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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE EFFECT OF PEER-BASED CONSULTING ON THE PROFESSIONAL  
AND PERSONAL LIVES OF THE CONSULTANTS

by



HAROLD HOWARD KLUCZNY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1984

## ABSTRACT

This study focused on the experience of the peer consultant Resource Teacher in the Alberta Education Social Studies In-Service Project of 1981-82. Its purpose was to determine how the peer consulting experience affected the professional and personal lives of the Resource Teachers. It was felt that the overall success of the Project, as documented by MacKay and Doherty (1982), might increase the likelihood of similar projects being conducted. This possibility would warrant our knowing something of the effects the process has on the peer consultants' lives.

The study was an exploratory, inductive, and hypothesis generating research conducted using the qualitative methodology. The phenomenological and symbolic interactionist perspectives were the philosophical bases underlying the methodology. Data were collected from five respondents - former Resource Teachers - by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews and open-ended questionnaires.

The findings reveal two groups of effects on the Resource Teachers. The first group contains three effect themes of a general nature. Effects outlined in this group seem to serve jointly as a matrix for the second group which consists of four, more specific, effect themes. As a combined group, the seven effects display dynamic interrelationships among themselves, with one or more of the effects often contributing directly or indirectly to the

development of others.

The three general themes reflect the following effects, in order of their frequency of occurrence in responses:

Theme one: Broadening personal perspectives. This effect on the respondents seemed to be an overall increase in their personal knowledge, experience, and skills, all related to the administration of education and to personal development.

Theme two: Fulfilling psychological needs. This effect was the fulfilment of higher level "Maslovian" needs in the respondents' lives.

Theme three: Increasing self-confidence. This effect included the development of self-confidence and security in relation to the respondents' career activities and career aspirations.

The following four themes reflect the specific effects growing out of the previous group. There was no particular order of importance in which they emerged from the analyses.

Theme four: Improving classroom teaching. The respondents reported a more positive perception of their own classroom teaching behaviors after the experience.

Theme five: Becoming resident expert. There was concurrence among the respondents that the experience resulted in their being perceived by others as resident social studies experts following their involvement in the Project.

Theme six: Maintaining positive contacts. The respondents made many acquaintances during their term as

Resource Teachers. Since then, they have maintained contact, both personal and professional with many of these individuals.

Theme seven: Reinforcing existing orientations. Some of the respondents were reluctant to give their peer consulting experience full credit for changes in their lives; however, they did acknowledge that their experience in the Project contributed to these changes by reinforcing their existing beliefs and behaviors.

The main conclusion arising from the findings is that the experience of peer consulting has had a very positive effect on the lives of the respondents. A second conclusion is that the findings seem to fit well into the framework of other existing theories. This situation enhances the validity of the study. Based on the findings and conclusions, a substantive theory is generated and recommendations are made to various groups within the educational establishment.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the aid and support of the following people, this study would not have been possible.

Dr. D.A. MacKay, the thesis advisor, gave assistance and support beyond the call of duty. The other members of the thesis committee, Dr. E. Ratsoy and Dr. D. Massey, kindly displayed interest and support towards the work.

The secretarial skills and personal sacrifices of the writer's wife, Sheila Kluczny, were indispensable to the completion of the study.

A sincere cooperation and exchange of ideas from the writer's colleagues made the task much more fulfilling.

The five respondents displayed an enthusiasm, cooperation, and interest that made data collection an enjoyable experience.

Sincere thanks are extended to all of the above-mentioned persons.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study focused on the experience of the peer consultant Resource Teacher in the Alberta Education Social Studies In-Service Project of 1981-82. The Project was a province-wide social studies curriculum implementation program. The Resource Teachers were the primary change agents, charged with delivering the Project's program. The following sections include: a brief statement of the research problem; a description of the Social Studies In-Service Project; an in-depth description of the Resource Teacher's role; and the significance of this research.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to investigate how the Resource Teachers' experience as peer consultants affected them and the impact of that effect on their lives today. This impact was assessed from two points of focus: one, the effect on the person's educational career and two, the effect on themselves as persons. The problem is stated thus: How has the experience of peer consulting in the Social Studies In-Service Project affected the professional and personal lives of Resource Teachers?

