: Teachers' Level of Commitment to Achieving the Goals of Most Significant Changes

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Level of Teacher Commitment</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>			
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	2.62	3
Organisational	(n=40)	2.00	2
<i>Origin Source:</i>			
Internal	(n=14)	3.07	3
External	(n=72)	2.18	2
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	2.36	2
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	2.40	2

When the results presented in Table 7. 1 were subjected to parametric (unpaired t-tests) and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U) comparison tests, these tests confirmed the significance

of the differences between the extent of teacher commitment toward Teaching/Learning changes in comparison to Organisational changes on the one hand, and the similarly significant difference between the extent of teacher commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with changes originating internally in comparison to the goals of changes originating externally. These tests further confirmed the absence of any significant difference between teachers' self-reported levels of commitment and the levels of teacher commitment observed by principals. The results of these comparison tests are presented in Table 7.1(a).

Table 7.1(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Level of Commitment

Sub-Group Categories	Comparison Test Results				
	Parametric t-value	p-value	Non-Parametric z-value	p-value	
<i>Domain Affected:</i>					
Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 3.01	p = .003	z = 2.98	p = .003	**
<i>Origin Source:</i>					
Internal: External	t = 3.26	p = .002	z = 3.11	p = .002	**
<i>Role:</i>					
Teacher: Principal	t = .24	p = .86	z = .41	p = .68	

7.2 Teachers' Perceptions of their Typical Responses to Educational Change Initiatives

As this aspect of the research was investigating how experience with a significant change might affect teachers' likely responses to future innovations, it was necessary to determine teachers' perceptions of the response style they had adopted typically in their work lives.

The results obtained from Item 18 on the questionnaires are presented in Table 7.2 on the following page. In this table it is clear that the great majority of teachers (63 percent) claimed that they responded typically to educational change by making adaptations to meet the requirements of the local context. Principals also saw teachers primarily as 'adaptors' (52 percent), although not to the same extent as was evident in teachers views of themselves and of their own characteristic behaviour.

Table 7.2: Teachers' Characteristic Response to Educational Changes

		<i>Response Style Categories</i>				
		<i>Adopt</i>	<i>Adapt</i>	<i>Comply</i>	<i>Resist</i>	<i>Other</i>
Teachers	(n=89)	3 (3%)	56 (63%)	15 (17%)	6 (7%)	9 (10%)
Principals	(n=87)	-	45 (52%)	17 (20%)	17 (20%)	8 (9%)

In order to make comparisons between the views of teachers and principals relating to these teachers' typical response to educational change, it was necessary to convert the category data of *Adopt*, *Adapt*, *Comply* and *Resist* into continuous data with scores of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Once converted from category to continuous data, the results presented in Table 7. 2 were subjected to parametric and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests. The results of these comparison tests are presented in Table 7.2(a).

Table 7.2(a): Teacher-Principal Comparisons for Characteristic Response

<i>Role</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Parametric p-value</i>	<i>Non-Parametric z-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Teacher: Principal	t = 2.32	p = .02	z = 2.93	p = .004 *

These results indicated that the principals in this study saw teachers as significantly more likely to respond characteristically to educational change by resisting such initiatives than did these teachers, few of whom saw themselves characteristically as resisters.

For the teachers interviewed in this study, experience of a significant change did not appear to be associated with any marked decrease in the level of suspicion with which future change was regarded. Indeed, it transpired that, even for those teachers who had responded successfully to the requirements of a change about which they had been uncertain or negative initially, such achievement did not translate automatically, or even necessarily, into positive receptivity toward future changes. Respondents explained this by referring to the pace and number of contemporary change initiatives as constituting

significant problems for them. There was, therefore, an entrenched resistance toward the educational changes of the future, as the teachers in this sample sought the respite they saw as necessary for them to be able to take stock of their current situation and to respond properly to existing expectations. An *acceptance of the inevitability of change; nostalgia for the past; a sense of survival and coping* in the face of current change expectations; and considerable *cynicism* about the real motives behind, and results of, educational innovations, characterised both these teachers' feelings about educational changes and the impact which they claimed such changes had had on the quality of their working lives.

No interviewees presented as opponents of educational change *per se*, nor was there any sense in which these teachers expressed the view that change could be resisted fruitfully. Comments such as, "Change is always with us", "Change is universal" and, "Nothing stays the same forever", were common. Typically, respondents accepted that change had been and would continue to be part of their work context. Perhaps the real issue was that these teachers had not opposed the notion of change itself, but had expected change processes to be managed better, especially at the system level.

A South Australian secondary teacher from a large urban high school described his responses to national curriculum profiles which were, in his view, then the most recent major change, in the following terms:

I'm prepared to at least look at them and give them a go. Most people have come to accept it and are now sort of working on it.

A Tasmanian teacher, then working at a primary school located in a community characterised by high proportions of the population dependent on the social welfare system, was more accepting than were most of her colleagues of even those educational changes which seem to deliver few advantages to schools, teachers or students:

I have always been fairly positive towards educational changes and, in fact, I even understood when we had to have funding cuts.

It was perhaps unsurprising that, consistent with the overall ageing of the members of the teaching profession in Australia, a degree of nostalgia for better, or at least, less paradoxical, times past was expressed by many respondents. In some of the literature this is occasionally referred to as the fond recall of a *golden age* in which the quality of

teachers' work lives was supposedly so much better, and so much less tenuous and problematic than many perceive it to be in current circumstances.

A teacher based at a South Australian area school (the nomenclature would be "district high school" in the Tasmanian context) said, for example:

I don't believe schools are the happy places to work in they used to be. Morale is nowhere near what it was in the past.

A city-based primary colleague also felt that things were not as they once were in relation to the level and quality of the support services provided by the education system:

A lot of help has fizzled out over the years. Years ago - we are talking 20 years - we used to get a lot more help than we do now.

The comments of two Tasmanian primary teachers were indicative of a sense of sorrow that something valuable had been lost in the moves from the old days to the present context.

The job of teaching has changed totally from when I started teaching about 18 or 20 years ago. So much of the peripheral stuff is now being done by teachers and the loss of the focus on the classroom concerns me a lot.

I think we need to get back to a point where we value the people in the system and the people who are, in fact, doing the job. The love of the job has gone from what it was, and that is sad.

While, in their interviews, many of these teachers reported difficulties in understanding and accepting new processes, procedures and expectations associated with educational changes of all varieties, others had been able to surmount most of their problems and, within a relatively short time, come to terms with the requirements of the innovations. Numerous teachers' comments indicated that, despite early fears and misgivings in the context of uncertainty and concern about their capacity to cope, they typically found that this anxiety receded as they became more familiar with the innovation. Much of the initial concern expressed by teachers was, therefore, fear of the unknown. To some extent, surviving such a period of uncertainty seemed to have made some teachers feel more confident about their capacity to cope with whatever a potentially unstable future might hold in store for them.

The introduction of the TCE (Tasmanian Certificate of Education) had a strong initial effect on a Tasmanian secondary college teacher.

It was a big threat because it threatened the way you taught and who you were and how you did things. But I think that all that paranoia has started to go away - it's nowhere near as bad as it was and anyone who was being rational about it could have seen that from the beginning.

Other comments from Tasmanian teachers also reflected this notion that the eventual reality of even large-scale changes has not been as bad as they had feared initially.

My current feelings are that we are over the hump - it's a bit of a "been there, done that" feeling. I am a bit tired, I guess, but more confident. There was a bit of trepidation in the beginning but what seemed to be insurmountable was eventually surmountable.

It's almost becoming the devil I know.

In South Australia, some teachers had seemingly developed some self-protective attitudes as part of their response to change initiatives, as indicated in the following two remarks:

You've got to learn to go with the flow. If you don't go with the flow, you'll go around the bend.

My attitude is, no matter what bureaucracies give teachers to do in the classroom, you eventually find a way of coping with it - whether you do it properly or whatever is up to the individual teacher.

For many of the teachers interviewed in the study there was a firm belief that educational change initiatives were often promoted by people who were more interested in advancing their own careers than in achieving improvements in education. This perception, whether fair or unfair, accurate or inaccurate, specific or general, was apparently the source of considerable cynicism in teachers' views about educational innovations. This cynicism was compounded further by a commonly held belief that most initiatives produced little in the way of tangible benefits for teachers or students. What is more, many teachers viewed current change initiatives as transitory, in the sense that they would soon be replaced by other initiatives. Hence *tactical delay* was seen as a viable response to many change initiatives.

There was little or no meaningful difference between the responses of interviewees from

either state system or level of teaching in this area. The following five responses were representative:

One always feels a little cynical about change from the big bureaucracy. Feeling fairly helpless, you feel negative about any change before it happens.

There is tremendous cynicism amongst practising teachers when it comes to innovations, and sometimes, therefore, rejection of innovations which are very valuable and very worthwhile because of suspicions that this is just someone's bandwagon.

There has been a lot of change and change isn't good if it's just change for the sake of change. There has been a bit of that going on - where someone has come along with a new design and everyone jumps on the bandwagon. So teachers are getting sick of too much change for the sake of change. In the classroom nothing much has really changed though.

More and more teachers are becoming increasingly cynical saying, "Okay, this was the flavour of the month last year, how long is it going to last?"

Sometimes it's just people in power wanting to get more power. A lot of changes that have happened here in the Education Department are all just big words on paper - they don't always get followed through.

7.3 Influence of Experiences with Significant Change on Teachers' Predicted Responses to Future Changes in Education

In the parts of the interviews which dealt with how teachers' experiences with a significant change might affect their future responses to innovations in education, respondents' comments were invariably accompanied by the caveat, *Well, it depends on what the future changes might be*. This was often amplified by the explanatory remark, *If I can see benefits for the kids or for me, then I'd respond positively. If not, well I just wouldn't want to be part of it*. Four themes emerged from interviewees' fuller responses to these questions: an *acceptance of the inevitability of change*; *nostalgia for the past*; a sense of *surviving and coping* in the face of current change expectations; and considerable *cynicism* about the real motives, behind, and results of, current and future educational innovations.

The teachers who responded to the questionnaire were asked (via Item 16) whether or not their experience with a significant change would affect their likely response to future changes in education. The results are presented overleaf in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Will Experience with Most Significant Change Affect Teachers' Responses to Future Educational Changes?

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Future Response Affected?</i>		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>				
Teaching/Learning	(n=47)	23 (49%)	12 (26%)	12 (26%)
Organisational	(n=40)	27 (68%)	7 (18%)	6 (15%)
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal	(n=14)	7 (50%)	3 (21%)	4 (29%)
External	(n=72)	42 (58%)	15 (21%)	15 (21%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=89)	51 (57%)	19 (21%)	19 (21%)
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=87)	64 (74%)	8 (9%)	15 (17%)

When the results presented in Table 7.3 were converted from category data to continuous data (*Yes* = 3, *Uncertain* = 2, *No* = 1) and then subjected to parametric (unpaired t-tests) and the equivalent non-parametric comparison tests, it emerged that there were no differences apparent among any of the sub-groups of the teacher sample (although, again, the results for the separate demographic sub-groups are not presented here). Similarly, there were no statistical differences apparent among any of the different types of educational changes.

The results of these comparison tests are presented below in Table 7.3(a).

Table 7.3(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Future Response Affected

<i>Sub-Group Categories</i>	<i>Comparison Test Results</i>			
	<i>Parametric</i>		<i>Non-Parametric</i>	
	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>z-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>Domain Affected:</i>				
Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 1.52	p = .13	z = 1.44	p = .15
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal: External	t = .38	p = .71	z = .40	p = .69
<i>Role:</i>				
Teacher: Principal	t = 2.56	p = .01	z = 2.06	p = .04 *

It is apparent in Table 7.3(a), however, that principals were far more ready than were these teachers themselves to believe that teachers' future responses had been affected by their recent experiences. This may be suggestive of principals as deeper and longer-term theorists about educational change in comparison with teachers. This might seem logical in the prevailing circumstances, given the increasing level of personal responsibility for the implementation of systemic change priorities which has been devolved to principals.

Those teachers (n=51) who felt that their likely response to future changes in education had been affected by their experiences with a recent significant change were asked, in the second part of Item 16, to indicate whether these experiences would lead them to respond more positively or more negatively to future innovations. The results are presented below in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Predicted Nature of Responses to Future Changes in Education

<i>Respondent Categories</i>		<i>Nature of Future Response</i>		
		<i>More Positive</i>	<i>More Negative</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
<i>Work Domain Affected:</i>				
Teaching/Learning	(n=23)	8 (35%)	14 (61%)	1 (4%)
Organisational	(n=27)	5 (19%)	22 (81%)	-
<i>Origin Source:</i>				
Internal	(n= 7)	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	-
External	(n= 42)	8 (19%)	33 (79%)	1 (2%)
ALL TEACHERS	(n=51)	14 (27%)	36 (71%)	1 (2%)
ALL PRINCIPALS	(n=64)	18 (28%)	44 (69%)	2 (3%)

When the data summarised above in Table 7.4 were converted from category data to continuous data (*More Positive* = 3, *Uncertain* = 2, *More Negative* = 1) and then subjected to parametric and non-parametric comparison tests, it emerged that there were no significant differences detected between the responses of teachers and principals. Similarly, no differences were detected between the responses of teachers whose experiences had been with changes which had impacted on different work domains. Only in the case of the origin of the most significant change did the responses of these teachers diverge significantly, with teachers who had experienced a change which had emanated from an

external source predicting much more negative likely responses to future changes in education. The results of these comparison tests are presented below in Table 7.4(a).

Table 7.4(a): Sub-Group Comparisons for Response to Future Changes

Sub-Group Categories	Comparison Test Results			
	Parametric		Non-Parametric	
	t-value	p-value	z-value	p-value
Domain Affected: Teach/Learn: Organ'l	t = 1.49	p = .14	z = 1.20	p = .23
Origin Source: Internal: External	t = 3.05	p = .004	z = 2.17	p = .03 *
Role: Teacher: Principal	t = .05	p = .96	z = .02	p = .99

In this particular area, the results of the current study are consistent with those which might be expected in the light of much of the burgeoning literature covering change in education. Three key ideas spanning the time frame of that literature from the 1970s to the present day (see, for example, Doyle & Ponder 1977-8; Fullan 1993b) might be paraphrased as follows: first, *you can't mandate what matters*; second, teachers will *adapt rather than adopt* innovations; and third, teachers will support only those innovations which they see as offering *practical benefits* for their own teaching or their students' learning.

Consistent with *you can't mandate what matters*, representative comments from teachers in this study included the following:

At one time something from the Department would have been something you did instantly. Now I feel like saying, "When you convince me it really needs to be done, then I'll do it. Does it really need to be done or are you just creating busy work for people?" The Department needs to justify the relevance of it.

Consistent with teachers as *adaptors rather than adopters*, representative comments included:

I don't think that anything is a mandatory thing that you have to implement. Pretty much what you do in your classroom is your own business - what happens behind that door is you, and how you operate is very much a personal thing.

Consistent with the application of a *practicality ethic* in decisions related to implementation of educational change, typical remarks of teachers interviewed in the study included:

If it's a change where I can see there will be benefit for students and for me, well then, I will respond positively.

I don't believe in change, unless it's for the better, unless someone can say, "This is going to be better for the students and for yourself".

You have to look at what the changes are going to be. If they are good for the school and good for the children, then you have to support them.

In effect therefore, despite expressing concerns about the pace and number of educational changes with which they have to contend; despite expressing concerns about the educational worth and real motives underlying many change initiatives; and despite expressing concerns about increased workloads and stress resulting from the current educational change context, the teachers in this study emerged as survivors. Furthermore, they emerged as *autonomous* and *empowered survivors*, in the sense that what they did in their classrooms remained largely a matter only between themselves and their students and in the sense that they claimed the right to ultimate decision-making in implementation matters at the classroom level. In addition, they maintained a continuing focus on their classroom activities as the core tasks of their profession. Taken to its logical conclusion, the autonomy of the teacher's role, and the empowerment afforded to those who occupy that role, gave those teachers who participated in this study a form of *immunity* from what they might have regarded as the worst excesses of the current change context. While such immunity can be said to equate to a capacity to resist key aspects of an unwanted educational change, it cannot be said to translate automatically to resistance *per se*.

7.4 Relationships Between Elements of Teachers' Experiences with an Educational Change and their Predicted Likely Response to Future Changes in Education

Seven single correlation analyses were conducted (by Fisher's $r - z$, rather than by employing one regression analysis, in order to keep the style of analysis consistent) to test the association between various aspects of teachers' experiences with a significant educational change and the ways in which these teachers claimed these experiences would affect how they would be likely to respond to future changes in education.

The first such association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the perceived source of origin of a significant educational change (Questionnaire Item 5 responses classified into *Internal* and *External* categories, subsequently converted to continuous data as 1 and 2 respectively) and the degree of commitment teachers' felt toward the achievement of change goals (Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a 4-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .350$ ($p = .0007$). This result indicated that these teachers described themselves as more committed to achieving the goals of changes which originated from sources internal to their work context than to achieving the goals of changes which originated from external sources.

The second association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the proximity of the main objective of a significant educational change to teachers' work contexts (Item 8 responses classified into *Internal* and *External* categories, subsequently converted to continuous data as 1 and 2 respectively) and the degree of commitment teachers' felt toward the achievement of change goals (Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a 4-point scale). The resulting correlation was $r = .193$ ($p = .07$). This level of correlation was not regarded as particularly significant educationally, nor was it statistically significant by the criteria adopted in the study.

The third association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the degree of opportunity available for teachers to influence decision-making related to a significant educational change (Item 10 responses interpreted as continuous data as follows: *Adoption & Method of Implementation Both Mandated* = 1, *Adoption Mandated / Method of Implementation Not Prescribed* = 2, *Adoption Optional / Method of Implementation Mandatory* = 3, *Neither Adoption nor Method of Implementation Mandated* = 4) and the degree of commitment teachers felt toward the achievement of change goals (Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a scale ranging from 4 to 1). The resulting correlation was $r = .467$ ($p = .0007$). This result indicated that high levels of opportunity to exercise their own judgement in decision-making were associated with high levels of commitment by these teachers to the achievement of change objectives. Similarly, restricted opportunities to participate in decision-making related to adoption or implementation of significant educational changes were associated with low levels of commitment from these teachers to the achievement of the objectives of such changes.

The fourth association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the nature of the roles played by teachers in the implementation of a significant educational change (Item 9 responses categorised into *Supportive*, *Compliant* and *Resistant* roles, subsequently converted into continuous data as 3, 2 and 1 respectively) and these teachers' predicted likely responses toward future changes in education (Item 16 responses: *More Positive*, *Uncertain*, or *More Negative*, subsequently converted into continuous data as 3, 2 and 1 respectively). The resulting correlation was $r = .548$ ($p = .0001$). This result indicated that those teachers who played supportive roles in the processes involved in one change tended to predict that they would respond even more positively to future changes in education, while those teachers who had played resistant roles in their involvement with a recent change tended to predict even more negative responses to future innovations.

The fifth association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the overall impact of a significant educational change on teachers' work (Item 4 responses ranging from *Very Positive* to *Very Negative* on a 5-point scale) and the nature of teachers' predicted likely response toward future changes in education (Item 16 responses: *More Positive*, *Uncertain*, or *More Negative*, subsequently converted into continuous data as 3, 2 and 1 respectively). The resulting correlation was $r = .655$ ($p = <.0001$). This result indicated that those teachers who reported positive impacts from one change tended to predict that they would respond positively to future changes in education, while those teachers who reported negative impacts from their involvement with a recent change tended to predict their own even more negative responses to future innovations.

The sixth association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between teachers' levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals of a significant educational change (Item 11 responses ranging from *Completely Committed* to *Not at all Committed* on a 4-point scale) and the nature of teachers' predicted likely response toward future changes in education (Item 16 responses: *More Positive*, *Uncertain*, or *More Negative*, subsequently converted into continuous data as 3, 2 and 1 respectively). The resulting correlation was $r = .745$ ($p = <.0001$). This result indicated that those teachers who reported high levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with one change tended to predict they would respond more positively to future changes in education, while those teachers who reported low levels of commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with a recent change tended to predict even more negative responses to future innovations.

The seventh association to be investigated involved a possible relationship between the degree of opportunity available for teachers to influence decision-making related to a significant educational change (Item 10 responses interpreted as continuous data as follows: *Adoption & Method of Implementation Both Mandated* = 1, *Adoption Mandated / Method of Implementation Not Prescribed* = 2, *Adoption Optional / Method of Implementation Mandatory* = 3, *Neither Adoption nor Method of Implementation Mandated* = 4) and the nature of teachers' predicted likely response toward future changes in education (Item 16 responses: *More Positive*, *Uncertain*, or *More Negative*, subsequently converted into continuous data as 3, 2 and 1 respectively). The resulting correlation was $r = .380$ ($p = .006$). This result indicated that those teachers who reported higher levels of opportunity for participation in decision-making in the processes associated with one change tended to predict that they would respond more positively to future changes, while those teachers who reported low levels of opportunity for participation in decision-making in their recent experiences tended to predict more negative responses to future innovations.