In order to fully appreciate and understand the nature

of the problem, it is necessary to be informed about its context, and to be aware of what the actual duties of the peer consulting Resource Teacher were. The following sections provide a contextual overview of the Social Studies In-Service Project and the role expectations as mandated to the Resource Teachers by Alberta Education.

## BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

### Social Studies In-Service Project

The Alberta Social Studies In-Service Project of 1981-82 was a teacher in-service project in which the main procedures employed were those of peer consultation. The project was announced in the Alberta Legislature April 19, 1981 by the Honorable David King, Minister of Education.

Rationale. The Downey Report of 1975, a major assessment of social studies instruction in the province, had made it clear that the high ideals of the Alberta Social Studies curricula of the past decade could not be attained without concerted professional initiatives in classroom implementation. (Alberta Education, 1981; MacKay and Doherty, 1982). Combined with mounting concerns over high instructional quality from the educational community and the public arena, recollection of the Downey assessment provided an impetus for action when the 1981 social studies curriculum was slated for implementation.

The Social Studies Curriculum Coordinating Committee and the Social Studies Specialist Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association both made presentations to the Minister regarding in-service strategies. These presentations, combined with those outlined by the Tri-Partite Committee on In-Service Education (1980), resulted in the emergence of the Social Studies In-Service Project.

All three groups had arrived at similar conclusions regarding curriculum implementation procedures and these were incorporated into the project (Alberta Education, 1981:1): (1) that it be conducted by practising professionals who have high credibility and peer respect, (2) that it facilitate the practical demonstration of unique methodologies, and (3) that it enable problem-solving and conflict-resolution about teachers' curriculum concerns to occur in an atmosphere of trust and confidence.

Objectives. The objectives for the program were categorized into three areas: those for Alberta teachers, those for the provincial social studies program, and those for curriculum implementation in Alberta (Alberta Education, 1981:2).

The teachers were to acquire a working understanding of the characteristics and requirements of the 1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum. They were also to be provided with opportunities to broaden their repertoire of instructional strategies for social studies.

The 1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum, which had

been the object of considerable professional and public dialogue, was to be given a fair chance for successful implementation. The project was also intended to provide a means for heightened professional and public dialogue about issues pertaining to social studies philosophy and methodology in Alberta.

In the area of general curriculum implementation in Alberta, the project was intended to test the viability of a peer-based consultative approach. It was felt that if the project was successful, this approach might be used in other areas of educational in-service training.

It was felt that the accomplished objectives would serve the students of Alberta. They would be the "long term beneficiaries" (Alberta Education, 1981:2) of the Social Studies In-Service Project.

Procedures. Guidelines for implementing the project at the school level were conveyed to school boards, superintendents, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and the Alberta Teachers' Association during May and June of 1981. The Provincial Steering Committee of the Project received information and advice from these sources and incorporated this into a revised and modified implementation plan. The resulting procedural guidelines proposed four stages.

Stage one consisted of the creation of the project's Provincial Steering Committee and the identification of 125 Resource Teachers across the province. Although final responsibilities for Resource Teacher selection rested with



Alberta Education, local boards were encouraged to identify and select individuals possessing the following qualifications (Alberta Education, 1981:6):

1. Recent teaching experience with the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum and resource materials.
2. Sound, practical knowledge of the 1981 Social Studies Curriculum.
3. Commitment to the spirit of Alberta Social Studies, including Canadian Studies and processes of inquiry.
4. Experience in curriculum planning, preferably at the provincial level.
5. Professional interest in curriculum consultative work.
6. Credibility with teachers and other peers.
7. Human relations skills.
8. Communication skills.
9. Ability to maintain a flexible schedule, to accommodate noon-hour and after-hours meetings and workshops.
10. Ability to travel by automobile.

Boards were encouraged to involve Regional Office Consultants in the identification of Resource Teachers.

It was not mandatory that all school boards participate, but those involved were allowed one or more Resource Teachers based on the number of teachers they had under contract, geographical factors such as distances between schools, and the number of teachers per grade level per school. The participating boards were expected to provide release time for the Resource Teachers during their training sessions and the term of their duties as peer

consultants, to provide release time for all social studies teachers to attend the workshops designated by the program, to ensure that the Resource Teachers may return to their original job assignment upon the completion of the project, and generally to meet the various needs arising from the situational contingencies involved in the project. Being seconded from their respective boards, the Resource Teachers' salaries and expenses were provided by Alberta Education.

Stage two of the project involved the training of the Resource Teachers. This was accomplished with a total of five days of workshops prior to the secondment. After secondment, there were a number of call-back sessions whereby the Resource Teachers met, shared their experiences, and received instruction and guidance from Alberta Education personnel.

Stage three consisted of the in-service workshops for Alberta social studies teachers. Each participating board was obligated to provide a minimum of two full days of in-service for the social studies teachers in their jurisdiction. The boards could choose to "...close schools, or in the case of secondary schools, to cancel social studies classes" (Alberta Education, 1981:3) to accommodate the workshops. The details of the workshops were the joint responsibility of the Resource Teachers and their central office supervisors.

Stage four continued throughout the implementation of the project. It consisted of "school-based consultation"

(Alberta Education, 1981:3) whereby the Resource Teachers spent considerable amounts of time with individual teachers, exhibiting and explaining curriculum materials, and discussing relevant social studies issues. Some of the issues suggested by Alberta Education were: Canadian studies, evaluation, processes of inquiry, and specific instructional strategies (Alberta Education, 1981:4).

Alberta Education made arrangements to have the entire project evaluated. A private firm, Evaluation Consultants (Edmonton) Ltd., was contracted for this purpose. From the beginning it was made clear to all involved parties that the evaluation team members might be attending any project activities throughout the province.

#### ROLE OF THE RESOURCE TEACHER

The Resource Teachers were professionally certified teachers released from school or classroom duties to assist classroom teachers and system personnel in implementing the 1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum (Alberta Education, 1981:8). They worked in a consultative capacity striving to improve educational services to students and teachers within the framework of local needs, resources and the Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Ethics (Alberta Education, 1981:8). It must be emphasized that the Resource Teachers were colleagues and peers of the people they were providing guidance to; in fact, they usually belonged to the same

jurisdiction.

The Resource Teacher's Handbook (Alberta Education, 1981:8) stressed the following obligations of the Resource Teacher:

1. To work in accordance with the priorities and directions provided by local lines of authority and communication as established by board policy.
2. To attend the training sessions and contact sessions.
3. To be knowledgeable and conversant with all of the pertinent curriculum objectives, prescribed resources, and other local support materials.
4. To assist in the planning, organizing, and conducting of needs assessments for the in-service sessions and peer-based consulting activities.
5. To provide peer-based consultative services to schools and teachers by: meeting with grade levels, groups, or individual teachers; planning presentations at staff meetings; and participating in classroom observations, demonstrations, discussions, and interviews.
6. To plan, organize, and conduct in-service sessions and provide liaison with other personnel and organizations with an interest in the implementation of the 1981 Social Studies Curriculum.
7. To conduct information sessions with board members and the general public, explaining the characteristics and requirements of the 1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum.
8. To maintain a logbook to record the tasks undertaken,

schools visited, type of services provided, special concerns requiring additional follow-up, preliminary assessment of activities, and expenses incurred.

9. To provide information and assistance in the evaluation phase of the project, including the submission of logbooks to the evaluators.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

#### Theory Generation

Undoubtedly the unique feature of the Social Studies In-Service Project was the "peer-based consulting component" (Alberta Education, 1981:9). Fullan (1982:250), in his treatise on innovation and change in education, noted the Alberta project and remarked on the use of peer-based consulting. Schreiber (1981), in an address to a meeting of Resource Teachers, stated: "the eyes of North America are on you in this novel approach to in-service education."

Since the formal use of peer consultants in in-service education is a recent innovation, time has not yet allowed for the development of grounded theory regarding the impact of this phenomenon on the consultants themselves. This research is designed to make some initial inroads into the development of such grounded theory. Although the sample size establishes a limitation in that it is too small to generalize findings to the entire cadre of 125 peer-consultants, the study is a significant exploratory and

methodological step in theory generation.