Finally, one set of ten correlation analyses was conducted (by Fisher's $r - z$) to test the association between teachers' satisfaction with the key aspects affecting the quality of their work lives (Responses to Items 19-28 ascribed values from 0 for *Satisfied* to 10 for *Dissatisfied*) and their likely responses toward future changes in education (Item 16 responses: *More Positive*, *Uncertain* or *More Negative*, scored 3, 2 and 1 respectively). The resulting correlations are presented in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5: Correlations Between Teachers' Predicted Responses to Future Changes in Education and their Degree of Satisfaction with Ten Key Aspects of their Work Lives.

Items Correlated with Item 16b		Correlations	
		r value	p value
Item 19	(Relationship with principal)	.064	.67
Item 20	(Relationships with colleagues)	-.126	.39
Item 21	(Interactions with students)	.235	.11
Item 22	(Parent/community support)	.302	.04 *
Item 23	(Education system policies)	.359	.01 *
Item 24	(Conditions of employment)	.028	.85
Item 25	(Decision-making opportunity)	.520	.0001 **
Item 26	(Influence on change impact)	.321	.03 *
Item 27	(Resource/equipment quality)	.075	.61
Item 28	(Degree of effort required)	.471	.0006 **

The results presented in Table 7.5 indicate that the levels of these teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with five of the ten aspects investigated: the level of parental and community support for teachers (Item 22); the policy directions of education systems (Item 23); opportunities to maintain control of decision-making in matters related to their work as teachers (Item 25); the extent to which they felt able to influence the impact of change on their work (Item 26); and the amount of effort necessary to meet all expectations and requirements in their work as teachers (Item 28) were all associated with the nature of these teachers' predictions of their responses to future changes in education. Satisfaction with these five aspects of teachers' work lives was associated with predictions of positive responses to future changes in education. Conversely, teachers who were dissatisfied with these five aspects of their work lives tended to predict that they would respond more negatively toward future changes in education.

Summary of the Findings Related to Research Question 4

The major findings of the study related to Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?* can be summarised briefly as follows:

- While the level of overall teacher commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with recent significant educational changes was relatively modest, these teachers' felt most committed to achieving the goals of changes in the Teaching/Learning domain and those changes which had emanated from sources internal to the teachers' work contexts. Conversely, these teachers felt least committed to the achievement of the goals associated with changes in the Organisational domain and those changes which had emanated from sources external to the teachers' work contexts;
- The teachers in this study did not respond typically to educational innovations by merely adopting the innovation in its original form: they saw their typical response to educational change as one in which they adapted the provisions of the innovation in order that it might better fit their particular local teaching context. While the principals in this study saw teachers as more characteristically resistant to change than did the teachers themselves, a majority of these principals also saw teachers' typical response to educational change as one in which they adapted innovations in the light of local circumstances;

- For these teachers, experience of a significant change did not appear to be associated with any marked decrease in the level of suspicion with which future change was regarded. The pace and number of contemporary change initiatives was said by these teachers to have constituted a significant obstacle in this regard. There was, therefore, an element of entrenched resistance toward the educational changes of the future;
- The attitudes toward educational change held by the teachers in this study were characterised by an acceptance of the inevitability of change; by apparent nostalgia for the past; by a sense of survival and coping in the face of current change expectations; and by considerable cynicism about the real motives behind, and results of, educational innovations;
- Those teachers whose recent experience had been with a change which had emanated from external sources predicted that their response to future changes in education would be significantly more negative, while those teachers whose experience had been with a recent educational change which had emanated from sources internal to their work contexts were not so predisposed to approach future changes negatively;
- The responses of the teachers in this study showed that three of the tenets of the traditional international literature on change implementation: innovation proponents *can't mandate what matters*; teachers *adapt, rather than adopt*, innovations; and teachers *actively support only those innovations which they judge to offer practical benefits* to themselves or to their students, were as pervasive among this group of teachers as they have been reported to be elsewhere. Hence these teachers reserved the right to make final judgements about changes in education, and thus preserved considerable autonomy for themselves as teachers;
- The internal or external nature of the source of origin of changes in education was more important than the degree to which the objectives of such changes were perceived to relate closely to these teachers' work contexts in determining their levels of commitment to the actual achievement of these objectives;
- The extent to which these teachers had opportunities to influence decision-making in relation to the adoption or implementation of educational changes was significantly associated with the level of commitment they reported toward the achievement of the objectives associated with such changes;
- These teachers' predicted likely responses to future changes in education were influenced strongly by the nature of their experiences with a recent educational change. Those teachers who had played supportive roles in recent change processes, who

claimed high levels of commitment to the achievement of the objectives of that change and who described the overall nature of the impact of that change on their work in positive terms indicated that their response to future changes in education would be even more positive. Conversely, those teachers who had played resistant roles in their experiences with a recent change, who held low levels of commitment to the achievement of the same change's objectives and who viewed the overall impact of that change on their work as negative indicated that their responses to future changes in education would be even more negative;

- These teachers' predicted likely responses to future innovations also were influenced by the extent to which they had been able to participate meaningfully in decision-making related to the adoption and implementation of a recent change. Teachers who experienced high levels of participation in decision-making predicted more positive responses to future innovations, while teachers who had experienced very restricted opportunities for participation in decision-making predicted that they would respond negatively to future educational changes;
- The levels of these teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the degree of support received from parents and the community, with the policy directions of their education system, with their opportunity to maintain control of decision-making in matters related to their work, with the extent of their capacity to influence the impact of change on their work and with the amount of effort necessary for them to meet all expectations and requirements in their work were associated with how they described their likely responses to future changes in education. General satisfaction across these five aspects of teachers' work lives was associated with predictions of positive responses to future changes, while those teachers who expressed general dissatisfaction across these five aspects of their work lives tended to predict that they would respond more negatively toward future changes in education.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The findings of the study in relation to each of the four research questions investigated were presented in the preceding four chapters. In this final chapter of the thesis these findings are discussed further, the study's conclusions are identified, and appropriate recommendations are made within a structure consisting of eight sections. Subsequently, the key argument drawn from the conclusions of the study, as this relates to the need for direct and transparent links between teachers' work and changes in education, is reiterated at the end of the chapter.

Briefly, the eight main sections of this final chapter present the following information:

8.1 The educational changes which affect teachers most in their work lives

The findings related to Research Question 1: *Which recent educational changes are perceived by teachers as affecting them most in their work lives?* were described in Chapter Four. Regardless of state of origin, grade level taught, gender or length of teaching experience, these teachers reported that the recent educational changes which had most affected them in their work emanated more from external, rather than internal, sources and that the range of such changes had impacted on both the Organisational and the Teaching/Learning domains of their work. The patterns inherent in these findings are discussed and a number of key conclusions drawn from them are detailed subsequently in this section.

8.2 The effects of educational changes on teachers' work

The findings related to Research Question 2: *How has teachers' work been affected by recent changes in education?* were described in Chapter Five. Major findings included that the effects of changes which impacted more on the Organisational domain of teachers' work were perceived as more negative than the effects of changes which impacted more on the Teaching/Learning domain. Similarly, the effects of changes seen as originating in sources external to teachers' work contexts were perceived as significantly more negative than were those of changes which emanated from internal sources. These findings are discussed and key conclusions are drawn from them in this section.

8.3 Teachers' satisfaction with the quality of their work lives

The findings related to Research Question 3: *How satisfied are teachers with the quality of their work lives in the current educational change context?* were described in Chapter Six. These teachers were satisfied with their working relationships with their school principals; with their colleagues; with their interactions with their students; and with the support received from the parents of the children they taught. They were, at best, ambivalent about their conditions of employment as teachers; the degree to which they felt able to exercise influence in decision-making related to their work; their capacity to control the impact of change on their work; and the quality of the facilities and resources available to them in their work. The teachers surveyed were dissatisfied with the level of support for teachers apparent in the wider community; with the policy directions of their education systems; and with the amount of effort required of them in meeting the expectations of the teacher role. These teachers reported that their experiences with recent educational change had impaired their capacity to attain satisfaction at work by hindering their ability to perform well in those aspects of the teacher's role which they saw as most important. These findings are discussed further in this section, with the conclusions which were drawn from the findings also being elaborated.

8.4 Teachers' predicted responses to future educational changes

The findings related to Research Question 4: *How have teachers' experiences in the current educational change context affected how they expect to respond to future changes in education?* were described in Chapter Seven. For these teachers, the nature of their personal experiences with a recent significant change in education was important in

influencing how they thought they would be likely to respond to future changes in education. Teachers who had played supportive roles in a recent change predicted more positive responses toward future changes, while those who had played resistant roles predicted even more negative responses in the future. These and the other major findings in relation to this Research Question are discussed and the key conclusions drawn from them are detailed in this section.

8.5 New realities of teachers' work lives

Ten new realities of teachers' work lives in Australian state schools in the 1990s, deduced from the findings from each of the study's four Research Questions, are presented in this section. These new realities are not intended to describe a total picture of teachers' work in all its complexities. Rather, they constitute ten new elements which need to be added to those understandings of teachers' work lives which have existed hitherto, in order that a more accurate and complete contemporary view might be established.

While the convention that new results should not be introduced in a concluding chapter is understood, the ten new realities presented in this section are more conclusions drawn from the findings, rather than findings or results *per se*.

8.6 Implications of the nature of teachers' work for teachers, principals, education systems and teacher educators

The information detailed in this section is presented subject to the limitations imposed on the extent to which the findings of the study can be generalised to the broader Australian state school teaching force by the nature of the sample employed in the study. Even in the context of this caveat, however, the more complete understanding of the nature of teachers' work in the contemporary context, inherent in the ten new realities of teachers' work lives identified in section 8.5, has implications for the ways in which teachers might approach and conduct their work in future; for how school principals might work with and manage their staff members and school communities; for how education systems might operate more effectively; and for how teacher educators might need to alter both the *how* and the *what* of their pre-service and in-service programmes. The changes implied for each of these four key educational stakeholder groups are identified and discussed in this section. In essence, the question addressed here could be worded simply as, "Now that we know more about what teachers' work is really like in the 1990s, so what?"

8.7 Recommendations relating to future educational changes

In Connell's (1991) phrase, teachers comprise "the workforce of reform". Given this, given the new realities of teachers' work lives identified earlier, given a context of advanced devolution to self-managing schools under the broad auspices of central state education authorities, and given seemingly ever-increasing expectations for significant changes in education to be achieved within ever-decreasing time frames, new ways of operating need to be found in order that the educational changes of the future might be implemented meaningfully. A number of recommendations relating to how such future changes might be identified, disseminated and implemented more efficaciously are suggested in this section.

8.8 Recommendations for future research

While this study has uncovered much about the real nature of some Australian state school teachers' work lives in the 1990s, the fact that the scope and pace of educational change are ever-broadening and ever-increasing implies that continued further research will be necessary in order that the links between teachers' thinking about their work and their consequent responses to educational change initiatives might be both further illuminated and remain current. In particular, the extent to which teachers are satisfied or dissatisfied with key aspects of their work lives and the nature of the connections between these levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and their responses to changes in education should be subject to future investigation. In this section, the need for such research is argued and certain modifications to some of the methods used in this study are suggested.

The main body of the text of the thesis is completed by a summation of the main conclusions of the study as these constitute a case for the necessity to consciously underpin approaches to the educational changes of the future with a more complete understanding of the nature of teachers' work.

8.1 The Educational Changes which Affect Teachers most in their Work Lives

The 100 South Australian and Tasmanian teachers involved in this study nominated a total of 79 separate changes in education which had affected them significantly in their work in the first half of the 1990s. The participating teachers were clear in their views that trends

and changes in several aspects of the broader contemporary Australian society had brought consequent changes to education and, therefore, to their own work as teachers. All of these changes, whether direct changes in education or changes to education which had resulted from wider social shifts, were viewed as affecting teachers' work markedly.

The Tasmanian teachers most commonly identified the group of changes which they saw as having resulted from the implementation of the recommendations contained in the CRESAP Report of 1990 as the particular change which had most affected their work lives, while the changes most often nominated by the South Australian teachers involved the introduction of national curricula (in the case of primary teachers) and of the South Australian Certificate of Education (for secondary teachers). Nevertheless, the groups of teachers from both states each nominated a broad range of changes which had come to affect both the Organisational and the Teaching/Learning domains of their work. Regardless of the grade level they taught, their gender or the length of their teaching experience, the participating teachers reported experiencing changes in each of these domains in roughly equal proportions. Thus it is clear that no major aspect of teachers' work had remained unaffected by the myriad of educational changes of the period investigated in the study. Most importantly, however, it was the cumulative effect of so many changes within such a relatively short period of time which had the most significant impact of all.

These teachers felt that the overwhelming majority of changes had emanated from sources outside their own work contexts, with the work context understood universally by these teachers as being their current school. When this perception of the majority of changes being generated from external sources is taken together with the changes in teachers' roles which have accompanied a broad range of contemporaneous social changes, the capacity for teachers to maintain control in and over their own work lives appears to have become considerably more tenuous, even in the context of the elements of autonomy these teachers saw themselves as able to exercise.

This capacity for teachers to maintain control of their own work to an extent which they feel would enable them to operate efficaciously in the current context is linked inextricably to the levels of change expectations which are required of them. This was particularly the case for the teachers in this study when the changes with which they were involved were perceived as emanating from external sources and as serving, primarily, the needs of those outside the context of the local school. Furthermore, the changes from external sources

were mostly those 'big picture/large scale' initiatives (such as devolution and the CRESAP recommendations) which were associated with few, if any, opportunities for teachers to influence, far less maintain control over, elements of the implementation process at the school level.

Therefore, it is perhaps hardly surprising, but nevertheless significant, that these teachers reported that their work lives had been affected very negatively by the types of changes which originated in sources external to the school context and which impacted most on the Organisational domain of their work. On the other hand, those changes which were seen to have originated in sources internal to the school and which impacted most on the Teaching/Learning domain of their work were reported to have had a mixture of negative and positive effects.

Teachers' perceptions of a change's origin, in the sense of whether it had been generated internally or externally, seem to be associated with aspects of dissemination and implementation, rather than with the actual source of origin *per se*. This was the case despite the acknowledgment on the part of these teachers that few if any changes could ever originate solely at the school level alone, completely separate from broader educational and social agendas. In the minds of these teachers, changes which featured mandatory adoption and implementation requirements were seen as both originating externally and as designed to achieve goals associated with the needs of stakeholders external to teachers' work contexts. Internal changes, on the other hand, were those which were perceived as less prescriptive in these areas, with this lack of prescription allowing teachers and schools to put their own imprimatur on the precise nature of what was to be adopted and implemented.

In this sense, teachers felt that they had been able to maintain their capacity to exercise elements of their own professional judgement in their involvement with many of the changes which impacted most on the Teaching/Learning domain, while this was not the case in their experiences with those changes which impacted mostly on the Organisational domain of their work. Hence, a perception of a change as originating internally and as connecting directly to teachers' teaching and to students' learning seems to have resulted in some degree of amelioration of the feelings of uncertainty, dissonance and negativity which were associated, seemingly universally, with these teachers' responses to educational changes in general.

Perhaps most significant of all, however, was the finding that it was not the impact of any one particular change that had the most significant implications for teachers' work lives. The individual changes that teachers saw as affecting their work most significantly were those which required them to replace their existing practices with unfamiliar methods of operation. Such changes included the introduction of criterion-based assessment and new approaches developed in order to cope appropriately with the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

In order to understand why these teachers found the impact of these individual changes particularly problematic, it is important to recognise the place of such individual changes in a broader context of educational change featuring multiple simultaneous innovations, with attendant implementation timelines which were, from these teachers' perspectives, far too short. Abbreviated timelines and the expectation that many changes would be implemented simultaneously had made it inordinately difficult for teachers to develop their own sense and meaning of each individual innovation, never mind implement each of these innovations effectively while still maintaining the level of effort required to manage their pre-existing day-to-day teaching duties.

The striking similarity in the responses from teachers across all sub-groups in the sample adds further weight to the notion that there is a strong element of consensus on these issues among the teachers involved in the study. In relation to their feelings about educational change, therefore, the study offers considerable support for the existence of strong norms of perception and expressed opinion about educational change which remain consistent with, for example, "experience counts, theory doesn't" (Hargreaves, 1984).

8.2 The Effects of Educational Changes on Teachers' Work

The effects of changes which impacted more on the Organisational domain of teachers' work were perceived as more negative than the effects of changes which impacted more on the Teaching/Learning domain. Similarly, it is clear that the effects of changes seen as originating in sources external to teachers' work contexts were perceived as significantly more negative than were the effects of changes which emanated from sources internal to teachers' work contexts.

It may be that there is more to this internal/external distinction than is apparent immediately. Several of the changes from external sources (such as devolution and the resourcing cuts which followed the CRESAP Report) had large-scale, far-reaching effects. The effects of such changes extended beyond the limits of teachers' control or amelioration capacities. Internal changes (such as new systems of behaviour management), on the other hand, tended to be associated with implementation procedures which allowed teachers to influence how their work was affected by the impacts of these smaller-scale changes, with this influence being exercised through their ultimate control over what happened in their classrooms.

Most crucially, however (and in a finding entirely consistent with the contemporary literature such as Fullan, 1995; Hargreaves, 1994), regardless of the characteristics of the single change which most affected these teachers, it was the cumulative effects of their involvement with multiple simultaneous innovations that had the most significant impact on these teachers' work lives.

Teachers across all demographic sub-groups in the sample reported perceptions of negative effects on their work resulting from externally imposed changes which impacted most on the Organisational domain, but reported more positive effects on their work resulting from internally generated changes which impacted most on the Teaching/Learning domain.

These findings, when taken together, produced a mixture of positive and negative effects resulting from these teachers' overall experiences with recent educational changes. For these teachers, the positive effects of their involvement with recent educational change fell into two main areas. The first of these involved increasing opportunities for genuine collaboration with other teachers at the school level. Such collaborative ventures were valued by teachers when they featured voluntary, self-selecting groups working together for their, and their students', mutual benefit on matters of shared interest, relevant to the local context. The second area in which positive effects resulting from teachers' experience with educational change were reported involved perceptions of improvements in teachers' pedagogy and in students' learning experiences which were judged to have resulted from teachers' efforts to implement the requirements of national curricula (mainly in the case of teachers working in primary schools in both states) and the criterion-based assessment requirements associated with the restructured models of senior secondary education in both state education systems.

The negative impacts which these teachers felt their experience of recent educational change had generated in their work lives also consisted of two clusters of effects.

The first such cluster of effects involved a considerable intensification in teachers' work lives, with this intensification being made manifest in teachers having to invest more personal emotional energy in day-to-day management of student learning and behaviour; in having more work to do; in having more complex work to do with new roles to learn and play; and in having to cope with time pressures inherent in increasing demands and expectations for change. In this regard, increased expectations for teachers to participate in collaborative decision-making processes, in the absence of an allocation of the extra time that this required (see, in this regard, Watkins, 1993c), was a prime example of how teachers felt compelled to attempt to meet increased change expectations without being provided with an appropriate level of extra resources.

The second cluster of effects perceived by teachers as having negative impacts on their work lives involved what they saw as an unwelcome, but required, shift in the main focus of their work. Teachers felt that the considerable increases in accountability levels and documentation requirements had compelled them to divert too much attention onto administrative tasks at the expense of their capacity to continue to devote sufficient time to classroom-based interactions with students.

The extent to which teachers have traditionally seen their interactions with students as the source of their self-efficacy as educators has been well established in the literature (in the Australian context see, for example, Thomson, 1992). It is, therefore, unsurprising that those perceived to be the architects of the educational changes seen as hindering teachers' capacity to conduct their 'real' work effectively were the target of much criticism in the data gathered during the study. The architects of such changes were invariably understood to be the officials of the employing education systems, thus exacerbating many teachers' tendency to feel and express antipathy toward the central authorities.

Given the difficulties teachers face when they respond to educational changes which require them to replace the practices with which they are familiar in their day-to-day work with new and unfamiliar modes of operating (see also, in this regard, Lieberman, 1992), two areas which have come more to the forefront of educational change in the relatively short period since the data for this study were gathered would seem to be likely to be especially

problematic for teachers in the immediate future. The first of these: Federal Minister Kemp's current focus on vocational training and employment placement, will require many secondary teachers to both deal with previously unfamiliar curricula and to adopt new roles including those of career counsellor, case manager and school-industry liaison officer. The second emerging trend of the mid to late-1990s: an increasing focus on the use of information technologies in teaching and learning, as exemplified in the Tasmanian government's 1997 announcement of its intention to provide one computer for every five students in all state school classrooms, will require all teachers to totally rethink how their classrooms should be physically organised and how they will manage their own teaching and their students' learning effectively in the new context. Even in the unlikely event that such an innovation in technology will only require a teacher to set up a number of co-operative learning groups, each clustered around its own computer with links to the teacher's personal lap top, it is clear from the findings of this study that teachers will find the extent to which they will be expected to replace their established patterns with new and unfamiliar practices particularly problematic.