### Practical Knowledge

The educational climate in Alberta today would seem to indicate that the peer-based consultative approach will probably be used again. The current provincial media, citing claims of teacher malpractice, organizational inefficiencies, and functional illiteracy among high school graduates, reflect an increased public demand for educational accountability. Education minister David King concluded: "There is very little reliable evidence of what is happening in the province's classrooms" (Reguly and Weatherbe, 1983: 40). Alberta Education has responded with a massive program of educational evaluation aimed at all facets of the enterprise. In this climate it would seem probable that the necessity for teacher in-service will grow.

On May 2, 1984 Alberta Education officially included a "Teacher Inservice" policy in their Program Policy Manual (Alberta Education, 1984b). This policy declared: "From time to time Alberta Education may identify special needs to which it will suggest a high priority for teacher inservice" (Alberta Education, 1984b). The policy states that the responsibility for carrying out in-service is to be shared by the schools, school boards, the teaching profession (including individual members), and Alberta Education; however, the procedural guidelines state: "School jurisdictions will develop and maintain on file their

education plans which outline their policies, guidelines, procedures, intended results, and how these results will be achieved" (Alberta Education, 1984b). For the 1984-85 school term, the government will allocate in-service funds to local boards on the basis of "\$9.00 per eligible pupil and \$5.40 per E.C.S. child . . ." (Alberta Education, 1984a). The stated provincial priorities for 1984-85 are computer literacy, the gifted and talented, and evaluations.

The implications are: one, that local district personnel will be responsible for planning and implementing the in-service programs; and two, that the level of funding almost implies the use of local expert, peer consultants to successfully implement district wide programs. Much more money would be needed to utilize high priced external expertise on an ongoing basis.

In their evaluation of the Social Studies In-Service Project, MacKay and Doherty (1982:64) recommended: "the peer-based consultative approach should be strongly considered as an approach in future projects." They also suggested that the sheer number of people involved in such a province-wide social studies in-service program demands a similar method.

From a practical and moral point of view, the possibility of peer consultation in the future would warrant our knowing something about the effect of this process on the lives of the consultants.

## OVERVIEW OF REMAINING CHAPTERS

The background literature and methodological arguments pertinent to this study are discussed in the following chapter. Chapter three consists of a specific description of the procedures used in the research. Themes and categories emerging from the analyzed data are portrayed in chapter four and the final chapter presents the conclusions, implications, and theory arising from the findings.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter summarizes the literature in two conceptual areas pertinent to the study: peer consulting and naturalistic inquiry. Peer consulting is the process of in-service education under investigation and thus the focal point of this research. Naturalistic inquiry is considered important because the nature of the data sought warrants the use of this research methodology. The overall intent of the chapter is to present a synthesis of information relevant to the objectives of this study and the particular features of the problem being investigated.

### PEER-BASED CONSULTING

This study was exploratory and inductive because there has been no previous research on the specific problem under investigation; that is, what long term effect does the peer-based consulting experience have on the lives of the consultants? Resulting from the dearth of literature in that area, the purpose of this section is to present a summary of information on the general efficacy of the peer-based approach to staff development. Staff development is an important concept in the discussion because it is the context in which peer-based consulting occurs. The

literature on peer-based consulting seems to emanate from utilization of this method in staff development programs.

The following sub-sections include: the definitions and conceptual models appropriate to this discussion; the theoretical background and rationale for the concept of peer-based consulting; and some relevant research findings on the topic.

### Definitions

In any scholarly discourse it would seem appropriate to provide some clear definitions of the concepts under investigation. The purpose of this section is to define the concepts of staff development and peer-based consulting as they are employed in the context of this study.

Staff development. Rebores (1982:12) defined a staff development program as a program designed "to help personnel meet school district objectives and also to provide individuals with the opportunity for personal and professional growth." On the basis of this definition, one could subdivide the concept into the areas of clinical supervision and in-service education.

Clinical supervision is the face to face observation, analysis, and evaluation of actual classroom teaching (Goldhammer et al., 1980:1; Goldhammer, 1969:54). Cogan (1973:4) stated that it is clinical because it is performed in the "clinic of the classroom." This method of supervision is characterized by the human relations approach

whereby the teacher is consulted extensively both before and after the actual classroom observation (Goldhammer et al., 1980:32). Although the purpose of the supervision may be formative or summative, the objective should always be to help the teachers improve their skills.