It is significant that both of these examples of the contemporary style of educational changes to which teachers are, and will continue to be, expected to respond, emanate directly from government. This reflects a further change in the nature of teachers' work in the current context, in that this work has become increasingly politicised. Thus, not only have recent educational changes produced more intense, harried, complex and demanding work lives for teachers, the current and emerging changes will require even higher levels of flexibility and adaptability from an already ageing teaching force. These and other implications arising from the "greying" of Australia's teachers have been dealt with in detail elsewhere in, for example, Dinham (1996).

In such a light it is apparent that it is not so much the change agenda itself which is at the heart of the problems teachers experience in their responses to educational change initiatives. Rather, it is the processes associated with change implementation which affect teachers' coping mechanisms most deeply (see also, in this regard, Lingard, O'Brien & Knight, 1993; Lieberman, 1991). In an increasingly devolved future educational context individual schools will have the capacity to either ameliorate or exacerbate the problems of implementation, with this depending on how school leaders and school communities manage the work of teachers.

8.3 Teachers' Satisfaction with the Quality of their Work Lives

It is clear from the results presented in Figures 6.1 - 6.10 in Chapter Six that the study's teachers were well satisfied with the relationships they shared with those with whom they had direct contact at work. Teachers claimed to be well satisfied with their working relationships with their principal, with their teacher colleagues and with their students. Furthermore, it is reasonable to add that these teachers were satisfied, at least to an extent that they found acceptable, with their relationships with the parents of the children they taught.

On the other hand, these teachers were far from satisfied with what they viewed as uninformed criticism and a lack of support for teachers in the wider community in general and from the media and political leaders in particular.

These teachers reported low levels of satisfaction in each of the areas where they were subject to the regulations and expectations of the education systems which employed them. This was evident particularly in teachers' resentment of the amount of work expected of them by their employers and in their lack of enthusiasm for their employers' policy initiatives and for the nature of the arrangements under which they were employed as teachers in their respective states. In a similar vein, they could be described as ambivalent, at best, about the quality of the facilities and resources available to them in their work. Indeed, these teachers had very little of a positive nature to say about the education systems within which they worked, perceiving these systems and their centrally-based officials to be overly bureaucratic, distant, and out of touch with classroom and school realities. The extent to which these were reasonable perceptions on the part of teachers was not under investigation in this study, but it is clear that these teachers held a consistent *image of their organisation* (Morgan, 1986) and that this image was far from flattering.

These teachers were also less than satisfied in relation to their capacity to exert some degree of influence over educational and social matters which affected their work. Although they were apparently aware of the increasing unpredictability and *dynamic complexity* of the contemporary educational context (Senge, 1990), these teachers harboured resentment about their perceived lack of influence in decision-making processes at both system and school levels. They remained unconvinced that systemic devolution of much decision-making responsibility from central authorities to the local school level had done anything to

improve the quality of teachers' work lives. This, of course, should not be taken, necessarily, as a critique of devolution itself, as its purpose, supposedly, has been to encourage the taking of better decisions through facilitating local participation and expertise, rather than the enhancement of teacher satisfaction *per se*. Nevertheless, for many teachers, while the experience of devolution and the simultaneous politicising of teachers' work have generated a capacity for principals to exercise more entrepreneurship and flexibility (see, for example, Tewel, 1993), these have produced little in the way of a more satisfying quality of work life for teachers. This apparent lack of improvement in work quality for teachers is entirely consistent with devolution's similar failure to deliver improvements in student learning. Even leading advocates of devolution in Australia have acknowledged that "research has not yet revealed a direct cause-and-effect relationship between decentralisation of management and improved outcomes for students" (Caldwell, in Tickell, 1997: 21). The same lack of improvement, it seems, is also the case in relation to the impact of devolution on teachers' work.

The principals in this study showed themselves to be cogent and perceptive observers of teachers at work. In seven of the ten aspects investigated these principals were able to recognise accurately the levels of teacher satisfaction which the teachers themselves were to indicate in their self reports. The extent of this concurrence is striking. There is no evidence here to support any view of principals as being out of touch with the day-to-day realities of schools, as schools are seen through teachers' eyes: on the contrary, these principals' responses demonstrate their awareness of, and empathy with, teachers who were operating in problematic, complex settings. This degree of concurrence, however, should not be seen as surprising, given that the principals in the sample had all been teachers, in many cases recently, and that some principals retained an active, if reduced, teaching role. It may well be that teachers and principals share, in the term coined by Sergiovanni (1985), the same *mindspace* of what it is, and how it feels, to be a teacher. Such a notion is not at all inconsistent with the classic literature on perceptions (including, for example, Harre & Gillet, 1994; Miller, 1984; Kisiel, 1982; Kuhn, 1977).

There were, however, three areas of difference between teachers' feelings and principals' expectations. First, principals underestimated the extent of teachers' unhappiness with the level of support received from community members, given an exception in the case of the parents of the children they taught. One explanation for this may lie in a distinction between proximal and distal stakeholders: with teachers perceiving support only from

those parents with whom they had close contact, and principals perceiving support for teachers from the community members with whom they had close contact in their role as principal, while the study's teachers perceived these same broader community members as distant from, and unsupportive of, their classroom endeavours. Second, principals underestimated the extent to which these teachers were unhappy with their opportunities to influence educational decision-making in matters related to their work. Principals expressed the view that teachers had adequate opportunity to influence decision-making at the school level, but the study's teachers perceived they had effective influence only at the level closest to their work: the classroom. Principals misconstrued teachers' perceptions of their impact at the school level: a level which seems to be proximal for principals, but somewhat less so for teachers. Third, principals predicted, wrongly, that these teachers' would express unhappiness about a limited capacity to control the impact of change on their work. These principals were seemingly unaware of their teachers' willingness to simply ignore minor changes or requirements when they felt this to be necessary. These teachers thus provided telling evidence for the veracity of the dictum *you can't mandate what matters* (Fullan, 1993b).

While the teachers in the study reported high levels of satisfaction with the nature of their relationships with those with whom they shared their work contexts: their principals, their teacher colleagues and their students, they attributed their levels of satisfaction (or, in a smaller number of certain cases, their dissatisfaction) to the actions taken, or the characteristics possessed, by these people, and hence to matters which teachers saw themselves as largely unable to influence or control. This factor makes work-related satisfaction in the key area of relationships a tenuous issue for teachers. When this is combined with the clear levels of dissatisfaction which were expressed in relation to the policy directions taken by the two employing education systems and the amount of effort needed to meet all the expectations and requirements of them at work, there is a clear fragility in teachers' perceived capacities to maintain control over the factors which determine their ability to continue to perform effectively in the teacher's role.

There are two areas in which the study's findings display clear links between the extent of teachers' satisfaction with their work lives and the impact of educational change on their work. First, teachers derived their satisfaction at work from the nature of the teaching-learning relationships shared with students and from the sense of self-efficacy which resulted from believing that they had performed well in demonstrating their pedagogic

content knowledge, while frustration associated with factors which impaired their capacity to perform well in these key aspects of their role was their major source of dissatisfaction. Most notably, these teachers' experiences with recent educational changes were viewed as magnifying these frustrations through putting obstacles, such as significantly increased workload pressures, in the path of the attainment of self-efficacy. Second, low levels of teacher satisfaction with the opportunities available to them to maintain control over decision-making at work, and with their capacity to control the impact of change on their work, were both closely associated with very low levels of teacher commitment to the achievement of the goals associated with particular educational changes.

Therefore, even in a context of multiple innovations contributing to a more intense work life for teachers, the provision of opportunities for teachers to exercise real influence at the school level is a key element in drawing and maintaining the commitment of teachers to educational change. For some school leaders there will be an element of the 'chicken and egg' conundrum in this, as they seek to find ways of encouraging dissatisfied teachers to become more active in decision-making. Significantly, therefore, even if teacher satisfaction was not to be viewed, *ipso facto*, as an important end in itself, it has clear implications for the extent to which teachers might be expected to work actively towards the attainment of the goals associated with educational change initiatives.

8.4 Teachers' Predicted Responses to Future Educational Changes

These teachers' predictions of the nature of their responses to future changes in education depended, to an important extent, on the nature of their experiences with those recent educational changes which had significant impacts on their work lives. Indeed, certain specific aspects of teachers' experiences of recent changes were particularly influential in determining their predicted responses to future changes, regardless of the identity of the individual changes with which they had been involved.

In this regard, teachers predicted more positive responses to the changes of the future when they had been involved with a recent significant change which originated from sources internal to their work context; when the recent change affected them more in the Teaching/Learning domain of their work; when they had been engaged in supportive roles in recent change processes; and when they had been able to participate meaningfully in

decision-making. Conversely, these teachers predicted that their response to future changes in education would be more negative when their experiences of recent significant changes had involved the change originating from sources external to the context of their schools; when the change affected the Organisational domain of their work; when they had occupied resistant roles in change processes; and when they had perceived that they had insufficient opportunity to participate in decision-making associated with the change.

Similarly, while these teachers portrayed considerable cynicism toward the real purposes of many educational innovations and toward the motives of those they saw as promoting such innovations, the teachers who described the overall effects of a recent educational change on their work as positive predicted more positive responses to future educational changes. The obverse, however, was more common, with those teachers who saw the overall effects of a recent change on their work as negative predicting that their response to future changes in education would be more negative still.

In addition, the levels of these teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the degree of support they felt they received from parents and the community; with the policy directions of their education system; with their opportunity to influence both decision-making in work-related matters and the impact of change on their work; and with the amount of effort needed for them to meet all the expectations and requirements of their jobs, were all linked to their subsequent depictions of their likely responses to future changes in education. Satisfaction with each of these five aspects of their work lives was associated with predictions from teachers of positive responses to the changes of the future, while those teachers who expressed dissatisfaction with these aspects of their work lives commonly predicted that they would respond negatively toward future educational changes. Perhaps unsurprisingly, such a finding may well be an example of the operation of a feedback loop in this area.

For the teachers in this study, moreover, simply working through the experience of a significant educational change did not appear to be associated with any automatic decrease in the extent to which future changes might be regarded with suspicion. The abbreviated nature of implementation time frames and the sheer number of changes to be implemented simultaneously constituted real difficulties for teachers, and the experience of these difficulties seems to have contributed to an apparent degree of entrenched resistance toward the educational changes of the future. Nevertheless, despite this element of resistance, and despite expressions of nostalgia for the supposedly more straightforward work lives

experienced by teachers in the past, these teachers accepted the inevitability of further change. Furthermore, they expressed this acceptance of the inevitable nature of future changes in the context of their own expectations that they would cope and survive in the milieu of the changes of the future.

It would be unfair, therefore, to describe the teachers in this study as characteristically simply resistant to educational change. On the other hand, even the teachers themselves do not see their own typical response to educational innovations as mere adoption in compliance with the specific expectations of others. These teachers see their characteristic response to educational change initiatives as one in which they adapt the provisions of each innovation in order that these might better fit the conditions dictated by teachers' understandings of their particular work contexts. There is every reason to believe, on the basis of the data in this study, that they will approach the educational changes of the future with the same mindset.

8.5 New Realities of Teachers' Work Lives

The findings from the qualitative data gathered in the study, particularly those which emerged from analysis of the interviews indicated that, despite teachers' discourse being still rooted firmly in the genre of Fullan's (1995) *multiple innovations* era, there are ten new realities for teachers at work in many of today's Australian state schools. The new realities of teachers' contemporary work lives which became apparent in the findings of the study are as follows:

- A myriad of change expectations
(An ever-increasing number of changes, with these changes requiring simultaneous implementation);
- Intensification
(Teachers have more work to do, more complex tasks to perform and find their work to be more demanding emotionally);
- Politicisation
(Increased levels of government intervention in directing the work of teachers and the emergence of political elements in teachers' roles in schools);

- Competition between two kinds of collaboration
(Teachers are required to participate in situations in which collaboration is contrived, while they prefer to work together in self-selecting groups on self-selected tasks);
- Resourcing pressures
(Reduced staffing levels and shrinking maintenance budgets add to the pressures inherent in the lack of time allocated to meet the expectations that teachers will participate actively in school-level decision-making);
- Mis-matches between expectations, needs and access in professional development
(Pressures to develop the new skills required to meet the complex demands of the contemporary teacher's role are made more problematic in a context of difficulties encountered in gaining access to appropriately targeted, quality professional development programs);
- Dissatisfaction with education systems
(Teachers in these state schools see their employing systems as promulgating unrealistic expectations and as unsympathetic towards the realities of the challenges involved in teachers' day-to-day work lives);
- Conflict between organisational and professional goals
(Teachers' experience of the contemporary change context is that the requirements of them to respond to systemic imperatives force them to direct much of their attention and energy away from more meaningful classroom-related functions);
- Dissonance associated with a paradox between professional expertise and external control
(Contemporary teachers are better qualified, more widely skilled and more experienced than before, but they have simultaneously been made more accountable and subjected more to official control measures); and
- Ironical options for distance and immunity
(Increasing levels of pedagogic skill and experience allow teachers to ignore, evade or otherwise avoid many of the key elements of the educational reforms envisaged by others).

While undeniably, it is clear that several of these realities have been part of teachers' working lives for a number of years, and are thus somewhat less 'new' than the others, all

of these new influences have developed and coalesced within a relatively short time frame. A teacher returning to classroom duties now, even after only two or three years out of schools, could not fail but be struck by the dramatic differences in the nature of the work expected of them. One teacher from the sub-sample of the study's interviewees, who had returned to teaching after a recent break in service for parenting purposes, spoke in her interview of the difficulties she had to face, with these being associated directly with the extent to which expectations and work patterns had changed in the relatively brief period of her absence. The transcript of this particular interview is included as Appendix V.

The ten new realities of teachers' work lives advanced here are not presented as a depiction of the complete essence of a teacher's work life. Rather, they are presented as additional factors: as aspects of teachers' work lives which were either not present, or at least not as readily manifest, in the day-to-day realities of teachers' work in earlier times. Thus, just as the school development planning models adopted in both South Australia and Tasmania have emphasised change priorities while remaining largely mute on established, on-going educational activities, the view of teachers' work depicted in these ten new realities needs to be understood as focussing on that which is new and additional, while remaining silent on those many elements of teachers' work that have a longer history, but which still demand much of a teacher's attention on a daily basis.

It is the simultaneous co-existence and the interconnected nature of all ten new and additional factors that have important implications for teachers and their work lives in Australian state schools in the mid-1990s. In terms of each of these ten new realities for teachers at work, taken separately and in turn, the major implications are as follows:

- **A myriad of change expectations**

The number of multiple, simultaneous innovations and change initiatives recognised by this study's teachers in both interview and survey contexts, and described earlier in Chapter Four and section 8.1 of this chapter, shows no sign of abating. The pace of technological change, and the resultant pressure on schools and teachers to keep up, can only magnify the current level and complexity of change expectations facing teachers. Indeed, for many a contemporary social problem, "education" is seen as both the venue and the process for addressing the issues. The profound changes schools have made in their approaches to vocational preparation in response to high levels of unemployment and employer concerns

about students' vocational readiness on leaving school constitute only one of innumerable recent examples of such change expectations.

Devolution of much decision-making from the administrative centre to the school level has apparently done little to ameliorate problems experienced by teachers with changes they see as being imposed externally. Furthermore, in neither South Australia nor Tasmania has devolution been accompanied by any reduction in the extent to which the respective central authorities have devised and set new educational priorities. Indeed, the contrary has been the case, with growing numbers of centrally-determined systemic priorities being disseminated to schools for implementation. Thus, devolution has been accompanied by more, rather than less, central control, with much of the central control agenda being driven politically by the governments of the day.

That the increase in the level of change determined and set centrally is continuing to occur in a context in which local schools are simultaneously being asked to set their own additional priorities in consultation with their own school communities is a clear indication that the level of change expectations can only increase, at least in the immediate future. It remains the case, however, that the ways in which overall change processes are managed at the local level are significant factors in determining the number of changes with which teachers are expected to be engaged simultaneously. Many, but far from all, school principals seemingly acknowledge the problems inherent in their teachers facing a myriad of change expectations by supporting 'in-house' priority-setting and more gradual implementation time frames, even in their responses to the most urgent systemic imperatives.

- **Intensification**

Cuts to teacher numbers and to other resource areas which have resulted in significant increases in the amount of work required of each of the teachers remaining in the system, combined with compacted timelines for change implementation and a broadening in the range of educative roles teachers are expected to play at school, offer further support for the perception of an intensification in teachers' work which has been widely reported in the literature elsewhere (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1994).

In addition, however, a number of other evolutionary factors, associated with educational

change and with broader social changes more generally, have combined to add considerably to the intensification of the nature of teachers' work. Two factors stand out in this regard, with both of these having the effect of making teaching a much more intense emotional experience for those engaged in it in contemporary state schools in Australia.

The first of these factors involves teachers' reports of the increasingly difficult and complex nature of the tasks involved in managing the behaviour of their students. While the management of student behaviour has been made more problematic recently by specific educational changes, such as increased retention rates in the senior secondary years and the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classes at all levels, there can be little doubt that many teachers now find that the job of managing the behaviour of students is more difficult and more complex than it was a decade ago. The constant effort, negotiation and vigilance required for effective behaviour management in the current context is reported to be an intensely emotional and energy-sapping experience for many teachers.

The second factor, the demographic profile of the people employed as teachers in Australian state schools, also seems to have contributed to the extent to which teachers have come to view their current work as a much more intense emotional experience than in the past. The ageing of the teaching workforce has been well documented (see, again, Dinham, 1996; Baumgart, 1995; Burke, 1994). The teachers who took part in this study were aged, on average, in their mid-40s, and were thus quite representative of Australian state school teachers in general. The mid-40s represent a period of not inconsiderable difficulty in the lives of many people, including, of course, teachers' lives. This is often a time when people may begin to confront issues of their own health and mortality; or of the death of parents; or of changes in their family arrangements associated with the growth of their children; or of increased concerns about job security and their capacity to provide adequately for the needs of the future. These and the other events which are often associated with those in their mid-40s, necessarily draw deeply on the reserves of emotional energy available to these teachers. When these factors are combined with other aspects which might be associated with teachers in the second half of their working lives such as a growing difficulty in making personal connections to their students' world, linked to an increasing gap in age between them, it is clear that many teachers find their work to be, increasingly, an emotionally intense experience. The burgeoning in the numbers of teachers either on leave from the teaching service or out of it altogether, as a result of work-related stress, is surely further evidence of intensification in how teachers experience their work.

- **Politicisation**

The increasingly political nature of teachers' work and the increasingly political nature of the context in which they conduct this work were readily apparent to the teachers who participated in the study. This was the case in both the 'large p' and the 'small p' understandings of politics.

At the 'large p' political level, many aspects of the contemporary educational change agenda were attributed to direct federal and state government intervention. It has long been the case in Australia that public education has operated under the auspices of the relevant Education Acts in each state and territory. Many of today's teachers began their careers in an era in which governments left the direction and management of the work of schools and teachers in the hands of the respective educational bureaucracies in each of the state public services. Teachers valued this distance from the degradations and vicissitudes of party politics. In South Australia, for example, teachers were traditionally strongly supportive of retaining the formal separation of government and education which was inherent in the situation in which the Director-General of Education held responsibility for the direction of education in that state, rather than this residing with the Minister for Education. However, by the time of this study, it was clear that regardless of any convention of a separation of powers in this regard, ministerial direction of education had become both the reality and the norm. In Tasmania this had become most readily manifest in the changes resulting from the CRESAP Report, and it was to be even more obvious half a decade later in the school-community-education system-government 'Partnership Agreements' announced by the Minister in 1997. In both states visited in the study the promulgation of a national curriculum, devolution, increased accountability for teachers' performance and the associated media scrutiny of educational outcomes, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy standards, were all exemplars of the increasingly political context in which teachers were expected to conduct their work. With federal Minister Kemp's 1997 announcement of initiatives in vocational education following closely behind these developments, it is not surprising that teachers see themselves as both apparatchiks and targets in politicians' visions for education.

The increasing politicisation of teachers' work in the mid-1990s is no less apparent at the 'small p' level. The expectation that teachers will participate actively in decision-making

processes at the school level has brought the world of political negotiations and manoeuvrings into the forefront of their work lives. In the context of devolution (and in something of a hangover from the days of worker participation in industry) teachers are now expected to contribute to the various decision-making forums which have been established at each of the classroom level (such as negotiating the curriculum with students), the school level (such as bidding for and helping to make decisions about school budgetary allocations), and the system level (such as taking on membership of panels which select those who will occupy school leadership positions). While these activities are, by their very nature, intensely political, another significance for teachers' work lives lies in the cumbersome nature of the procedures involved in each case and in the amount of time that such participation demands.

- **Competition between two kinds of collaboration**

Hargreaves (1994) has described as *contrived collegiality* much of the work associated with devolution that teachers have been required to do together. There is ample evidence in the data that contrived collegiality is both common among, and transparent to, the teachers in this study. Despite the fact that this type of shared work was a common experience for these teachers, they seemingly attached little credibility to either the processes or the products of the 'small p' politics associated with such decision-making.

However, contrived collegiality was only one of the two forms of collaboration common among the teachers in this study. A second form of shared effort was much more highly valued. They set great store on the *mutually supportive collaboration* in which they engaged voluntarily in self-selecting groups on tasks selected by these groups. Teachers apparently see this self-initiated form of collaboration as their most valuable source of professional assistance and as a source of personal and professional support in an educational climate characterised by low levels of esteem for teachers in the wider community.

Even though mutually supportive collaboration is valued by teachers, the fact that the tasks on which teachers collaborate in this way are self-selected contains an inherent problem for the members of these groups. Given that there can be no guarantee that the selected tasks will accord with system-set, or even community-set, priorities, collaborating teachers may find themselves in the situation of either adding to the workload expected of them, or

reducing still further the already limited time available for attending to other priorities. The choice for teachers is an invidious one: either give up the sort of collaboration and tasks they see as worthwhile in order to attend to priorities to which they may feel less committed, or sustain the joint efforts they see as valuable, cognisant of the attendant risks of failing to meet others' expectations fully, or of the potential for burnout which might result from trying to do both.

- **Resourcing pressures**

It has been a feature of the Australian economy in general in the 1990s that workers have been expected to, as the well-worn phrase of economic rationalism goes, "do more with less". Several of the teachers interviewed in this study used these precise words to describe work situations in which they felt expected to cope with their previous tasks in the context of reduced resource levels, while also completing additional tasks, usually without any additional resources being earmarked for these extra functions.

The widespread cuts in education funding levels which were a common feature of Australian state education systems in the years leading up to this study (and which resulted, for example, in a reduction of 20 percent in teacher numbers in Tasmania) have had significant implications for the work lives of those who remained in the teaching service. While the more obvious of these implications, which included increased class sizes and increased instructional loads, were apparent immediately, the more subtle effects of reduced educational funding took longer to come to teachers' attention, but have been no less significant in their impact on teachers' work lives. Thus, the results of reductions in the funds provided to upgrade and maintain school buildings took some time to become apparent, but are now made manifest in run-down classrooms badly in need of painting and even in shortages of basic items such as student desks and chairs. Similarly, a combination of forces, including reduced funding levels but with additional factors such as the global (or 'one-line') budgeting characteristic of devolution and the need for schools to provide funds to purchase the hardware and software associated with information technology, has made it impossible for schools to buy and maintain appropriate stocks of library resources, text books and other curriculum materials. In many cases, therefore, teachers are being asked to do the job of preparing students for participation in the modern world while having to rely on obsolete and inadequate resources in their endeavours to meet that challenge.

Perhaps the key resource which teachers see as not provided at appropriate levels in the current context is that of time. Many of the plethora of current educational changes are accompanied by the expectation that teachers will participate actively in the decision-making processes associated with the implementation of such innovations. It is unarguable that active participation in decision-making takes time, yet the teachers involved in this study reported that they were not provided with sufficient allocations of the time required to comply with this expectation. Given that democracy and consultation are both heavy consumers of time, the reality for many teachers has been that the demands on their time have expanded, while the allocation of resources in terms of time have remained static. Teachers have had to call on their own energies and resources to find the extra time necessary for training in the development of the skills needed for effective participation in decision-making in a devolved context and, subsequently, for involvement in such decision-making processes at the school level.

- **Mis-matches between expectations, needs and access in professional development**

The changing nature of the teacher's role is not at all atypical within the broader expectation of multi-skilling which has been such a feature of the restructuring of the Australian economy in the 1990s. Thus, expectations that teachers will develop and apply new skills and understandings have been held and expressed by employing authorities and accepted, or at least acknowledged, however reluctantly, by teachers themselves. In Tasmania, these systemic expectations, and the somewhat grudging concurrence by teachers, manifested themselves as industrial trade-offs in an agreement that teachers would spend five days outside their normal scheduled working hours each year engaged in approved professional development activities.

At the same time, however, the economic stringencies which motivated the widespread funding cuts alluded to earlier resulted in a marked reduction in the extent to which professional development activities had been made available through systemic support services. Thus, unless a contemporary teacher's particular professional development needs happen to coincide with the specific change priorities of the employing system, access to appropriate professional development is, at best, difficult. The decline in the extent to which central education authorities provide training and development opportunities for their

own teaching staff has, in many instances, forced schools to develop their own programs. While this has often been successful and rewarding for teachers (see, for example, Groundwater-Smith, 1995, and the various reports emanating from the National Schools Network), it has generated particular problems for teachers in small schools where the lack of the economies of scale present in larger institutions make it difficult to either mount or attend professional development activities.

Furthermore, the curtailing of the role played by central support services in the provision of professional development has created a situation in which there can be no guarantee that the programs in which teachers become involved at school level will address the priorities of the education system directly. This may well be primarily a problem, in a strategic sense, for education systems rather than for teachers. Nevertheless, it has left teachers facing a situation in which high levels of expectation are held of them that they will acquire the skills necessary for the implementation of the educational innovations announced by government and by leaders of education systems, while they have only limited access to the training necessary for them to comply with such expectations.

- **Dissatisfaction with education systems**

It may well be that there is something of a tradition among state school teachers in Australia to speak critically of their respective education systems. Terms such as 'the department' and 'the centre' are both used in a derisive sense by teachers; with even the buildings that house the two central education bureaucracies often being referred to as 'Fairylund' by Tasmanian teachers and as 'Bullshit Castle' by their South Australian colleagues. The data gathered from the teachers in this study, however, show criticism of the central authorities to have become more pointed and to have a more overt place in teachers' staffroom discourse.

These teachers expressed considerable dissatisfaction with, and alienation from, the actions of the systems which employ them. In particular, they viewed both systems' change implementation expectations as unreasonable and completely at odds with teachers' own perspectives in terms of time. In this regard the implementation target dates specified in the implementation timelines projected by education systems are viewed by teachers as unrealistic in the sense that these are seen as failing to take the complexities of teachers'

current tasks into account. Compounding this issue still further, many teachers express resentment at what they see as criticism of the quality of their existing efforts being implicit in many of the exhortations for change which emanate from central authorities.

The lack of internal consistency in education systems' own structures exacerbates the problems between teachers and their employing authorities. The confusion and bureaucratic bungles which result from structures in which personnel management, for example, is centralised while supervision and payroll are devolved to district level, and from the mixture of both centralised and devolved curriculum facilities, have the effect of reducing departmental credibility still further in the eyes of teachers.

In the period covered by the study teachers in both South Australia and Tasmania faced resistance from educational authorities (and from state treasury officials) when they sought substantial increases in their salaries, justified in teachers' eyes because of the increased complexities of the work expected of them and because of a decline in the real value of their current rates of pay. The salary negotiations were protracted and, at times, bitter in both states.

The increased expectations of teachers (combined with the reductions in the levels of resources provided to schools, discussed earlier in this section) in a context of official opposition to what teachers saw as a patently deserved pay increase have created problems and fuelled resentment between teachers and their employing systems. For the teachers in this study, therefore, their employers acted in ways which ignored fairness and common sense, and seemed distant from the day-to-day realities associated with teaching and learning. For many teachers, the systems (and, perhaps, the respective state governments) were failing twice over: as poor employers and as out-of-touch, disinterested educators.

- **Conflict between organisational and professional goals**

While the teachers in this study reported that they responded generally positively to curriculum initiatives and other innovations and expectations which have classroom activities as their focus, they responded negatively and with cynicism to new procedures, new expectations and contemporary approaches to implementation which they saw as serving the needs of educational systems and as diverting their own attention from their 'real teaching' tasks. Teachers, therefore, see themselves as being faced with the necessity

to commit a significant proportion of their time and effort to complying with organisational requirements, thus reducing their capacity to devote as much energy as they would wish to their work in classrooms.

Any meaningful connections between the increased accountability and documentation expectations of educational bureaucracies on the one hand, and improved teaching and learning practices in classrooms on the other, are apparently not yet accepted fully in teachers' discourse.

There are clear implications in this for the extent to which teachers will be willing to embrace the agendas for change set by central authorities in particular, but perhaps also for the extent to which they will be willing to do more than merely deliver compliance on paper with even those additional priorities identified at the local level, should these not be perceived by teachers as related directly to improved teaching and learning. School-level leadership is critical, although perhaps not the sole requirement, in this regard (see, for example, Fullan & Miles, 1992). Just as principals have the capacity to act to influence the level of change expectations facing teachers, school leaders can also promote and make explicit the educational benefits of those changes which are taken up at the school level. Such action would increase the extent to which teachers might see educational value in those changes which emerge from the principal's 'gate-keeping' function to become school priorities.

- **Dissonance associated with a paradox of professional expertise and external control**

The apparent contradictions between the various expectations held of teachers in the current educational context have been documented elsewhere (Hargreaves, 1995a). While several of the paradoxes Hargreaves has described were reported by the teachers involved in this study, they expressed experiencing particular dissonance in matters related to their own professional expertise and the extent to which this was constrained by the imposition of external control measures.

At the very time that they saw themselves teaching and managing the learning of their students better than ever before, they felt that they were more constrained than ever before by curriculum decisions made by others and by documentation and accountability

requirements. While, for example, on the one hand they felt both willing and able to adapt curricula and to develop learning experience of relevance to their students, on the other hand they felt limited in the extent to which they could undertake these tasks by the requirements associated with compulsory national curricula and by the universal assessment of particular learning outcomes. For many of the teachers in this study, national and state curriculum guidelines often manifested more as restrictions or as hurdles to negotiate, than as guidelines or frameworks for practice.

In this sense, therefore, teachers perceive that the somewhat limited extent to which they are able to exercise professional freedom of judgement does not reflect or acknowledge appropriately the level of their pedagogic expertise.

- **Ironie options for distance and immunity**

As the teachers in this study aged and acquired a repertoire of pedagogic skills within which they could operate with some confidence, they laid increasing claims to maintaining their professional autonomy, at least within the confines of their own classrooms.

While the policy of devolution has, in theory, afforded teachers considerable empowerment at the local level, the experience in South Australia and Tasmania, as in many other education systems, has been to manage the process of devolution through strict operational guidelines set by the central authorities. It is ironic, therefore, that in the context of education authorities' intention to maintain tight centralised control over local decision making, the capacity offered to teachers and school communities to make choices at the local level has contributed to these teachers becoming seemingly less susceptible to some of the exhortations of their superiors.

The teachers in this study demonstrated this partial immunity from the guidelines emanating from central education systems by standing back from the implementation of many change initiatives, reserving for themselves the final decisions about whether or not innovations would be enacted at the classroom level. While in some of the literature the autonomy of teachers at the classroom level has been well established for many years (even as far back, for example, as Lortie, 1975), with this often involving a perception of teachers as isolated in the conduct of their work, this newer form of autonomy extends beyond the classroom door to involve the additional element of individual teachers asserting the right to make

choices about whether or not to adopt (or even adapt) innovations, even in the face of the promulgation of relatively restrictive and seemingly compelling external guidelines.

8.6 Implications of the Nature of Teachers' Work for Teachers, Principals, Education Systems and Teacher Educators

These ten new realities of teachers' work constitute only a snapshot of the ever more complex world of the teacher at work. The picture is, however, entirely consistent with many of the well-established themes in the literature: Fullan (1995), for example, has discussed the multiple and simultaneous elements of the *myriad of change expectations*; Hargreaves (1994) has elaborated on *intensification* and on *conflict between two kinds of collaboration*; and Cuban (1990) has dealt with aspects of *politicisation*. It is clear, therefore, that the new realities detailed in section 8.5 have significant implications for teachers, for principals, for education systems and for teacher educators in Australia.

• Implications for teachers

Perhaps the most profound implication inherent in the myriad of change expectations to which contemporary teachers are expected to respond is that the pace and number of such changes show every sign of increasing, rather than abating, in the immediate future. Similarly, in the context of devolution, as this has been implemented in both South Australia and Tasmania with local decision-making constrained by strict central guidelines, opportunities for conflict between teachers' views of what is important and appropriate in their specific contexts and the requirements of their education system will be likely to arise even more often in future than for the teachers in this study.

The *Directions Statement* issued by the Tasmanian government in mid-1997 is a window onto the increasingly intense and politicised nature of the tasks teachers will face in their work lives in the next several years. In one fell swoop, this package of innovations foreshadowed the provision of a lap top computer for every teacher, one computer for each five students in every classroom, and invited schools to draw up statements in which each school's agreed priorities for the next three years would be detailed. These statements would be documented as formal partnership agreements between the government, the school, its parents and members of the local community in each case. Far from representing a move toward total local management of schooling however, the Tasmanian

government's *Directions Statement* required that each partnership agreement will include the government's priorities and the school's implementation plans for these, established a system of five-year performance-based employment contracts for principals, abolished the central provision of professional development for teachers, and mandated the systemwide monitoring and assessment of specific student learning outcomes. In such circumstances, it is clear that Tasmanian teachers' work will be conducted in an intense, political environment, in the same way as has the work of their colleagues in other state education systems in Australia.

Of the many implications of these new realities of teachers' work, the issue of how teachers will respond to the imperatives of the future is paramount. Surely there can be no positive outcome if teachers simply lament the myriad of change expectations, divorce themselves from organisational goals, and retreat behind the closed doors of their classrooms as part of a struggle to hold back the tide of educational changes. Surely in those circumstances, they would be engulfed eventually. If, on the other hand, teachers can use their autonomy, immunity, expertise, mutual support and their focus on quality teaching and learning to influence the future of education at the enacted level, then the work of the teacher may well merit and receive appropriate recognition.

It is not as if the difficulties teachers face in the current context are unknown to educational planners in Australia. Schemes have been mooted in both South Australia and Tasmania under which teachers could be offered the opportunity of spending one year in every five away from their duties while receiving 80 percent of their regular salary throughout the five year period. Such schemes acknowledge the growing intensity of teachers' work (and generate extra time, albeit at the teacher's own cost), but do nothing to address the real issues in a substantive sense. Simply making available this form of regular respite from the demands of the teaching role will do nothing to ameliorate the difficulties associated with on-going work realities which include pressures to reduce resources further (the absence of key staff might well make the problems which result from such pressures even worse); and the apparently mutual lack of regard between teachers and their employing systems (the 'one year off in five' scheme is predicated on the notion that teachers will be able to work even harder than at present during their four years on duty).

Official and public recognition of teaching as a complex and demanding task, which can only be fulfilled effectively by those who are well-trained and who have access to a level of

resources appropriate for the task and to pedagogic knowledge and expertise, must be achieved in order for some of the more problematic realities of teachers' contemporary work lives to be resolved.

- **Implications for principals**

On each of the ten questionnaire items which sought principals' views on the extent of their teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their work lives, the range of responses from principals (as indicated by the respective standard deviation figures) was smaller than the corresponding range for the teachers' responses. It would stretch credulity to regard this phenomenon as having occurred simply by chance alone. While this is clearly a matter worthy of further investigation, and despite acknowledging the otherwise general match between principals' views and teachers' feelings, it might be hypothesised that this may well be indicative of a partial narrowing in each principal's view of the teacher's role. As the demands of their own role have increased, principals may well have come to view the teacher's role merely in terms of the parts of it that their working days enabled them to see and as they related these few observations to what they could recall of their own experience of teaching, rather than seeing the full range of complex processes involved in the teacher's multi-faceted role in the 1990s.

That the assessment of principals is now increasingly based on measurable school performance outcomes has, itself, become a new reality of work life for Australian state school principals. In their responses to this new reality of their work, Australian principals will need to recognise that there are equivalent new realities for their teachers and that such teacher realities will need to be addressed thoughtfully and skilfully, if for no other reason than the work of these same teachers will have a direct influence on the very outcomes which are measured in the assessment of a principal's effectiveness.

Given that, at the local level, the school principal often has the necessary capacity and flexibility to influence the directions in which resources are allocated, he or she has the potential to affect the extent to which teachers feel satisfied with the key aspects their work lives which relate to how they experience educational change and hence how they will respond to the change initiatives of the future. Such directions might include decisions which would lead to teachers feeling that they were able to control the impact of change on their own work; directions which might lead to teachers feeling able to pursue matters

related to their professional interests; and directions which might lead to teachers feeling more satisfied with their interactions with students. Even in the current climate of decreased job security among teachers, principals would be well advised to put their energies into facilitating the professional growth of teachers and their commitment to the imperatives of the future, rather than to rely on fear or insecurity to produce compliance. Given their options for autonomy and immunity, passive compliance from teachers will not be likely to be sufficient to allow principals to meet their own performance-related targets.

The training programs which have been developed recently in several Australian states, including Tasmania, provide both an opportunity and a vehicle through which current and prospective principals can promote teaching and learning as being at the heart of the educational enterprise they share with teachers and students. A common concern for quality teaching and learning is the essential basis for the joint work of teachers and principals. A focus on this shared concern also offers a basis upon which the problems inherent in *contrived collegiality* (Hargreaves, 1994) might be minimised in the context of the proposed Partnership Agreements between system, school and community in Tasmania.

• Implications for education systems

The results of the current study echo the key tenets of much of the educational change literature. The notion that *you can't mandate what matters* (made abundantly clear in Fullan, 1993b); the assertion that teachers *adapt rather than adopt* innovations and that they will engage with only those innovations seen to offer *practical benefits* for teaching or learning (so well-established as long ago as Doyle & Ponder, 1977-78), are consistent features of the teachers' responses throughout the study.

Thus, even in the face of concerns about the pace and number of the educational changes to which they have had to respond, despite their cynicism about the real educational worth and what they have seen to be doubtful benefits associated with many change initiatives, the teachers in this study emerged if not completely unscathed then at least unbowed. Furthermore, they have attained a degree of empowered autonomy, at least in the sense that their classroom activities have remained essentially a matter between themselves and their students. Thus it is teachers who have retained the right to ultimate decision-making in implementation matters at the instructional level.

What is more, they have evidently maintained a focus on their classroom activities as the key elements of their “real work”.

When all of this is taken in concert with the highly critical views of their two employing systems expressed by the teachers in this study, it is clear that it would be simply counter-productive for education systems to ignore the impact of externally imposed educational changes on teachers' work. Even if teachers' partial immunity from what they interpret, in some cases, as unnecessary or excessive systemic directives, and their consequent criticisms of their employers, were insufficient to cause concern among central decision-makers, the explosion in the number and cost of stress-related workers' compensation cases in the teaching force over the past decade should convince senior members of educational hierarchies of the importance of acknowledging the complex realities of teachers' work in the 1990s.

- **Implications for teacher educators**

Teacher educators could be forgiven for feeling just as battered by the prevailing elements as do many of the teacher respondents in this study. For a number of years in Australia, teacher educators have been lambasted for being out-of-touch with the classroom on the one hand, and for failing to devote attention to quality research on the other (see, for example, Turney & Wright, 1990). Indeed, the pressure for change in teacher education faculties is undeniably pervasive at a time when previously secure student numbers and faculty positions are now, at best, uncertain.

Without advocating yet another quiet revolution in teacher education (see, for example, Pope, 1993; Sarason, 1993), it is a reasonable observation that the great majority of preservice training of teachers concentrates on the Teaching/Learning domain of a teacher's work; while the Organisational domain is almost unrepresented in preservice curricula. Given that almost half of the educational changes identified by this study's teachers as having the strongest impact on their work fall into the organisational category, preservice teacher training programs should reflect a much broader conception of teachers' work. Pre-service curricula in Australian teacher education institutions prepare beginning teachers for pedagogy rather than for politics; for working with students but not for working with parents or community members; and largely ignores the complexities involved in the relationship between teachers and their employers. While that which is taught in teacher

education programmes in the current context cannot be said to be redundant, the new realities of teachers' work lives advanced in this study clearly indicate that teacher preparation in Australia is incomplete at best, and, indeed, might be better described as simply inadequate.

Despite the calls of advocates of whole-school change and of Fullan (1993a) among others, that "everyone must be a change agent", the reality evident in this study is that many teachers feel unprepared, unwilling, or unskilled in and for the roles they occupy in their responses to change initiatives and directives. While there is, of course, an extensive literature dealing with the management and effective implementation of change (see, for example the work of David Hargreaves (1990) in the British context) and innumerable courses are offered at the postgraduate level to cater for potential leaders of educational change processes, there is very little available for teachers who seek the skills, strategies and understandings necessary for them to do more than merely survive in a climate of rapid and continual change. That there is little available currently to present and prospective classroom teachers presents an opportunity, and perhaps even an obligation, to teacher educators.