In-service education is a "catch-all" phrase pertaining to curriculum, personal, and professional development activities undertaken while the teachers are actively employed (Harris, 1980:1). As Rebores (1982:169) revealed, the traditional approach to in-service education was "let's have a work-shop." This idea is no longer acceptable, as in-service education should encompass a myriad of delivery methods and many topical areas (Rebores, 1982:169; Harris, 1980:1).

Peer-based consulting. This concept consists of employing a collegial staff of "resource teachers" (Fullan, 1982; MacKay and Doherty, 1982; Schreiber, 1984) to implement clinical supervision or in-service education programs. The resource teachers are usually "master" teachers, expert in their fields, involved in active teaching practices, and holding no line authority over their peers (Riechard, 1976:364). During their staff development leadership activities, they are usually seconded from their teaching positions or relegated to a part time status. The practice of peer-based consulting is both old and new. Traditionally, teachers have always helped one another on an informal basis; however, recent trends have involved the formalization of this procedure in many staff development

programs (Blumberg, 1980:202; Alfonso, 1977:601).

### Conceptual Models

Research geared toward increasing the effectiveness of staff development programs has produced many conceptual frameworks for analyzing the process. The purpose of this section is twofold: to present two staff development models that are compatible with a peer-based approach and to present a conceptual model of the peer consultant.

Staff development. Research by Sergiovanni and Starratt (1979:298) resulted in the following model, indicating the characteristics of effective staff development programs. The compatibility of this model with a peer-based approach is evident and implicit within the criteria. The items seem to focus on individual teacher participation and collegial relationships.

1. School-based programs in which teachers participate as helpers to each other and planners of in-service activities tend to have greater success ... than do programs ... conducted by college or other outside personnel without the assistance of teachers.
2. In-service education programs that have differentiated training experiences for different teachers (that is, "individualized") are more likely to accomplish their objectives than are programs that have common activities for all participants.
3. In-service education programs that place the teacher in an active role (constructing and generating materials, ideas, and behavior) are more likely to accomplish their objectives than are programs that place the teacher in a receptive role.
4. In-service education programs in which teachers share and provide mutual assistance to each other are more likely to accomplish their objectives than are programs in which each teacher does separate work.

5. Teachers are more likely to benefit from in-service programs in which they can choose goals and activities for themselves, as contrasted with programs in which the goals and activities are preplanned.

It is important to note the emphasis placed on planning, differentiated experiences for different teachers, active roles, using ideas, materials and behavior found in the actual teaching situation, teachers working with and helping other teachers, and teacher goals.

As much as the Sergiovanni and Starratt model was geared toward in-service education, the following model by Joyce and Showers (Mireau, 1983:13) is geared toward clinical supervision. This model was chosen because it has been effectively employed using peers as supervisors (these cases are discussed later in the discussion). A staff development program to promote teaching skills should incorporate the following features:

1. presentation of theory or description of new skills;
2. modeling or demonstration of skills or models of teaching;
3. practice in simulated and classroom settings;
4. structured and open-ended feedback - provision of information about performance;
5. coaching for application - hands on, in-classroom assistance with the adoption of skills and strategies.

With all these components in place, it has been estimated, 90 percent of participants would be able to implement skills successfully in the classroom (Mireau, 1983:13).

Peer-based consultant. Enns (1963:29), in his framework for analyzing the supervisory organization, stated that the supervisor could be classified as follows: "generalist or specialist; resident or non-resident; high level, middle level, or low level; temporary or permanent." According to this model the peer consultant would usually be: a specialist in the area of expertise he or she is consulting in; a resident of the organization he or she serves; and low level, that is, assuming a peer or collegial relationship with the teachers he or she is serving. The peer consultant would have staff authority only and usually assume responsibility for developmental or formative work with the teachers.

#### Theoretical Background and Rationale

Theoretical underpinnings for the peer-based approach to staff development lie in some facets of human motivation and human behavior. This section is designed to explore relevant motivational theory, human anxiety and resistance, and to describe some existing peer-based staff development programs.