Teacher education programs will need to be framed in such a way that paradox is managed skilfully by their graduates. In this study, teachers present themselves as autonomous and empowered survivors who are somewhat immune from many change efforts. The paradox here is that teachers are likely to be able to maintain their sanity, keep stress at a manageable level and retain their focus on students and classroom relationships, while systemic expectations of teacher behaviour in terms of implementation may not always be met because of the same immune system.

If Sungalia (1991: 16) is right that "the quality of teaching and learning in an educational system can only be improved from within the system, from within the classroom, from within the heart and mind of the teacher who is determined to teach so that students do learn all that they possibly can", then our teachers ought be helped to identify those practices which are critical for such quality teaching and learning. What is more, they should be empowered further to defend and protect those practices, while adding new dimensions to their pedagogical repertoires as appropriate. Teacher educators will only be able to assist future teachers in these activities if they are themselves, first, aware of the new realities of teachers' work lives in the latter 1990s; and second, able to both use and impart theories of

action (such as that suggested by Smyth, 1988) appropriate for teachers operating within the dynamic complexity of the current and future educational context.

8.7 Recommendations Relating to Future Educational Changes

The implications of the findings of the study are profound for all those with an interest in creating further change in Australian state schools and classrooms as, in the overwhelming majority of educational change efforts, it is teachers who still comprise what was depicted as “the workforce of reform” (Connell, 1991). The proponents of future changes in education would be well advised to take cognisance of what is now known about the members of this workforce, of the real nature of their work lives in the mid-1990s, and of how they describe their own individual and collective responses to educational change initiatives.

The teaching workforce still consists of a majority of females, especially at the classroom level, but Australian teachers are now, on average, older than ever before, with the average age of 41 years for the teachers in this study (based on 1994 data) being quite typical of the broader population of Australian teachers. In terms of where these teachers’ are positioned in their career life cycles (Huberman, Grounauer & Marti, 1993), therefore, many might be expected to have developed pedagogic repertoires with which they feel comfortable and to have long ago passed through an experimental learning period in which they might have automatically embraced innovations as potential sources of improvement.

The work lives of teachers in Australian state schools are harried and intense. A wide variety of new tasks and roles has been added to their continuing traditional duties, and teachers have had to perform their increasingly demanding and complex role in a context of the declining educational resource levels which have characterised Australian state education since a brief flurry of relative affluence in schools in the 1970s. Teachers see the complexity and value of their work as being largely unrecognised by the wider community and by the education systems which employ them. Perhaps most importantly, many feel that their work has been politicised and bureaucratised to an extent that they have been forced to sacrifice their focus on teaching and learning issues in order to meet, or at least be seen to be complying with, the accountability and documentation requirements of central authorities.

It is now known that Australian state school teachers are expected to deal with multiple, simultaneous educational innovation within what they see as counter-productively abbreviated implementation timelines. In their own descriptions of their responses to educational change, these teachers speak critically of the motives behind, and real effects of, many initiatives, and particularly critically about organisational changes which are imposed from external sources. They are overwhelmingly “adaptors”, rather than “adopters” of educational changes. Furthermore, in today’s teachers’ responses to exhortations for further educational change, their autonomy, bolstered by years of experience in the teacher’s role, has granted them sufficient immunity, if they should so wish, to metaphorically parrot the words many a teacher has heard from many a student, “You can’t make me!”.

While the path of avoidance may be available to teachers, it is hardly one which, if pursued, would serve their ultimate best interests. While it is appropriate, or perhaps even inevitable, that teachers should maintain control over the educational change agenda at the classroom level, this should not translate into responses characterised by automatic resistance. There is, after all, considerable support in the study’s data for the view that teachers’ apprehensions about many innovations tend to dissipate somewhat when they subsequently come to grips with these changes.

There are a number of lessons in all of this for those who would be proponents of educational change in the immediate future, but who may have concerns about the possible impact on teachers and on their work lives. In the form of the short, annotated list which follows, these lessons could include five recommendations. In terms of effective implementation alone, the operational implications of each of these five recommendations would be of significance for all those with an interest in the enactment, rather than the mere dissemination, of educational change initiatives.

- **Keep the number of simultaneous innovations to a level which is manageable for those who will implement them**

Given the increasingly intense and complex nature of teachers’ work, how many simultaneous innovations can they be expected to implement effectively while they continue to undertake all the rest of their duties? There is some anecdotal evidence in this study and embryonic research evidence in the educational management literature (see, for example,

Warner, 1997) that three is the maximum number of major initiatives that individual members of a school staff can cope with simultaneously. This makes a nonsense of the burgeoning numbers of central priorities to which education systems expect schools to respond currently. It could be argued, in fact, that when these current so-called "priorities" are each only one among so many, they cannot really be priorities in the true sense of that term. This does not mean, of course, that education systems and schools should have only three change priorities, as not all teachers at any one school would have to be involved necessarily in the same three innovations. The message, on the other hand, should be clear to both systems and schools to identify what their real change priorities are, to concentrate their efforts on these and to fund them, while foregoing or postponing other tempting, but apparently less urgent or important initiatives.

- **Situate proposed innovations in the context of maintaining a focus on the core tasks and purposes of teaching and learning**

The responses of the teachers in this study demonstrate that they see the most important and efficacious aspects of their work as those that relate directly to their teaching and learning work with students. Consequently, they report that they are more receptive to changes which they see as related to opportunities for improved teaching and learning and that they are more resistant to changes which they see as lacking such a direct connection to their core purposes. At the classroom level at least, teachers are the ultimate arbiters of both *what* and *how* in terms of implementation. Ideally, therefore, the connections between any proposed change and potential for improved teaching and learning outcomes will need to be communicated to teachers in ways that will encourage their acceptance of such direct links. While this should be feasible enough with educational changes which will affect teachers in the Teaching/Learning domain of their work, it may be more challenging to demonstrate direct connections to improved educational outcomes in the case of proposed changes which will most affect the Organisational domain of teachers' work. Even with the sorts of changes which relate only to administrative efficiencies, however, the enlistment of active support and co-operation from teachers should be predicated on a demonstration of the specific improvements to teaching or learning which will result from effective and full implementation of the proposed innovation. In the absence of an acceptance among teachers that any such links exist, implementers will face reluctant compliance at best, or opposition and non-compliance in cases where teachers feel that their focus on teaching and learning is under threat.

- **Ensure that the levels and types of resources provided are adequate for both implementation and institutionalisation**

While not overt in the data generated by this study it is apparent that the current implementation structures favoured by the two Australian state education systems are completely at odds with teachers' realities. This is especially the case in terms of the nature and levels of technical support provisions. Contemporary implementation support structures invariably feature one or more central (or at least, out-of-school) officers who are charged with the single task of supporting the implementation of a particular innovation. This single focus allows such officers the relative luxury of the time required to see all the complexities of their innovation, often resulting in excruciatingly detailed guidelines being disseminated to schools. In the current context of multiple simultaneous innovations described earlier, with similarly weighty tomes emanating from each project officer or project team, it is clear that such strategies blatantly disregard the complex realities of contemporary teachers' work lives.

Implementation strategies which feature single-purpose project teams generating long and detailed sets of guidelines must be abandoned and replaced with those which provide levels of technical expertise appropriate for teachers' needs, which are grounded in the work of the classroom, and which are accompanied by quality professional development which occurs at the school as the implementation site. Furthermore, implementation strategists must come to acknowledge that time is not merely a key resource but is also relative. In this sense, the projected time frames which make sense to those who operate from the distant perspective of head offices tend not to accord with the time frames perceived as attainable from the perspective of those engaged in the complex realities of schools.

In terms of extending implementation timelines to more realistic levels, the fact that teachers face multiple tasks in their day-to-day work must be understood. Furthermore, as it costs money to implement and, subsequently, to maintain new educational endeavours, financial support provisions must acknowledge maintenance needs in addition to the costs associated with initial implementation. Only in such circumstances will it be likely that implementation strategies will muster in teachers what Miles and Louis (1990) termed the "will" and "skill" for change: both of which are necessary precursors not merely for initial implementation but for the considerably less common but more lasting cultural changes which equate to institutionalisation of changes at the school level.

- **Promote local ownership of educational innovations to enhance teacher commitment to the attainment of the goals associated with changes**

Many contemporary implementation efforts pay only lip service to the need for teacher ownership of innovations at the local level. Yet there is much in this study to support an emerging view that few, if any, major change initiatives are ever implemented fully, or at least not implemented with the fidelity intended. Teacher ownership of particular innovations requires not merely the acceptance of a link to improved teaching and learning, but also agreement that the innovation makes sense in the local context. Innovations can only become meaningful to teachers at the local level when they are allowed the time to try things out and thus to develop their sense and meaning of the innovation in practice. Even then, opportunities for implementation through practical trials should be preceded by teacher participation in the decision-making processes which result in the identification of those changes which will be implemented at the local level and then subsequently predicated on a clear acceptance of a likely variety of styles and forms of enactment in practice.

Furthermore, teachers cannot be expected to accept responsibility for the attainment of specific goals associated with educational changes in the absence of a match between such goals and the levels of resources provided to meet those goals. Both teachers (in their dealings with those who set budgets at the school level) and schools (in their dealings with those who set budgets at the system level) will need to exercise their political skills to negotiate agreements, either on the budget increases which may be necessary to meet high outcome expectations or on the reduced outcomes which are feasible within the limitations imposed by restricted financial allocations.

- **Give teachers positive experiences in their involvement with a prior educational change before embarking on further initiatives**

The teachers in this study set high store on those change processes that had allowed them to take an active role in shaping the nature of educational change at the enacted level. Genuine participation in decision-making, both in the selection of changes to be implemented and in the determination of how such changes would look in practice in their own classrooms; a shared vision; a sense of efficacy; and subsequent opportunities to play positive leadership roles in collaborative self-selecting implementation teams were all

associated with a positive view of such changes. More importantly, teachers who had had these positive experiences with a significant change in the recent past claimed a considerably more positive disposition toward the changes of the future. Clearly, to change teachers' attitudes toward the educational changes of the future, it will be necessary to provide teachers with positive experiences in the change processes of the present. There is nothing in such an exhortation to look beyond the immediate context so that contemporary actions might encompass an element of planning for the changes of the future which conflicts in any way with the contemporary literature on effective implementation (see, for example, Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Smylie, 1994; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Lieberman & Miller, 1990a; Maeroff, 1988).

8.8 Recommendations for Future Research

The current study has uncovered much concerning a more complete understanding of the nature of teachers' work in the contemporary change context in Australian state schools. The situation in relation to each of the four research questions which were addressed specifically in the study is now considerably clearer. It is now known, for example, that it is the combined effects of multiple, simultaneous innovations which most affect teachers in their work lives, rather than certain individual changes *per se*. It is now known that externally-imposed changes which impact most on the Organisational domain of teachers' work are perceived by teachers to have affected their work particularly negatively, by contributing to an intensification of their work lives and to an unwelcome shift away from classroom tasks being the core focus of their work. It is now known that teachers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the working relationships they share with others at their schools, but dissatisfied with many of the demands, expectations and requirements which they associate with their education systems. It is now known that teachers' capacity to maintain control in and of their work is increasingly tenuous. It is also now known that the nature of teachers' experiences with a recent significant educational change has a direct influence on how they expect to respond to the educational changes of the future, even in the context of teachers being mainly adaptors, rather than adopters, of educational innovations.

Nevertheless, this study has raised some new questions and has also left a number of questions answered only in part, with both of these types of questions being worthy of future investigation. Given the significance of a current and complete understanding of the

real nature of teachers' experience of their own work for the sorts of strategies which should be associated with efforts to implement the educational changes of the future, both the new questions which have been generated by the study, and those questions which have not yet been answered in full, should be investigated in further research projects.

At least two new questions arise as a result of this study. These two questions are: first, "What do Australian teachers perceive to be their true work context and how does this perception affect their responses to educational change initiatives?"; and second, "What are the specific relationships between the extent of teachers' satisfaction with their work lives and the nature of their responses to educational change initiatives?"

In relation to the first question, there is an emerging indication that Australian state school teachers perceive their particular work context to be their current school, while some non-state system Australian teachers and certain overseas teachers see themselves operating within a systemic work context. Research conducted in 1996 in Australian state schools, the catholic diocese of Parramatta in New South Wales, in New Zealand schools and in Western Sumatra in Indonesia (Churchill, Grady, Duncan, McDougal & Hardiyanto, 1996) gives some indication that 'internal' means 'at the school level' in the discourse of New Zealand and Australian state school teachers, but means 'across the system' in the mindsets of teachers working within sections of the Australian catholic and Indonesian education systems. Given the apparent significance of their perceptions of the source of origin for the nature of teachers' subsequent responses to educational change initiatives, there may be substantial implications in this for how implementation and dissemination might be handled effectively in differing educational contexts. Clearly, this question merits further investigation.

In relation to the second new question, which involves the nature of the relationships between teachers' satisfaction with their work lives and their responses to educational change, the work which began in this study in the connections between the third and fourth research questions should be pursued. For all sorts of reasons it is clearly important to know whether the extent of teachers' work-related satisfaction is related directly to the extent to which they are willing and able to respond positively to the challenges associated with educational changes.

This issue might be investigated, partially at least, through the further development of the teacher satisfaction scale which appeared in this study as Items 19-28 in the questionnaire

for teachers. A revamped version of such an instrument has already been developed and trialed. In its newer form, the instrument features 15 items, each of which relate to one or the other of Moos' (1974) three dimensions of psychosocial environments: the personal relationships dimension; the personal development dimension; and the system maintenance and system change dimension. Each of the items begins with the same phrase: "How do you feel at present about ..." as it make inquiries into teachers' levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following 15 key aspects related to the quality of their work lives:

- the nature of the working relationships between you and the principal of your school;
- the level of support you receive from the parents of the children you teach;
- the nature of the policies produced by the education system within which you work;
- the extent to which your work at this school influences your students' future lives;
- the industrial conditions (salary, tenure, etc.) which relate to your employment as a teacher;
- the opportunities available to you at your school to influence decision-making in educational matters;
- the nature of the working relationships between you and the other teachers at your school;
- the personnel structures (transfer procedures, promotion practices, etc.) which apply in your education system;
- the capacity you have to exercise control over the effects that changes in education may have on your work as a teacher;
- the extent of the opportunities available to you to pursue involvement in matters related to your professional interests;
- the quality of the facilities and other resources which are available to you in your work as a teacher;
- the nature of the curricula which govern the content of your work with students;
- the nature of the interactions you have with students at your school;
- the amount of effort necessary for you to meet all of the requirements and expectations of you in your work as a teacher;
- the public perception of teachers, as you see this being expressed in the wider community.

The structure of the amended instrument also addresses the problems inherent in doubts about whether the options 'satisfied' and 'dissatisfied' represented a true semantic differential as these were offered originally in Items 19-28 in the questionnaires employed in the current study. The new instrument now features a scale which has all the appearance of the familiar 5-point Likert scale, but which consists in reality of two merged 3-point scales in which the response 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' is construed as the semantic differential for both of the extreme responses 'highly satisfied' and 'highly dissatisfied'. A sample item from the new instrument is presented in Fig 8.1, in which it can be seen that the newer scale now also offers the option of an 'unsure' response: an option not made available to the teacher respondents in the current study.

Fig. 8.1 Sample Item From Amended Teacher Satisfaction Instrument

How do you feel at present about the nature of the working relationships between you and the principal of your school?

Highly Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Quite Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why do you feel this way about your working relationship with your principal?..

This newer instrument would not, alone, be able to produce all the data necessary for a full probe into the links between teacher satisfaction and responses to educational change, but it might well generate a more complete picture of teacher satisfaction while needing the support of other data gathering approaches in order that the connections between satisfaction and responses to change might be investigated more fully.

Given that teaching is such a multi-faceted task and that efforts toward change dominate the educational agenda in Australia, it would be all too easy to generate a long list of future research topics which might flow logically from the issues addressed in this study. In such

circumstances it may be more appropriate to limit these suggestions to just three possibilities:

- an investigation of how teachers spend their time (a case study approach based around shadowing a representative sample of teachers might be instructive);
- a study of the psychosocial characteristics of individual teachers and specific educational changes (an ethnography such as that employed in Connell's *Teachers' Work* (1985) could result); and
- an examination of the efficacy and value of the range of change implementation strategies employed at the system level (comparing the perspectives of system strategists, principals, teachers and, perhaps, students and parents would be illuminating).

No single research project of the nature of that undertaken in this study can expect to have answered completely all the questions which were under direct investigation or which were implied in the study's conceptual framework. The limitations imposed by the level of available resources, both financial and temporal, often necessitate, for example, that respondent samples are not entirely representative of the total population for whom the researcher seeks to draw conclusions. In the case of this study, these limitations meant that data were gathered only from a pool of teachers and principals from the state systems of Tasmania and South Australia. It is uncertain, therefore, how far the conclusions of the study can be applied to the broader populations of Australian teachers in the five other state systems, or how applicable these conclusions might be to those populations of Australian teachers working in the various non-state sectors. The subsequent work of Churchill, Grady, Duncan, McDougal & Hardiyanto (1996) indicates that the findings of the responses of the teachers involved in the current study are largely replicated by those of their colleagues from three of the other Australian state education systems, but further research is still needed in this area in the interests of the generalisability of the study's findings.

The Key Conclusions of the Study for Teachers' Work in the Contemporary Change Context

The findings of the study have demonstrated that teachers report having been significantly affected in their work lives by the number and complexity of the multiple simultaneous innovations to which they have been expected to respond. Their involvement with these

innovations has contributed to the development of considerably intensified work lives for teachers: work lives that are characterised by dissatisfaction with the systems which employ them and by pressure which have forced an unwelcome shift away from their classroom duties on their day-to-day work. Teachers are not obedient adopters of prescribed innovations, rather they make whatever adaptations they see as necessary in the context of their own work lives and their own local settings. Their prior experiences of educational changes are important influences on their predicted responses to future educational change initiatives, which they see as inevitable, while also seeing themselves, justifiably, as being the final arbiters of what, if anything, is enacted at the classroom level.

As teachers are the ultimate arbiters of implementation, it would be folly for those connected with teachers' involvement in the educational changes of the future to fail to acknowledge and address the realities of teachers' work lives. After all, these work lives are conducted in the very contexts that such innovators seek to affect and teachers may well hold that 'possession is nine tenths of the law'. On a similar note, government officers (who, at senior levels, are increasingly appointed on limited-term, performance-related contracts) and politicians would be well advised to reconsider the wisdom of what teachers have perceived to be an adversarial attitude in official dealings with teachers and their union leaders. After all, there are a lot of teachers, teachers have families and, in every state in Australia, voting is compulsory.

While at the time he wasn't writing about education systems, schools or teachers, Naisbitt (1994) depicted the immediate future as characterised by, among other things, two sorts of pressures which seemingly conflict with each other: the pressure to respond to global issues in standardised ways; and the pressure to respond to local issues in individualised ways. These twin pressures are inherent in the practice of the policy of devolution in Australian education systems and which, in turn, underpins the contemporary change context in which teachers in Australian state schools conduct their work.

In Naisbitt's analysis the way forward in such contradictory and uncertain circumstances necessitates a twofold strategy: first, existing structures and practices must be altered sufficiently to allow the new structures and practices which come with innovations to be able to flourish; and second, that some old structures and practices, particularly those which have symbolic value, must be retained in order that needs can be met meaningfully at the local level. There are clear parallels in all of this with the implications of the findings of this study: the old practices which will have to go will include those actions which have

been associated with so many contemporary efforts to implement educational change while ignoring or misunderstanding the realities of teachers' work lives; while the importance (both symbolic and real) of teachers' focus on teaching and learning in classrooms will have to be retained and defended if their support for future educational innovations is to be enlisted.

Hough and Paine (1997: 9) see the change context in education in the post-industrial world as requiring responses which involve both a "phase-in" component and a "stabilising" component. In these terms, the findings of this study in relation to the new realities of teachers' work lives might be interpreted as follows: the myriad of change expectations with their attendant abbreviated timelines and the increasing intensification and politicisation of teachers' work lives require that the large-scale change efforts of the future be "phased in"; while closer links between systems and teachers, an enhanced focus on the importance of teachers' classroom work, increased opportunities for genuine collegial collaboration at the school level, and an acceptance of teachers' professionalism should all be fostered as part of a deliberate policy of "stabilisation"; in order that any attempts to improve educational operations and outcomes can be founded on a secure footing.

In the contemporary educational change context in Australia it is clear from the responses of the teachers and principals involved in this study that there is a palpable need for a thorough understanding of the nature of the realities of teachers' work lives, and of their perceptions of their work, to underpin future approaches to educational change if anything beyond mere compliance on paper is to be achieved.

The essential point is that the new realities of teachers' work lives detailed in this study comprise a significant element of teachers' culture in the 1990s. Thus we now have a new understanding of teachers' work cultures, including what they think they could do and what they think they should do. This understanding of contemporary teachers' work cultures is not apparent at all in the depictions of teachers' work lives alluded to in Chapter One (in the references to *The Advancement of Spencer Button*, *Stand By Me*, *Heartbreak High*, Lortie's *School Teacher* or Connell's *Teachers' Work*), nor is it even reflected fully in Little and McLaughlin's *Perspectives on Cultures and Contexts of Teaching* (1993), or in Hargreaves' *Changing Teachers, Changing Times* (1994). With, perhaps, the single exception of the still embryonic work of Shacklock (1995), the material emanating from the United Kingdom gets closest to a depiction of the cultures of teachers and schools which could apply in the Australian context (see, for example, the British television drama *Hearts*

and Minds and, in a more scholarly vein, Gillian Helsby's (forthcoming) *Changing Teachers' Work*). None of these, however, offers what might suffice as a complete picture of the work cultures of teachers in Australia's state schools in the mid to late 1990s. None of these depicts adequately the intense and political nature of teachers' work; none shows the reality of the struggle to simply get the job done in the face of ever-increasing expectations and inadequate resources; none shows the yawning gulf between the perceptions of teachers and those held by their employers; and none shows the extent to which teachers work together to survive and to move toward self-selected improvements in teaching and learning, often by evading the depredations of those external the school context. It would be more accurate to acknowledge that each of the works mentioned, whether scholarly or otherwise, depicts some elements of the realities of contemporary teachers' work lives, but none of them shows all of these realities in their interdependent entirety.

This study has examined only teachers' own perspectives on educational change and its impact on their work. There are, of course, a range of other actors involved with educational change in Australia and the members of each of these groups (including teacher union officials, senior educational bureaucrats, parents and political leaders) have their own perspectives on teachers, on the quality of their work and on the need for particular changes in education. There is no suggestion in any of this that teachers are the sole members of the educational community blessed with universal wisdom in these matters. The point remains, however, that it is teachers, and only teachers, who are daily in the front line of the practice of education in the contemporary change context and thus their perspective is both unique and powerful. To extend this somewhat military allusion a little further: it is clear that the teachers who participated in this study have not retreated into the bunkers of their classrooms (which, in many cases, are less a potential source of shelter than they may have been in the past), but have joined forces at the school level to create and protect meaningful educational communities. Whether, and for how long, politicians and some of the senior officials of educational authorities wish to remain (fairly or unfairly) cast by teachers in the role of 'enemy' is, in no small measure, dependent on the extent to which they are prepared to acknowledge and address the new realities of teachers' work lives in their future direction of the educational change agenda in Australia.

ATTACHMENTS

Introduction

The thesis concludes with a list of references and with the presentation of several documents which were crucial to the conduct of the study. Following the references, these documents are presented as follows:

- **Appendix I**

The interview schedule which was used in the 38 interviews with teachers which were conducted early in the final term of the 1994 school year;

- **Appendix II**

The questionnaire for teachers which was completed by 89 teacher respondents during the period September to November, 1994;

- **Appendix III**

The questionnaire for principals which was completed by 87 principal respondents during the latter months of 1994;

- **Appendix IV**

Four examples of invitations to participate and briefing documents which were sent to potential teacher and principal respondents at the commencement of the final school term of 1994; and

- **Appendix V**

A sample interview transcript, both before and after the teacher interviewee had made amendments to the original draft of that transcript.

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APPENDIX I

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

OPENING:

Greet the interviewee and introduce yourself by name. Say:

"As you know this interview is part of a research project being conducted by the University of Tasmania. We would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study."

Then say:

"Now, with your approval, I'd like to tape record the interview. This will allow the interview to flow freely, and it will ensure that your views are recorded accurately. When the tape is transcribed, neither you nor your school will be able to be identified. So, if this is okay with you, I'd like to start the tape and begin the interview."

Wait for agreement.

Insert a new cassette into the recorder.

Switch on to begin recording.

Check that recorder is operating.

QUESTION 1:

"Can you identify three changes in education that have affected your work as a teacher over the past five years?"

Record each of the three changes below.

Read each one back to check for accuracy.

Say

"You've identified (*Restate the three changes given*) as three changes which have affected your work."

QUESTION 2:

"Which one of these three changes has had the strongest degree of impact on your work as a teacher?"

If the interviewee indicates that two, or even all three, of the changes have had equal degrees of impact on their work, it may be necessary to establish which change is having the strongest current impact by asking, "Well, which of these changes seems to effect you the most in your day-to-day work at present?"

Record this change:

Tell the interviewee that the rest of the questions deal only with this change.

QUESTION 3:

"Where, in your view, did this change originate?"

Wait for an answer.

If necessary, prompt uncertain interviewees with a follow-up question: "Well, did the change originate:

- * from within your own work or from somewhere else within this school;*
- * from Education Department sources;*
- * from government sources; or*
- * from somewhere else?"*

QUESTION 4:

"How was this change first presented to you?"

Wait for an answer.

If necessary, prompt uncertain interviewees with a follow-up question: "Well, were teachers:

- * the initiators of the change; or were teachers*
- * involved in the development of the change; or*
- * was the change simply announced as mandatory?"*

QUESTION 5:

"At your school, was the change introduced as ready for immediate full implementation, or was it introduced gradually and allowed to develop over time?"

QUESTION 6:

"What did you understand to be the main objective of this change?"

QUESTION 7:

"What factors supported your efforts to implement this change?"

Wait for an answer.

If necessary, prompt uncertain interviewees by saying: "Well, factors which might have supported implementation could include things like:

- * personal help from particular people;*
- * the provision of resources;*
- * availability of extra time; or*
- * other school strategies created to assist in implementation."*

QUESTION 8:

"What factors hindered your efforts to implement the change?"

QUESTION 9:

"In what ways has this change affected you in terms of the amount of work required of you in your role as a teacher?"

QUESTION 10:

"Has this change required you to adopt new ways of operating in terms of how you do your work as a teacher?"

QUESTION 11:

"Has this change affected your work as a teacher in terms of your relationships with others?"

If asked by the interviewees you should explain that this question might include relationships at work as well as those involving others outside work.

QUESTION 12:

"Has this change affected any other aspects of your work as a teacher?"

QUESTION 13:

"What effects have this change had on your students' experiences at school?"

QUESTION 14:

"What are your current feelings about this change?"

Ask the following question only if the interviewee offers no reason for their feelings: "What things have led you to feel this way?"

QUESTION 15:

"In what ways have your experiences with this change affected how you think you will be likely to respond to future educational changes?"

Wait for an answer.

If necessary, rephrase the question by asking: "Well, will your experiences with this change lead you to respond more positively or more negatively to future changes?"

CLOSURE:

Say:

"Thank you. That concludes the formal part of the interview. Is there anything else that you would like to add in relation to the impact of educational change, in general, on your working life?"

Wait for an answer.

Switch off the tape recorder.

Thank the interviewee for their time and for their contributions to the study.

Tell them that the interview will be transcribed over the next few weeks.

The transcription will be mailed to them for confirmation of its accuracy.

At that time they will have an opportunity to correct or amend the transcript.

Hand out the follow-up survey.

Ask the interviewee to complete and return the survey using the attached reply-paid envelope during the next week.

Make sure that the audiotape and this interview schedule are placed in an envelope labelled with the interviewee's name, school and date of interview.

Repeat your thanks for their contribution.

APPENDIX II

THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Introduction

The questionnaire which is presented here as Appendix II was developed through the processes described in Chapter Three. It was completed and returned by 89 teacher respondents, 27 of whom also participated in the study as interviewees.



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

INTRODUCTION

This survey is part of a research project which is being conducted in Australia at the University of Tasmania. The research involves an investigation into the effects that changes in education and in society are having on the working lives of South Australian and Tasmanian classroom teachers.

The survey is designed to be completed by classroom teachers. Once the data from the completed and returned surveys has been collated, these forms will be destroyed. All participants are given a clear guarantee that their responses will be treated in confidence and that their anonymity will be ensured at all times.

In completing the survey, classroom teacher respondents are asked to do the following:

1. Complete the details requested in the "Background Data" section;
2. Complete the remainder of the survey by answering items 1 - 28 as fully as possible, basing your replies on **your own opinions and experiences**;
3. Use the reply-paid, pre-addressed envelope provided to return the completed survey to the University of Tasmania within the next seven days.

Should you wish to contact the research group for any reason, please feel free to do so. The contact details are as follows:

Mail
Mr. Rick Churchill
School of Education
University of Tasmania
PO Box 1214
Launceston 7250

Telephone
003-243252

Facsimile
003-243048

Thank you for your participation in, and valuable contributions to, this research project.

BACKGROUND DATA

Please supply the following details:

1. Year of birth: 19____
2. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
3. Current school type: Primary ☐
Area/District High ☐
Secondary ☐
Senior Secondary ☐
4. Number of years as a teacher: ☐ ☐
5. Number of years as a teacher
at your current school: ☐ ☐
6. Number of years you expect to
continue to work as a teacher: ☐ ☐
7. Have you participated in an interview
as part of this research project? Yes ☐
No ☐

THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

ITEM 1:

Please list each of the educational changes which have had significant impacts on your work as a teacher during the past five years.

ITEM 2:

Which one of these changes has had the strongest overall effect on your work?

Items 3 - 16 relate only to "this change", the one change which you have identified as having had the strongest overall effect on your work.

ITEM 3:

How would you describe the strength of the impact that the overall effect of this change has had on your work as a teacher?

Please tick the most appropriate response

- ☐ Very little impact
- ☐ Some impact
- ☐ Significant impact
- ☐ Very strong impact

ITEM 4:

Use the scale below to indicate how positive or negative the effects of this change have been on your work as a teacher.

Please circle the most appropriate response

Very Positive Positive Mixed/Neutral Negative Very Negative

ITEM 5:

Which of the following was principally responsible for originating this change?

You should tick one box only

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | You as a teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> | Your school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Your school principal | <input type="checkbox"/> | Your local community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Education Department | <input type="checkbox"/> | Federal sources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other State government sources | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | | |

ITEM 6:

Whose interests were meant to be served by the development of this change?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Students | <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Educational administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> | Politicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | | |

ITEM 7:

Whose interests have actually been served by the implementation of this change?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Students | <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Educational administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> | Politicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | | |

ITEM 8:

What was the main objective of this change?

ITEM 9:

Which of the following terms best describes your role as an individual teacher in this change?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Initiator | <input type="checkbox"/> | Opposer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adviser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Supporter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Collaborator | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reluctant participant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Implementer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Passive resister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | | |

ITEM 10:

To what extent were you allowed control over decision-making in relation to the implementation of this change in your work setting?

Tick one of the following options

- ☐ Implementation was mandatory and a particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was mandatory, but no particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was optional, but a particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was optional and no particular method was prescribed

ITEM 11:

How committed have you felt to the achievement of the objectives of this change in your work setting?

Please tick the most appropriate response

- ☐ Not at all committed
- ☐ Partially committed
- ☐ Firmly committed
- ☐ Completely committed

ITEM 12:

In what ways has your work life been affected by this change?

ITEM 13:

What strategies have you adopted to help you adjust to new work patterns resulting from this change?

ITEM 14:

Has this change had any effects on your major sources of satisfaction, in your work as a teacher?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', what are your major sources of work-related satisfaction?

... and, how have these been affected by this change?

ITEM 15:

Has this change had any effects on your major sources of dissatisfaction, in your work as a teacher?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', what are your major sources of work-related dissatisfaction?

... and, how have these been affected by this change?

ITEM 16:

Has your experience with this change affected your likely response to future educational changes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', as a result of this experience are you now

☐ Likely to respond more positively to future educational changes?

or

☐ Likely to respond more negatively to future educational changes?

Items 17 and 18 relate to other changes. These changes might include any changes in education or in society generally which you feel may affect your work as a teacher.

ITEM 17:

During the past five years, have any social changes had significant impacts on your work as a teacher?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', what other changes have affected your work as a teacher?

...and, how have these other changes affected you in your work as a teacher?

ITEM 18:

Which of the following best describes you in your typical response to educational change?

- ☐ A teacher who adopts changes in their original form
☐ A teacher who adapts changes according to the local context
☐ A teacher who resists changes until convinced otherwise
☐ A teacher who complies with the formal requirements associated with changes
☐ None of the above: I am a teacher who

Items 19 - 28 relate to a number of factors which may have an impact on the quality of teachers' working lives.

This research project is interested in your views on how you feel about each of these factors in relation to your work at present.

You are asked to respond to each question on the scales provided in the following ways:

1. **Place a tick on the scale** within the sector which most closely indicates your **present** feelings in relation to the item;
2. Briefly state the **reasons why you feel as you do now**, in relation to the item;
3. **Repeat steps 1 - 2** for each of the items 19 - 28.

ITEM 19:

How do you feel now about the quality and nature of the working relationship between you and the principal of your school?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your working relationship with your principal?

ITEM 20:

How do you feel now about the quality and nature of the working relationships between you and the other teachers at your school?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your working relationships with other teachers?

ITEM 21:

How do you feel now about the nature of your interactions with students at your school?

Satisfied

/ / / / /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your interactions with students?

ITEM 22:

How do you feel now about the level of support for and perception of teachers, expressed by parents and the wider community?

Satisfied

/ / / / /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about parent and community perceptions of teachers?

ITEM 23:

How do you feel now about the directions and objectives of the policies produced by the Department of Education?

Satisfied

/ / / / /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about Departmental policy directions?

ITEM 24:

How do you feel now about your employment conditions, such as salary, job security and opportunities for promotion?

Satisfied

/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your employment conditions?

ITEM 25:

How do you feel now about the opportunities available to you to maintain control over decision-making in educational matters which relate to your work as a teacher?

Satisfied

/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your opportunities to control decision-making in educational matters?

ITEM 26:

How do you feel now about your capacity to control the impact of change on your work as a teacher?

Satisfied

/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

Dissatisfied

Why do you feel this way about your capacity to control the impact of change on your work?

ITEM 27:

How do you feel now about the quality of the facilities, equipment and other resources which are available to you in your work as a teacher?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ / / / /

Why do you feel this way about facilities, equipment and other resources?

ITEM 28:

How do you feel now about the amount of effort necessary for you to meet all of the expectations and requirements of you in your work as a teacher?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ / / / /

Why do you feel this way about the amount of effort necessary to meet your work requirements?

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the survey to the University of Tasmania by using the reply-paid envelope provided for this purpose.

APPENDIX III

THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

Introduction

The questionnaire which is presented here as Appendix III was developed through the processes described in Chapter Three. It was completed and returned by 87 school principal respondents.



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

INTRODUCTION

This survey is part of a research project which is being conducted in Australia at the University of Tasmania. The research involves an investigation into the effects that changes in education and in society are having on the working lives of South Australian and Tasmanian classroom teachers.

The survey is designed to be completed by school principals. Once the data from the completed and returned surveys has been collated and analysed, these forms will be destroyed. All participants are given a clear guarantee that their responses will be treated in confidence and that their anonymity will be ensured at all times.

In completing the survey, principal respondents are asked to do the following:

1. Complete the details requested in the "Background Data" section;
2. Complete the remainder of the survey by answering items 1 - 28 as fully as possible, basing your replies on **your experiences and knowledge of the teachers at your current school**;
3. Use the reply-paid, pre-addressed envelope provided to return the completed survey to the University of Tasmania within the next seven days.

Should you wish to contact the research group for any reason, please feel free to do so. The contact details are as follows:

Mail
Mr. Rick Churchill
School of Education
University of Tasmania
PO Box 1214
Launceston 7250

Telephone
003-243252

Facsimile
003-243048

Thank you for your participation in, and valuable contributions to, this research project.

BACKGROUND DATA

Please supply the following details:

1. Year of birth: 19_____
2. Gender: Male ☐
Female ☐
3. Current school type: Primary ☐
Area/District High ☐
Secondary ☐
Senior Secondary ☐
4. Number of years as a principal: ☐
5. Number of years as principal
at your current school: ☐
6. Number of years you expect to
continue to work as a principal: ☐

THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

ITEM 1:

Please list each of the educational changes which have had significant impacts on the work of your teachers during the past five years.

ITEM 2:

Which one of these changes has had the strongest overall effect on your teachers' work?

Items 3 - 16 relate only to "this change", the one change which you have identified as having had the strongest overall effect on your teachers' work.

ITEM 3:

How would you describe the strength of the impact that the overall effect of this change has had on your teachers' work?

Please tick the most appropriate response.

- ☐ Very little impact
- ☐ Some impact
- ☐ Significant impact
- ☐ Very strong impact

ITEM 4:

Use the scale below to indicate how positive or negative the effects of this change have been on your teachers' work.

Please circle the most appropriate response

Very Positive Positive Mixed/Neutral Negative Very Negative

ITEM 5:

Which of the following was principally responsible for originating this change?

You should tick one box only

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Your school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You, as principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Your local community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Education Department | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal sources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other State government sources | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

ITEM 6:

Whose interests were meant to be served by the development of this change?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> Politicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

ITEM 7:

Whose interests have actually been served by the implementation of this change?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> Politicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

ITEM 8:

What was the main objective of this change?

ITEM 9:

Which of the following terms best describes the role of the teacher in this change at your school?

You may tick more than one box if appropriate

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initiator | <input type="checkbox"/> Opposer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adviser | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborator | <input type="checkbox"/> Reluctant participant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Implementer | <input type="checkbox"/> Passive resister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

ITEM 10:

To what extent were your teachers allowed control over decision-making in relation to the implementation of this change?

Tick one of the following options

- ☐ Implementation was mandatory and a particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was mandatory, but no particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was optional, but a particular method was prescribed
- ☐ Implementation was optional and no particular method was prescribed

ITEM 11:

How committed have your teachers felt to the achievement of the objectives of this change in your school?

Please tick one of the following options

- ☐ Not at all committed
- ☐ Partially committed
- ☐ Firmly committed
- ☐ Completely committed

ITEM 12:

In what ways have your teachers' work lives been affected by this change?

ITEM 13:

What strategies have your teachers adopted to help them adjust to new work patterns resulting from this change?

ITEM 14:

Has this change had any effects on your teachers' major sources of satisfaction in their work as teachers?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', what are your teachers' major sources of work-related satisfaction?

... and, how have your teachers' sources of satisfaction been affected by this change?

ITEM 15:

Has this change had any effects on your teachers' major sources of dissatisfaction in their work as teachers?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', what are your teachers' major sources of work-related dissatisfaction?

... and, how have your teachers' major sources of dissatisfaction been affected by this change?

ITEM 16:

Have your teachers' experiences with this change affected their likely responses to future educational changes?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

If 'Yes', as a result of this experience are your teachers now

☐ Likely to respond more positively to future educational changes?

or

☐ Likely to respond more negatively to future educational changes?

Items 17 and 18 relate to other changes. These changes might include any changes in education or in society generally which you feel may affect your teachers in their work.

ITEM 17:

During the past five years, have any social changes had significant impacts on the work of your teachers?

[] Yes

[] No

[] Uncertain

If 'Yes', what other changes have affected the work of your teachers?

...and, how have these other changes affected your teachers in their work?

ITEM 18:

Which of the following best describes your teachers in their typical response to educational change?

- [] Teachers adopt changes in their original form
- [] Teachers adapt changes according to the local context
- [] Teachers resist changes until convinced otherwise
- [] Teachers comply with the formal requirements associated with changes
- [] None of the above: Teachers

Items 19 - 28 relate to a number of factors which may have an impact on the quality of your teachers' working lives.

This research project is interested in your understanding of how your teachers feel about each of these factors in relation to their work at **present**.

You are asked to respond to each question on the scales provided in the following ways:

1. **Place a tick on the scale** within the sector which most closely indicates how you believe teachers **currently** feel in relation to the item;
2. Briefly state the **factors which have caused teachers' feelings** in relation to that item;
3. **Repeat steps 1 and 2** for each of the items 19 - 28.

ITEM 19:

How do your teachers feel about the quality and nature of the working relationship they have with you, as the principal of their school?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 20:

How do your teachers feel about the quality and nature of their working relationships with other teachers at their school?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 21:

How do your teachers feel about the nature of their interactions with students at school?

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

/ / / / /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 22:

How do your teachers feel about the level of support for and perception of teachers, expressed by parents and the wider community?

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

/ / / / /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 23:

How do your teachers feel about the directions and objectives of the policies produced by the Department of Education?

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

/ / / / /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 24:

How do your teachers feel about their employment conditions, such as salary, job security and opportunities for promotion?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 25:

How do your teachers feel about the opportunities available to them to maintain control over decision-making in educational matters which relate to their work as teachers?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 26:

How do your teachers feel about their capacity to influence the impact of social and educational changes on their work as teachers?

Satisfied _____ Dissatisfied _____
/ _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 27:

How do your teachers feel about the quality of the facilities, equipment and other resources which are available to them in their work as teachers?