Human motivation. Dowling and Sayles (1971:388) stated that McGregor's Theory Y assumptions rely heavily upon self-control and self-direction. Although one might propose that a continuum of behavior types exists between the extremes of Theory X and Theory Y, Dowling and Sayles argue that teacher professionalism should generally allow the adoption of Theory Y assumptions when dealing with teachers.

They add that the motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, and the readiness to direct behavior towards organizational goals are all present in people; thus, it is the responsibility of management to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their goals best by directing their own efforts toward organizational objectives.

Blumberg (1980:92), as a result of his research, concurred with the theory of Herzberg regarding teacher motivation. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the notion arises that man's behavior is always directed by his needs. Some needs are more basic than others, and their satisfaction is necessary before a person can attempt to satisfy higher needs. A need that is satiated will no longer serve as a motivator when a person is offered more of the same. Those needs associated with a higher level of human functioning and related to personal growth are the most powerful motivating factors. Sergiovanni (1982:96) concurred while stating the advantages of collegueship in staff development:

... the long overdue recognition that classroom teachers have much to contribute to the quest for instructional improvement, coupled with increased responsibility for the design and implementation of improvement strategies, can produce a sense of personal achievement as well as a better functioning school. Recognition, responsibility, and achievement are termed 'motivators' by Herzberg and are associated with job satisfaction. Therefore, successful collegueship may well contribute to increased job satisfaction for classroom teachers.

Cogan (1973:69) contributed that in a collegial relationship it is easier for teachers to help each other and at the same time strengthen themselves professionally and personally.

The tenets of participative management have revealed that the participators gain a sense of fulfilment and self worth by being involved in organizational management. Turner and Weed (1983:152) reinforced this idea stating that "team-building is often an essential first step in creating an appropriate environment of mutual regard and trust." The resulting sense of collegiality fulfills the employees' higher level needs and thus motivates them. One might conclude from the above discussion that a collegial, peer-based approach to staff development would enhance teacher motivation.

Anxiety and resistance. The second main point in the rationale for a peer-based approach is the anxiety and resistance aroused in teachers by traditional external approaches to staff development. Mosher and Purpel (1972:23) suggested that teacher resistance is the main roadblock to "clear and vital supervision programs."

"In spite of recent trends and practices in approaches to classroom supervision, an age old problem still persists - how to handle the problem of teacher anxiety when supervision is taken into the classroom" (McGee and Eaker, 1977:24). The humanistic and ethical thrust of today's society has fostered concern over this problem among educational administrators. McGee and Eaker (1977), in



their study of the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and supervisors in Tennessee, found that only 62% of teachers felt confident about impending classroom supervision. The very personal nature of teaching causes teachers to open themselves up - "this is my personality on display." Few feel comfortable in having one or more adults observe their behaviors, especially when the adults may be perceived as administrative with the power to hire, retain, and dismiss teachers (McGee and Eaker, 1977:24). Tuckman and Oliver (Blumberg, 1980:3), based on their 1968 research, added "It can only be surmised that teachers are defensive toward administrators who, in the absence of much basis for judgement, attempt to tell them how to teach."

Heishberger and Young (Blumberg, 1980:2), in a 1975 survey of teacher attitudes toward supervision, found that although 82% felt the need for supervision, 70% perceived the supervisor as potentially dangerous. Bellon (1982:9) discovered that when school systems adopt new evaluation programs, anxiety among teachers increases. He added that teachers want their supervisors to "behave as colleagues rather than superiors." Holley (1982:7) concurred with this finding. Geigle and Bradford (1982:21) went further revealing that teachers did not perceive a relationship between teacher evaluation and student achievement. Reaves (Blumberg, 1980:2) concurred with the above findings in an experiment among his university supervision classes. The results showed that the students tended to see supervision as an anxiety producing enterprise resulting in

defensiveness.

Roecks and Estes (1982:9) stated that resistance to change is human nature. The status quo is comfortable since less time and effort are spent in maintaining the equilibrium. The point seems to be as McGee and Eaker (1977:25) have stated: focusing on a teacher's classroom behavior will cause some degree of anxiety on the part of the teacher. This leads to some manifest questions: one, do we think improving classroom instruction is important enough to cause some anxiety; and two, are there ways to focus on teacher classroom behavior during observation and yet keep anxiety levels at a minimum? This writer agrees with McGee and Eaker that improvement is necessary, therefore we must find a way to reduce anxiety.