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

/ / / / /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

ITEM 28:

How do your teachers feel about the amount of effort necessary for them to meet all of the expectations and requirements of them in their work as teachers?

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

/ / / / /

What factors have led your teachers to feel this way?

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the survey to the University of Tasmania by using the reply-paid envelope provided for this purpose.

APPENDIX IV

BRIEFING NOTES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Introduction

Examples of four pieces of guidance for potential teacher and principal participants are presented in Appendix IV. These four examples are presented in the following order:

- The letter (dated 8th September, 1994) which was sent to South Australian school principals inviting their participation as questionnaire respondents in the study and seeking their permission and assistance related to the participation of a number of their teachers in the study. A similar letter, not reproduced here, was sent to Tasmanian school principals;
- The invitation to participate in the study and accompanying background briefing notes which were sent, via school principals, to Tasmanian teachers who had been identified as interested in participating in the study as interviewees or as questionnaire respondents;
- The equivalent invitation and background briefing notes which were sent to those South Australian teachers identified as interested in participating as interviewees or questionnaire respondents; and
- The letter sent to both Tasmanian and South Australian school principals inviting them to participate in the study as respondents to the questionnaire for principals.



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

8th September, 1994

Dear Principal

You will be aware that there has been a considerable level of interest expressed in understanding how teachers have been affected, both personally and professionally, by recent educational changes. You will be aware also of the weight of evidence which underlines the significance of the role of the school principal in determining the impact of change in their individual schools.

As one response to this increasing interest in the impact of educational change on teachers' working lives, a study is being conducted in Australia by Professor John Williamson and Rick Churchill of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

This research will involve the collection of information from a total sample of 80 Australian schools, with these being selected so as to give appropriate representation to primary and secondary schools, senior secondary colleges, urban and rural schools, large and small schools, isolated schools, and so on.

The views of the principals and some teachers from 20 schools, selected from the original sample of 80 schools, will be particularly sought. This will help the study to better reflect the realities of school and classroom life, as this is experienced by teachers in their day-to-day work.

It is in your role as principal of one of these 20 selected schools that we would particularly appreciate your participation, as well as that of a small number of your teaching staff, in this project.

Your participation would involve three things.

- First, following your consideration of the brief pre-reading notes which are enclosed, you would complete a 28-item survey, which is also enclosed, and return it to the university in the reply-paid envelope provided.
- Second, you would identify eight volunteers from among your full-time teaching staff to also participate in the project - two of these being prepared to participate in an interview with a member of the research team in addition to completing a survey, with the remaining six involved only in responding to this teacher survey. A brief paper, outlining the purpose of the study and the nature of possible teacher involvement, is enclosed with this letter to assist in this process of identifying volunteers.
- Third, you would allow a member of the research team to visit your school at a convenient time on Tuesday 1st November to conduct the interviews with the participating volunteer teachers.

We are aware of the many factors which might lead you to decline participation in this project - the many competing demands on the principal's time, heavy staff workloads at this time of year, the urgent nature of many departmental priorities and, of course, the absence of any apparent immediate benefits for yourself or your school community.

Despite acknowledging the reality of these constraints, we still ask for your participation. Given a sufficient level of participation, we expect that the results of the study will have significant impacts on the conditions of teachers' work. We will be glad to supply a summary of the project data to you and your staff.

We would like to offer a number of assurances in relation to our request for your participation in the project. First, we have sought and received formal permission to conduct research in departmental schools. Second, the identities of all participants and schools will remain confidential at all stages of the project. This assurance of anonymity includes the strict protection of the anonymity of participants and schools in all resulting reports and publications. Third and finally, while your participation would be much appreciated, it is, of course, entirely voluntary.

Should you now be prepared to participate in the study, please do so in accordance with the following procedure:

1. read the enclosed set of background notes for principals dealing with issues of educational change;
2. complete the survey for principals, basing your replies on your knowledge and understanding of the teachers employed at your school;
3. place the completed survey in the reply-paid envelope provided and post this envelope to the University by 28th September, 1994;
4. identify two volunteers from among your full-time teaching staff to participate in the project as both interviewees and survey respondents;
5. identify six further volunteers from among your full-time teaching staff to participate in the project as survey respondents.

A member of the research team will telephone you at school during the next week to answer any queries you may have, and to seek your response to our request for your participation.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated. We hope that the project will generate benefits for principals, teachers and students as a direct result of improved understandings of the effects of educational changes on teachers' work.

Should you have any immediate questions relating to any aspect of this study, these should be directed to either of the members of the research team, at the above address. Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to receiving the benefit of your school's participation.

Yours faithfully

John Williamson
Head of Department

Rick Churchill
Department of Secondary &
Post-Compulsory Education

Enclosures:

1. Background notes for principals
2. Principal survey
3. Reply-paid envelope for principal survey return
4. Information paper for potential teacher participants - 10 copies



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

Part 1: AN INVITATION FOR TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE ON THEIR WORK

Education systems and schools have undergone considerable change in recent years. One slowly-emerging consequence of the level of such change has been interest in understanding how these changes have affected teachers, both personally and professionally.

As part on this increasing interest in the impact of educational change on teachers' work lives, a study is being conducted in Australia by Professor John Williamson and Rick Churchill of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

This research will involve the collection of information from a total sample of 80 Australian schools, with these being selected to ensure appropriate representation of primary and secondary schools, senior secondary colleges, urban and rural schools, isolated schools, and so on.

The views of some of the teachers from 20 schools, selected from the original sample of 80 schools, will be particularly sought. This will help the study to better reflect the realities of school and classroom life, as this is experienced by teachers in their day-to-day work.

It is in your role as a teacher at one of these 20 selected schools that we would particularly invite and appreciate your participation in this project.

Your participation can be at one of two levels. You can either:

- agree to be interviewed by a member of the research team during the second or third week of the next school term. During the week following the interview you would complete a 28-item survey dealing with aspects of the impact of educational change on your work as a teacher;
- or,
- complete the 28-item survey only, and not be involved in any interview.

We are aware of the many factors which might lead you to decline participation in this project - heavy teacher workloads, the urgent nature of many other priorities and, of course, the absence of any apparent immediate benefits for yourself or your students.

Despite acknowledging the reality of these constraints, we still ask for your participation. Given a sufficient level of participation, we expect that the results of the study will have significant impacts on the conditions of teachers' work. We will be glad to supply a summary of the project data to you.

We would like to offer a number of assurances in relation to our request for your participation in the project. First, we have sought and received formal permission to conduct research in departmental schools. Second, the identities of all participants and schools will remain confidential at all stages of the project and in all resulting reports and publications. Third and finally, while your participation would be much appreciated, it is, of course, entirely voluntary.

Should you now be prepared to participate in the study, please do so in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Read the next section of these background notes. This gives some information about our understanding of recent educational changes;
2. Advise your principal that you are prepared to participate in the study, either as an interviewee and survey respondent, or as a survey respondent only.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated. We hope that the project will generate benefits for all concerned with schools, as a direct result of improved understandings of the effects of educational changes on teachers' work.

Should you have any immediate questions relating to any aspect of this study, these should be directed to either of the members of the research team, at the above address. Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to receiving the benefit of your participation.

Part 2: INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study. Your participation, along with that of your colleagues from your own and other schools, will produce valued information.

The study is concerned with investigating the effects that recent educational changes have had on teachers in their working lives. These effects might be experienced by teachers in changes to the ways in which they do their work, in changes to the ways they feel about their work, or in changes to the amount and type of work they do as teachers.

The focus of the study is, therefore, on your perceptions of how recent educational changes have affected you in your work. In short, the study is interested in two main questions:

- Which recent educational changes have had the most impact on your work as a teacher?
- In what ways has your work been affected by educational change?

It is important that all participants share a common understanding of the term "educational change". To assist in this, a list of some recent educational changes is presented below. This is, of course, far from a complete list of all recent educational changes, and it is not necessarily a list of the most significant changes of recent years. Furthermore, in your school there will have been a number of other changes generated in response to your local context. These will not appear on the list, but may well have particular significance to your work as a teacher at your school. Bearing all these provisos in mind, a list of examples of recent educational changes might include the following:

- the development of national curriculum statements;
- the introduction of the TCE;
- increased levels of school-based decision-making;
- changes to working conditions which have resulted from the CRESAP report;
- increased student retention rates;
- changes to employment and promotion practices;
- the increased importance of vocational training in the curriculum;
- the inclusion of students with disabilities in the local school;
- parent participation in schools;
- the introduction of accountability procedures for teachers and schools;
- changes to assessment, reporting and other documentation procedures;
- new systems for behaviour management;
- policy initiatives in areas such as equity and social justice.

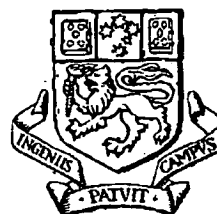
It is hoped that these examples will be of use to you as you identify the particular educational changes which you see as having the greatest impact on your work as a teacher. It is stressed that there is no expectation that these changes need to appear on the above list. The list is merely a selection of some recent educational changes which, in turn, may have affected the work of some teachers.

Thank you for your agreement to participate in this project as either an interviewee and survey respondent, or just as a survey respondent.

Yours faithfully

John Williamson
Head of Department

Rick Churchill
Department of Secondary &
Post-Compulsory Education



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON TEACHERS' WORK

Part 1: AN INVITATION FOR TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE ON THEIR WORK

Education systems and schools have undergone considerable change in recent years. One slowly-emerging consequence of the level of such change has been interest in understanding how these changes have affected teachers, both personally and professionally.

As part on this increasing interest in the impact of educational change on teachers' work lives, a study is being conducted in Australia by Professor John Williamson and Rick Churchill of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

This research will involve the collection of information from a total sample of 80 Australian schools, with these being selected to ensure appropriate representation of primary and secondary schools, senior secondary colleges, urban and rural schools, isolated schools, and so on.

The views of some of the teachers from 20 schools, selected from the original sample of 80 schools, will be particularly sought. This will help the study to better reflect the realities of school and classroom life, as this is experienced by teachers in their day-to-day work.

It is in your role as a teacher at one of these 20 selected schools that we would particularly invite and appreciate your participation in this project.

You participation can be at one of two levels. You can either:

- agree to be interviewed by a member of the research team during the second or third week of the next school term. During the week following the interview you would complete a 28-item survey dealing with aspects of the impact of educational change on your work as a teacher;

or,

- complete the 28-item survey only, and not be involved in any interview.

We are aware of the many factors which might lead you to decline participation in this project - heavy teacher workloads, the urgent nature of many other priorities and, of course, the absence of any apparent immediate benefits for yourself or your students.

Despite acknowledging the reality of these constraints, we still ask for your participation. Given a sufficient level of participation, we expect that the results of the study will have significant impacts on the conditions of teachers' work. We will be glad to supply a summary of the project data to you.

We would like to offer a number of assurances in relation to our request for your participation in the project. First, we have sought and received formal permission to conduct research in departmental schools. Second, the identities of all participants and schools will remain confidential at all stages of the project and in all resulting reports and publications. Third and finally, while your participation would be much appreciated, it is, of course, entirely voluntary.

Should you now be prepared to participate in the study, please do so in accordance with the following procedure:

1. read the next section of these background notes. This gives some information about our understanding of recent educational changes;
2. Advise your principal that you are prepared to participate in the study, either as an interviewee and survey respondent, or as a survey respondent only.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated. We hope that the project will generate benefits for all concerned with schools as a direct result of improved understandings of the effects of educational changes on teachers' work.

Should you have any immediate questions relating to any aspect of this study, these should be directed to either of the members of the research team, at the above address. Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to receiving the benefit of your participation.

Part 2: INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study. Your participation, along with that of your colleagues from your own and other schools, will produce valued information.

The study is concerned with investigating the effects that recent educational changes have had on teachers in their working lives. These effects might be experienced by teachers in changes to the ways in which they do their work, in changes to the ways they feel about their work, or in changes to the amount and type of work they do as teachers.

The focus of the study is, therefore, on your perceptions of how recent educational changes have affected you in your work. In short, the study is interested in two main questions:

- Which recent educational changes have had the most impact on your work as a teacher?
- In what ways has your work been affected by educational change?

It is important that all participants share a common understanding of the term "educational change". To assist in this, a list of some recent educational changes is presented below. This is, of course, far from a complete list of all recent educational changes, and it is not necessarily a list of the most significant changes of recent years. Furthermore, in your school there will have been a number of other changes generated in response to your local context. These will not appear on the list, but may well have particular significance to your work as a teacher at your school. Bearing all these provisos in mind, a list of examples of recent educational changes might include the following:

- the development of national curriculum statements;
- the introduction of the SACE;
- increased levels of school-based decision-making;
- changes to working conditions which have resulted from reviews of departmental staffing and resources levels;
- increased student retention rates;
- changes to employment and promotion practices;
- the increased importance of vocational training in the curriculum;
- the integration of students with disabilities in the local school;
- more active parent participation in schools;
- the introduction of accountability procedures for teachers and schools;
- changes to assessment, reporting and other documentation procedures;
- new systems for behaviour management;
- policy initiatives in areas such as equity and social justice.

It is hoped that these examples will be of use to you as you identify the particular educational changes which you see as having the greatest impact on your work as a teacher. It is stressed that there is no expectation that these changes need to appear on the above list. The list is merely a selection of some recent educational changes which, in turn, may have affected the work of some teachers.

Thank you for your agreement to participate in this project as either an interviewee and survey respondent, or just as a survey respondent.

Yours faithfully

John Williamson
Head of Department

Rick Churchill
Department of Secondary &
Post-Compulsory Education



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

12th October, 1994

Dear Principal

You will be aware that there has been a considerable level of interest expressed in understanding how teachers have been affected, both personally and professionally, by recent educational changes. You will be aware also of the weight of evidence which underlines the significance of the role of the school principal in determining the impact of change in their individual schools.

As one response to this increasing interest in the impact of educational change on teachers' working lives, a study is being conducted in Australia by Professor John Williamson and Rick Churchill of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

This research will involve the collection of information from a sample of 80 Australian schools, with these being selected so as to give appropriate representation to primary and secondary schools, urban and rural schools, large and small schools, isolated schools, and so on. We would particularly appreciate your involvement, as principal of one of these 80 selected schools.

Your participation would involve the consideration of the brief pre-reading notes, which are enclosed, followed by your completion of a 28-item survey, which is also enclosed. You are asked to return the completed survey to the University in the reply-paid envelope provided.

We are aware of the many factors which might lead you to decline participation in this project - the many competing demands on the principal's time, the urgent nature of departmental priorities and, of course, the absence of any apparent immediate benefit for yourself or your school community.

Despite acknowledging the reality of these constraints, we still ask for your participation. Given a sufficient level of participation, we expect that the results of the study will have significant impacts on the conditions of teachers' work. We will be glad to supply you with a summary of the project data early next year.

We would like to offer a number of assurances in relation to our request for your participation in the project. First, we have sought formal permission to conduct research in departmental schools through the procedures required by the relevant authority. Second, the identities of all participants and schools will remain confidential at all stages of the project.

This assurance of anonymity includes the strict anonymity of participants and schools in all resulting presentations and publications. Third and finally, while your participation would be much appreciated, it is, of course, entirely voluntary.

Should you be prepared to now participate in the study, please do so in accordance with the following procedure:

1. read the enclosed set of background notes dealing with issues of educational change;
2. complete the enclosed survey, basing your replies on your knowledge and understanding of the teachers employed at your school;
3. place the completed survey in the reply-paid envelope provided and post this envelope to the university by 11th November, 1994.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated. We hope that the project will generate benefits for principals, teachers and students as a direct result of improved understandings of the effects of educational changes on teachers' work.

Should you have any questions relating to any aspect of this study, these should be directed to either of the members of the research team, at the above address. Thank you for your consideration of this invitation. We look forward to receiving the benefit of your contribution.

Yours faithfully

John Williamson
Head of Department

Rick Churchill
Department of Secondary &
Post-Compulsory Education

Enclosures:

1. Pre-reading notes for principal survey
2. Principal survey
3. Reply-paid envelope for principal survey return

APPENDIX V

SAMPLE DRAFT & AMENDED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Introduction

There were 38 interviews conducted with teachers through the processes described in Chapter Three. Appendix V presents the transcript of one of these interviews. It shows how these processes, involving sending a draft transcript to this interviewee and amending that transcript subsequently in the light of additions and deletions she made on that draft, resulted in the final transcript as it was then used in the study.

Appendix V consists of two parts:

- The original draft of the interview transcript, with the interviewee's amendments indicated in the text as follows: additions are indicated in italics (i.e. *additions*), and deletions are indicated by striking through the text to be removed (i.e., ~~deletions~~); and
- The final version of the transcript as it was used in the study after the amendments requested by the interviewee were incorporated in the text.

In both versions of the transcript, the interviewers' questions and remarks are reproduced in bold text, while the interviewee's contributions are reproduced in regular text.

Draft transcript with amendments made by interviewee

Can you identify three changes in education that have affected your work as a teacher over the past five years?

One of them is the change in methodologies, (*from*) the way we used to teach in the old days, (*when*) we stood out the front, and the kids did what they were told (*to*) the way I teach now; and another one would be the students' involvement in decision making, and also staff involvement in decision making ~~often~~, and lastly Profiles and Statements (*with Attainment Levels before that*).

Just let me run those three changes past you again to make sure that my understanding of them is in accord with yours. You've identified: the change from traditional teacher centred methodologies to some new ways of doing things - how would you describe those new ways of doing things? If from traditional teacher centred, is it more appropriate to say, "to more student centred methods"?

The teaching(*er*) is a facilitator instead. I mean, ~~they~~ (*the students*) have got a lot more choice in what they do, and I don't spend hours at home preparing things (*and marking*) like I used (*to*). They get to choose what they want to do themselves, research and all that sort of stuff.

Okay, thanks for that. The second change you gave me related to both staff and student involvement in decision making in the class in their own school; and the third change you gave me is curriculum change involved in the National Profiles and Statements. Now of those changes, change in teaching and learning methods, change in an increased involvement of staff and students in decision making, and National Profiles and Statements, which one of these three changes has had the strongest degree of impact on your work as a teacher?

The first one.

Okay, so how are we to characterise this change? I am going to ask you a few questions about it now, and there is not much point in us going through a two sentence description every time I ask you a question.

Look, I'll tell you how it happened. That was when I had Nick, my son, so that's when it was, and I had a couple of years off, and then I came back, and everyone was doing something different, and I had missed out somewhere in those two years I had off. I came back, and there was all this new jargon. I didn't know what anyone was talking about (*with these new approaches*). Everyone was talking about interactive approaching(es) and ~~all this new~~ resource based learning, and all those kinds of phrases, and I had this big mad panic.

All right, if I just refer to it, as a change in teaching methods, we can just accept that as a catch-all description. Where in your view, did that change in teaching methods originate, where did it come from?

The new principal at the school. The other principal we had, retired, and we got this new principal in, who had been a superintendent, he had been one of these people who volunteered to go back to being a principal and he had seen all these wonderful things happening at all these other schools, and he wanted it all happening in our school, in that term, if not sooner. One of those people! (*In fact, about half the staff transferred out in the first two years he was there!*)

How was this change first presented to you? Were you, as a teacher, an initiator of the change; were you involved in its development; or was it simply announced as mandatory?

No, I was told, "this is the way you have to teach now", and, people who didn't teach like that, well you filled in your transfer form, then off you went.

Is that right?

Yes, it was ~~pretty much~~ quite as dramatic as that, but at the same time I had lots of release time. I was allowed to go and observe in ~~anybody's room~~ (*other classes*), and I was ~~allowed~~ (*encouraged*) to go to every conference that was available, and that kind of thing. I mean, there was the other side of it, but if you were allowed to attend all these workshops

every Friday for 10 weeks or whatever, there had to be results at the end of it. So he used to come in your room, and expect the kids to be doing this Processed Maths, or whatever it was.

At your school, was the change introduced as ready for immediate full implementation, or was it introduced gradually and allowed to develop over time?

No, introduced and then you had to do it. We had professional development at staff meetings, we had people running workshops, but you could go to one session, but then you were supposed to be doing it next week in your room. *(I remember having one 2-hour introductory session on computers for staff, and then being expected to be a computer expert in the classroom.)*

So it was basically straight on ...?

Yeah. We had to take it on board straight away.

What did you understand to be the main objective of this change to new methods?

Oh, at the time I was very cynical, I thought that it was the principal who just wanted our school to be the best school in the State, so he looked good. I mean, that's ~~the truth~~ *(how I saw it)*. I wanted to be like everybody else, because I knew I had always been a good teacher, and I'd always had all of this.. positive feedback *(from senior staff and parents)*, and all of a sudden I thought, "Oh, my god - I'm behind, I'd better catch up quick". So, I did lots of work to catch up - studied every night, and read all ~~this stuff~~ *(the theory)*, and talked to lots of people.

At the time, your understanding was that the main objective was, in effect, related to the principal?

And *(to)* make our school look good so he can have all his ~~people~~ *(superiors)* coming in to visit, to show them what great things we were doing. That used to happen a lot.

I see. At that time, or indeed, in the time since, what factors supported you in your efforts to implement those new teaching methods?

I'd say, my colleagues, the most. Just talking to the two people, ~~you know, in the classrooms~~ on either side of me. They had been there before I went off on leave, and they were still there, when I came back, so just talking to them, and then going to all the conferences, workshops, observation visits.

Did the school provide time and resources to allow those things to happen?

Oh, it did. But then there is the down side of that too, I remember one term, I reckon I was out of my classroom, ~~you know~~, three mornings or whatever a week, and the kids started all playing up, because you were never there. ~~So I mean, you know, if you want to get up to date really quickly, that was the way to do it.~~ *(The inservice was too intensive in too short a time and there was no time for reflecting, internalising or evaluating what you'd learned.)*

What about the other side of that coin: contact with your colleagues, the availability of professional development and the like were things that helped you come to terms with the new teaching methods; but what factors, whether by their presence or by their absence, hindered your efforts to implement the new teaching methods?

I think it was all just too much. I think I was expected to change too much, all at once. I mean, it was hard to change to learn all about Process Maths, this new approach to Science, this new ~~learned~~ language of resource based learning, and there were about 10 new things *(all going on at once)*, and they were talking about "inclusivity" - I had never even heard of it, it was all too much at once. I should have done it a lot more slowly, I mean, I nearly cracked up at the end of that year, just from over-work, I think. *(Mental exhaustion!)*

Actually, my next question was going to be about the amount of work. In what ways has that change to new methodologies affected you in terms of the amount of work required of you in your role as a teacher?

Now? I do less now.

You do less work now? Did I get the impression you did more earlier and now less?

That year, ~~I reckon~~ I worked every night until nearly 9 or 10 o'clock - every single night.

But since then?

Once I got the hang of it all, ~~you know, all that internalising.~~ I remember absolutely freaking out before some parent night, where you are supposed to ~~tell~~ (talk to) your parents - ~~this is right~~ at the beginning of the year, only about four weeks in - and we were supposed to get up and tell these parents all this new stuff we were doing in our rooms, and I didn't even really understand it, I mean, I could sprout the right words, but if they had asked me a question, well I wouldn't have had a clue. I remember, being in an absolute panic and nearly in tears and saying, "I can't do it, I can't do it", and getting through it somehow. But it takes a while to internalise all this stuff. But, once you get the hang of it, I reckon it is actually less work. *(The planning still takes a lot of time - I meet with two colleagues for a day every holidays to plan the term's work - but I don't take my program and all the children's books home to mark every night. I still do schoolwork most nights of the week, but a lot of it is not related to my classroom - although some is, like typing newsletters for parents. Most of the work I do at home is things like planning workshops for parents, planning staff meetings, action research and writing it all up.)*

Has your involvement with these new methodologies required you to adopt any new ways of operating in terms of how you do your work as a teacher

It has changed, it has changed a lot. I mean, I don't make decisions without consulting the kids. I don't decide what we are going to learn. That's sort of thing which I used to do before, I'd plan three months work in advance, so I could decide we were doing this, that, the other, for Social Studies, whatever it was for then; but it's nothing like that now. I mean, you might plan a unit of work, but even if you choose the actual topic, you would still give the children the choices within that topic. ~~I don't plan anything more than a couple of weeks in advance now.~~ *(Team teaching with two colleagues also reduces the workload because we share ideas and activities.)*

So has your involvement with these new methodologies affected you in your work as a teacher in terms of your relationships with others?

With the kids?

Either students, or the staff or ...

~~I reckon~~ I always had good relationships with the kids, but I think I am closer now than I use(d) to be, and I think at this school, I tend to ~~hang around~~ (socialise) with the teachers who teach like I do. I've got two (colleagues) that I team teach with, and ~~that'll~~ (we) plan together, but then I don't have much to do with the people who are still traditional and haven't changed. I don't tend to associate with them. There's still some of those people here.

Have these new methodologies affected any other aspects of your work as a teacher? Clearly they have had impacts on how you teach your students. Have they affected any other aspects of your work?

~~I reckon~~ (think) I'm more confident now. I've got this promotion for next year as a coordinator, and before I would have never have ~~gone~~ (applied) for anything like that. I got my AST last year. Actually I've applied for about four positions, and I got every single one of them ~~in the past six months~~.

You put that down, to some extent at least, to your involvement with these new methodologies?

Yes, or since that change, I've made a point of keeping up with things. ~~Not that I did it on purpose, but, since having a baby.~~ But, I made a point to it, I always make sure I keep abreast of things now. (*I read a lot more theoretical articles and journals than I used to.*)

What effects have your involvement with these new methodologies had on your students' experiences at school?

(I try to teach them the skills to become independent learners - like research skills. I also teach problem solving and conflict resolution - peer mediation, social skills, co-operating in a group and how to critically analyse texts. How I teach is more important than the content of a subject. For example, a research assignment could be on any topic the student is interested in as it's the skills of locating information, analysing, etc., that are important. I also teach them to assess and evaluate their own learning and set goals for future learning.

I make sure the skills I want them to learn are explicitly taught.) I always make sure that whatever we do is something totally relevant to what they need to know.

How is what's "relevant" determined?

Life skills - the last thing I've been doing in my room is teaching them how to apply for jobs. They have been writing job applications and resumes, and they've been applying for these jobs in my room; like the, lunch monitors, the catering manager, and (*we've got*) a financial adviser, ~~and all this kind of stuff~~. They've done a fantastic job, and, I think kids can learn anything.

And that's considerably different from what they would have been doing under the old methodologies?

Yeah, it's like in Maths, where you used to do boring old pages of sums ~~or things like that~~ or that(e) Maths module(s), and you don't do anything else. We do problems, real problems, finding out something that is going to be useful to you, like postcode numbers. I mean, it's something you have to use, or if you put a toy on lay by ~~to~~ (*until*) Christmas. I ~~can~~ know just from my son Nicholas it'll be interesting and it's something that might be useful to them in their life.

So what are your current overall feelings about these new methodologies and your involvement with them?

I like it, I enjoy teaching more now than I did before. It is more interesting.

So you overcame any initial doubts?

Yeah, but I got a transfer.

You changed schools?

Yeah, I changed schools, after the next year, as I couldn't stand another year with the principal, so I had to transfer. So I put my transfer in, and soon as I put my transfer form in, he moved, so I could have stayed. He got another promotion and he's gone back to something ~~other~~ else, which is what he wanted all along.

In what ways have your experiences with this change in methodology affected how you might be likely to respond to future educational changes, whatever they may be? Do you think you will now be likely to respond more positively or likely to respond more negatively, than otherwise might have been the case?

I think more positively - as long as ~~though~~ it is only one change at a time and not so many at once ~~like others~~ like it was. That was all too much - to expect someone to change everything in one year. That's why now when anything new comes up I try to take it on board straight away.

That was the last of the formal questions I wanted to ask you about that particular change, but is there anything you would like to say about either educational change in general, or how change, or other changes have affected your work? Are there any other changes that you believe that have had a significant impact on your work that you would like to mention?

Yeah, things like the Profiles, the Attainment Levels. ~~But then~~ I got really annoyed about that, because we had these Attainment Levels one year, I got straight into it, (*read them and*) started using them and then we had to start programming for outcomes, which no one had ever done, and that took me about a whole year to work out how to do that properly. And then a new government comes in, or whatever happened, and they're out the door, something else is happening: what a waste of money that was: a waste of time and effort. We had all these PD days - what a waste, the whole thing was a waste. You do tend to get a bit cynical, I think, whenever a new government comes in, they think of one thing, and then the next government gets elected and they think up something else, and whatever the last person did, was no good. That's what happened at the school I was at, where we had all these changes. When that principal went, they got another principal, who was in his first ~~job at being~~ (*position as*) a principal and everything that this previous guy had done, he negated it, and changed everything around again. I'm glad I wasn't there. Then - at staff meetings - I'll tell you what stresses me out - staff meetings when the principal reads out his notes from the assistant director of - whatever she is - and it's all about change and change is happening at an ever-increasing pace, and I get sick of hearing this. You think, "This is it, I can't cope!" When they start saying things like that I think, "Oh well, I'm not up with all of that and I reckon I'm pretty good, but if I can't keep up, how can everybody else keep up?" I sometimes wonder, "What it is all about?"

What is it all for - have you got any notion?

I don't think it is necessarily for the kids, I think sometimes it's people in power wanting to get more power or something. *(And also to keep parents and the general community placated with articles in the newspaper about new government initiatives on this and that.)*

Right, so how do you feel overall with educational change's impact on your work?

I think it has been positive, and it has been better for the kids, but also, I think a lot of the changes that have happened here *(in the Education Department)* are all just big words on paper in this school, and in other schools too. We make decisions often, but they don't always get followed through. We might decide that something needs to happen, but then six months down the track, half of the people aren't doing what we decided. It's really hard to find a school where you have got 100 percent commitment - impossible!

Final transcript, after incorporation of interviewee amendments

Can you identify three changes in education that have affected your work as a teacher over the past five years?

One of them is the change in methodologies, from the way we used to teach in the old days, when we stood out the front, and the kids did what they were told to the way I teach now; and another one would be the students' involvement in decision making, and also staff involvement in decision making, and lastly Profiles and Statements with Attainment Levels before that.

Just let me run those three changes past you again to make sure that my understanding of them is in accord with yours. You've identified: the change from traditional teacher centred methodologies to some new ways of doing things - how would you describe those new ways of doing things? If from traditional teacher centred, is it more appropriate to say, "to more student centred methods"?

The teacher is a facilitator instead. I mean, the students have got a lot more choice in what they do, and I don't spend hours at home preparing things and marking like I used to. They get to choose what they want to do themselves, research and all that sort of stuff.

Okay, thanks for that. The second change you gave me related to both staff and student involvement in decision making in the class in their own school; and the third change you gave me is curriculum change involved in the National Profiles and Statements. Now of those changes, change in teaching and learning methods, change in an increased involvement of staff and students in decision making, and National Profiles and Statements, which one of these three changes has had the strongest degree of impact on your work as a teacher?

The first one.

Okay, so how are we to characterise this change? I am going to ask you a few questions about it now, and there is not much point in us going through a two sentence description every time I ask you a question.

Look, I'll tell you how it happened. That was when I had Nick, my son, so that's when it was, and I had a couple of years off, and then I came back, and everyone was doing something different, and I had missed out somewhere in those two years I had off. I came back, and there was all this new jargon. I didn't know what anyone was talking about with these new approaches. Everyone was talking about interactive approaches and resource based learning, and all those kinds of phrases, and I had this big mad panic.

All right, if I just refer to it, as a change in teaching methods, we can just accept that as a catch-all description. Where in your view, did that change in teaching methods originate, where did it come from?

The new principal at the school. The other principal we had, retired, and we got this new principal in, who had been a superintendent, he had been one of these people who volunteered to go back to being a principal and he had seen all these wonderful things happening at all these other schools, and he wanted it all happening in our school, in that term, if not sooner. One of those people! In fact, about half the staff transferred out in the first two years he was there!

How was this change first presented to you? Were you, as a teacher, an initiator of the change; were you involved in its development; or was it simply announced as mandatory?

No, I was told, "this is the way you have to teach now", and, people who didn't teach like that, well you filled in your transfer form, then off you went.

Is that right?

Yes, it was quite as dramatic as that, but at the same time I had lots of release time. I was allowed to go and observe in other classes, and I was encouraged to go to every conference that was available, and that kind of thing. I mean, there was the other side of it, if you were allowed to attend all these workshops every Friday for 10 weeks or whatever, there

had to be results at the end of it. So he used to come in your room, and expect the kids to be doing this Process Maths, or whatever it was.

At your school, was the change introduced as ready for immediate full implementation, or was it introduced gradually and allowed to develop over time?

No, introduced and then you had to do it. We had professional development at staff meetings, we had people running workshops, but you could go to one session, but then you were supposed to be doing it next week in your room. I remember having one 2-hour introductory session on computers for staff, and then being expected to be a computer expert in the classroom.

So it was basically straight on ...?

Yeah. We had to take it on board straight away.

What did you understand to be the main objective of this change to new methods?

Oh, at the time I was very cynical, I thought that it was the principal who just wanted our school to be the best school in the State, so he looked good. I mean, that's how I saw it. I wanted to be like everybody else, because I knew I had always been a good teacher, and I'd always had all of this.. positive feedback from senior staff and parents, and all of a sudden I thought, "Oh, my god - I'm behind, I'd better catch up quick". So, I did lots of work to catch up - studied every night, and read all the theory, and talked to lots of people.

At the time, your understanding was that the main objective was, in effect, related to the principal?

And to make our school look good so he can have all his superiors coming in to visit, to show them what great things we were doing. That used to happen a lot.

I see. At that time, or indeed, in the time since, what factors supported you in your efforts to implement those new teaching methods?

I'd say, my colleagues, the most. Just talking to the two people on either side of me. They had been there before I went off on leave, and they were still there, when I came back, so just talking to them, and then going to all the conferences, workshops, observation visits.

Did the school provide time and resources to allow those things to happen?

Oh, it did. But then there is the down side of that too, I remember one term, I reckon I was out of my classroom three mornings or whatever a week, and the kids started all playing up, because you were never there. The inservice was too intensive in too short a time and there was no time for reflecting, internalising or evaluating what you'd learned.

What about the other side of that coin: contact with your colleagues, the availability of professional development and the like were things that helped you come to terms with the new teaching methods; but what factors, whether by their presence or by their absence, hindered your efforts to implement the new teaching methods?

I think it was all just too much. I think I was expected to change too much, all at once. I mean, it was hard to change to learn all about Process Maths, this new approach to Science, this new language of resource based learning, and there were about 10 new things all going on at once, and they were talking about "inclusivity" - I had never even heard of it, it was all too much at once. I should have done it a lot more slowly, I mean, I nearly cracked up at the end of that year, just from over-work, I think. Mental exhaustion!

Actually, my next question was going to be about the amount of work. In what ways has that change to new methodologies affected you in terms of the amount of work required of you in your role as a teacher?

Now? I do less now.

You do less work now? Did I get the impression you did more earlier and now less?

That year, I worked every night until nearly 9 or 10 o'clock - every single night.

But since then?

Once I got the hang of it all. I remember absolutely freaking out before some parent night, where you are supposed to talk to your parents - at the beginning of the year, only about four weeks in - and we were supposed to get up and tell these parents all this new stuff we were doing in our rooms, and I didn't even really understand it, I mean, I could sprout the right words, but if they had asked me a question, well I wouldn't have had a clue. I remember, being in an absolute panic and nearly in tears and saying, "I can't do it, I can't do it", and getting through it somehow. But it takes a while to internalise all this stuff. But, once you get the hang of it, I reckon it is actually less work. The planning still takes a lot of time - I meet with two colleagues for a day every holidays to plan the term's work - but I don't take my program and all the children's books home to mark every night. I still do schoolwork most nights of the week, but a lot of it is not related to my classroom - although some is, like typing newsletters for parents. Most of the work I do at home is things like planning workshops for parents, planning staff meetings, action research and writing it all up.

Has your involvement with these new methodologies required you to adopt any new ways of operating in terms of how you do your work as a teacher

It has changed, it has changed a lot. I mean, I don't make decisions without consulting the kids. I don't decide what we are going to learn. That's sort of thing which I used to do before, I'd plan three months work in advance, so I could decide we were doing this, that, the other, for Social Studies, whatever it was for then; but it's nothing like that now. I mean, you might plan a unit of work, but even if you choose the actual topic, you would still give the children choice within that topic. Team teaching with two colleagues also reduces the workload because we share ideas and activities.

So has your involvement with these new methodologies affected you in your work as a teacher in terms of your relationships with others?

With the kids?

Either students, or the staff or ...

I always had good relationships with the kids, but I think I am closer now than I used to be, and I think at this school, I tend to socialise with the teachers who teach like I do. I've got two colleagues that I team teach with, and we plan together, but then I don't have much

to do with the people who are still traditional and haven't changed. I don't tend to associate with them. There's still some of those people here.

Have these new methodologies affected any other aspects of your work as a teacher? Clearly they have had impacts on how you teach your students. Have they affected any other aspects of your work?

I think I'm more confident now. I've got this promotion for next year as a coordinator, and before I would have never have applied for anything like that. I got my AST last year. Actually I've applied for about four positions, and I got every single one of them.

You put that down, to some extent at least, to your involvement with these new methodologies?

Yes, or since that change, I've made a point of keeping up with things. But, I made a point to it, I always make sure I keep abreast of things now. I read a lot more theoretical articles and journals than I used to.

What effects have your involvement with these new methodologies had on your students' experiences at school?

I try to teach them the skills to become independent learners - like research skills. I also teach problem solving and conflict resolution - peer mediation, social skills, co-operating in a group and how to critically analyse texts. How I teach is more important than the content of a subject. For example, a research assignment could be on any topic the student is interested in as it's the skills of locating information, analysing, etc., that are important. I also teach them to assess and evaluate their own learning and set goals for future learning. I make sure the skills I want them to learn are explicitly taught. I always make sure that whatever we do is something totally relevant to what they need to know.

How is what's "relevant" determined?

Life skills - the last thing I've been doing in my room is teaching them how to apply for jobs. They have been writing job applications and resumes, and they've been applying for these jobs in my room; like the, lunch monitors, the catering manager, and we've got a financial adviser. They've done a fantastic job, and, I think kids can learn anything.

And that's considerably different from what they would have been doing under the old methodologies?

Yeah, it's like in Maths, where you used to do boring old pages of sums or the Maths modules, and you don't do anything else. We do problems, real problems, finding out something that is going to be useful to you, like postcode numbers. I mean, it's something you have to use, or if you put a toy on lay by until Christmas. I ~~ean~~ know just from my son Nicholas it'll be interesting and it's something that might be useful to them in their life.

So what are your current overall feelings about these new methodologies and your involvement with them?

I like it, I enjoy teaching more now than I did before. It is more interesting.

So you overcame any initial doubts?

Yeah, but I got a transfer.

You changed schools?

Yeah, I changed schools, after the next year, as I couldn't stand another year with the principal, so I had to transfer. So I put my transfer in, and soon as I put my transfer form in, he moved, so I could have stayed. He got another promotion and he's gone back to something else, which is what he wanted all along.

In what ways have your experiences with this change in methodology affected how you might be likely to respond to future educational changes, whatever they may be? Do you think you will now be likely to respond more positively or likely to respond more negatively, than otherwise might have been the case?

I think more positively - as long as it is only one change at a time and not so many at once like it was. That was all too much - to expect someone to change everything in one year. That's why now when anything new comes up I try to take it on board straight away.

That was the last of the formal questions I wanted to ask you about that

particular change, but is there anything you would like to say about either educational change in general, or how change, or other changes have affected your work? Are there any other changes that you believe that have had a significant impact on your work that you would like to mention?

Yeah, things like the Profiles, the Attainment Levels. I got really annoyed about that, because we had these Attainment Levels one year, I got straight into it, read them and started using them and then we had to start programming for outcomes, which no one had ever done, and that took me about a whole year to work out how to do that properly. And then a new government comes in, or whatever happened, and they're out the door, something else is happening: what a waste of money that was: a waste of time and effort. We had all these PD days - what a waste, the whole thing was a waste. You do tend to get a bit cynical, I think, whenever a new government comes in, they think of one thing, and then the next government gets elected and they think up something else, and whatever the last person did, was no good. That's what happened at the school I was at, where we had all these changes. When that principal went, they got another principal, who was in his first position as a principal and everything that this previous guy had done, he negated it, and changed everything around again. I'm glad I wasn't there. Then - at staff meetings - I'll tell you what stresses me out - staff meetings when the principal reads out his notes from the assistant director of - whatever she is - and it's all about change and change is happening at an ever-increasing pace, and I get sick of hearing this. You think, "This is it, I can't cope!" When they start saying things like that I think, "Oh well, I'm not up with all of that and I reckon I'm pretty good, but if I can't keep up, how can everybody else keep up?" I sometimes wonder, "What it is all about?"

What is it all for - have you got any notion?

I don't think it is necessarily for the kids, I think sometimes it's people in power wanting to get more power or something. And also to keep parents and the general community placated with articles in the newspaper about new government initiatives on this and that.

Right, so how do you feel overall with educational change's impact on your work?

I think it has been positive, and it has been better for the kids, but also, I think a lot of the changes that have happened here in the Education Department are all just big words on

paper in this school, and in other schools too. We make decisions often, but they don't always get followed through. We might decide that something needs to happen, but then six months down the track, half of the people aren't doing what we decided. It's really hard to find a school where you have got 100 percent commitment - impossible!

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