Kogan, in his 1976 research, advocated a collegial approach to staff development as a possible solution to the dilemma (Blumberg, 1980:4). Flanders, also in 1976, extended this concept, proposing "a partnership in inquiry in which two persons compare alternatives, the supervisor being the person who simply has more experience in the conduct of inquiry" (Blumberg, 1980:4).. Knapp (1982:3) stated that in some cases peers are involved in evaluation, but only one to three percent of school districts contain such features. Research has shown that resistance and anxiety associated with change can be diminished if the stakeholders are allowed participation in the process (Dowling and Sayles, 1971:378). It would seem that a collegial approach might meet this requirement.

Peer-based programs. The purpose of a peer-based staff development program is to utilize the informal organization for formal purposes (Dowling and Sayles, 1971:87; Blumberg, 1980:205). Riechard (1976:364) in describing his model, stated that there should be resident clinical supervisors (R.C.S.) who are master teachers, teaching on a part time basis in the same school where they are serving as supervisors. Mosher and Purpel (1972:193) advocated a "clinical professor" who, among other educational development activities, would provide in-service supervision and training to other teachers. They also discussed the possibility of group supervision whereby teachers work together, taping and analyzing one another's work. They added that this scenario would require a collegial trust and confidence among the teachers.

Mireau (1983) and Smyth (1983) have both developed similar programs based on the Joyce and Showers staff development model. These are clinical supervision programs characterized by the use of teachers, who upon the completion of their two year cycle of training and involvement, provide active leadership in supervising their peers. These peers may then follow the same route and take on leadership roles.

An in-service model used by Alberta Education in the 1981 Social Studies In-Service Project and the 1980 Jefferson County (Colorado) Educational Jurisdiction in their Science curriculum Project (Fullan, 1982:170) was characterized by the use of Resource Teachers. These

teachers, regular classroom teachers who had demonstrated expertise, leadership and competency in their respective subject areas, were seconded from their positions to serve as in-service consultants in the implementation of new curriculum, social studies in Alberta and science in Colorado.

There are probably many other existing models of peer-based staff development programs; however, the above-mentioned cases serve to provide an overview of what has been commonly done in the area of peer-based staff development.

#### Research Findings

The purpose of this section is to present the findings of research on the necessity for and efficacy of peer-based staff development. The sub-topics of clinical supervision and in-service education are dealt with separately.

Blumberg (1980:202) stated that "teachers have long given their help to colleagues in an informal manner." He added that a growing body of data is slowly becoming available indicating the primary source of assistance teachers use in their efforts to solve the problems they face on a daily basis is other teachers. Milikan found the above to be true in his 1979 study of Edmonton, Alberta secondary teachers (Blumberg, 1980:202). In 1978, similar findings had been revealed by DeSanctis and Blumberg in a pilot study of adult-adult interactions in schools (Blumberg, 1980:202). Blumberg (1980:202) concluded by

stating: "for whatever reason, principals appear not to be the people to whom teachers turn, as a rule, when they need assistance with problems related to teaching." These findings might lead one to agree that we should officially recognize the value of the peer approach and implement formal utilization.

Clinical supervision. Alfonso and Goldsberry (1982:100) stated that teacher observation of methods, techniques, and styles of other teachers through intervisitation is a valuable staff development tool. He cited Evans (1975) as attributing intervisitation among British infant school teachers to the successful development of self-analysis and continued improvement. In 1978, Roper, Deal and Dornbush explored a system of intervisitation and peer evaluation among elementary teachers and reported that "teachers can and will help each other perform better on their jobs" (Sergiovanni, 1982:100). Simon's 1979 study found that elementary teachers valued an approach whereby they were oriented to clinical supervision, observed each other, and reported to one another (Alfonso and Goldsberry, 1982:101). In 1980, Goldsberry conducted a study in which teachers voluntarily participated in a semester-long course on colleague consultation, a form of peer delivered clinical supervision (Alfonso and Goldsberry, 1982:101). The results of the study indicated that the teachers not only valued the process, but became more self-analytical, and many changed their approach to teaching as a result of the experience.

Mireau (1983:14) in describing the Teacher

Effectiveness Program (T.E.P.) of the Edmonton Public School Board, lauded the effective use of teachers who have "demonstrated leadership qualities" in the implementation of the program. Each school then has the option to enroll more staff members as the program progresses. A teacher, having completed the program, becomes a trained peer consultant in clinical supervision.

Smyth (1983:5), in describing the clinical supervision model successfully employed in his Australian context stated: "Experience with the follow through model suggests that once teachers have gained practical knowledge through hands on experience, they become eager to share their knowledge with uninitiated colleagues."

The aforementioned findings would seem to imply that a peer model is certainly viable in the area of clinical supervision.

In-service education. Fullan (1982) has compiled an extensive summary of research findings pertaining to many areas of educational change and innovation. He cited Little (1981) who found that school improvement is "most surely and thoroughly" achieved when teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete talk about teaching practice (Fullan, 1982:73). Curriculum implementation and delivery depend upon this process.

The Texas Research and Development Center evaluated the Jefferson County, Colorado curriculum implementation program (Fullan, 1982:170). They found it to be a success, "the implementation results showed that there was a dramatic

increase over previous standards" (Fullan, 1982:170). The evaluators partially attributed the success to the use of peer consultant Resource Teachers in the program.

Fullan, Miles and Taylor in their 1978 case study of Adams County Colorado, confirmed the importance of establishing a resource unit within the district which is integrated with ongoing program needs. External consultants were used but "mainly to train inside resource people (i.e., trainer-of-trainers approach)" (Fullan, 1982:183). Kamloops School District (1980) reported similar successful results in using peer-consultants as in-service leaders (Fullan, 1982:173).

MacKay and Doherty (1982:64), in their evaluation of the Alberta Social Studies In-Service Project recommended: "the peer-based consultative approach should be strongly considered as an approach in future projects." They also revealed that the Project resulted in some positive impacts on the peer consultants (MacKay and Doherty, 1982:60). The peer-based approach had been the hallmark of the Alberta program.

Fullan (1982) cited findings by Aoki et al. (1977), Kormos and Enns (1979), and Leithwood et al. (1978) all indicating that teachers are generally not satisfied with the assistance provided by external consultants in resolving curriculum implementation problems. The corollary would seem to be that peer-consultant resource teachers could more effectively conduct in-service programs. Fullan (1982:287) concluded by stating: "The cases of success we examined

consisted of systems of peer-based interaction and feedback among teachers with some external assistance."

### Conclusion

Based on the evidence reviewed in the previous discussion, it is this writer's position that a peer-based approach to staff development has some merit. More sharing of ideas and problems might lead to increased teacher satisfaction and thus better performance. Perhaps some of the stressors present in traditional staff development programs can be avoided.

Given the situational contingencies existent within various staff development settings, it is difficult to generalize findings from one to another. Even if there had been previous research on the long term personal effects sustained by consultants as a result of their peer-based staff development experiences, it would have been important to investigate that problem in this particular setting. The MacKay and Doherty (1982) evaluation of the Alberta Social Studies In-Service Project documented the general efficacy of the enterprise and noted some positive effects on the peer consultants. This research goes one step further, documenting the longer term effects on the peer consultants.



## NATURALISTIC INQUIRY

The purpose of this section is to indicate why the naturalistic research paradigm was a suitable approach for this study. The following sections identify the nature of the data required for the research and discuss the philosophical underpinnings of the approach, the assumptions and postures adopted, and the methodological implications of the previous features. A summary and conclusion are also included.

### Nature of Required Data

Logic would suggest that the best method of inquiry for any research project can be determined only after one has decided on the sorts of information that need to be generated. The purpose of this research was to investigate how the Resource Teachers' experience as peer consultants in the Alberta Education Social Studies In-service Project affected them and to determine the impact on their lives today. Because there has been no previous research in this area the study assumed an exploratory stance. It was also inductive, hypothesis and theory generating in nature. This genre of problem warranted an intensive exploration and assessment of the respondents' subjective interpretations of their experiences.

Guba and Lincoln (1982) and Rist (1977) concurred that the style of research one chooses to employ should be a

matter of informed judgement rather than orthodoxy. The sensible conclusion is perhaps best stated by Guba and Lincoln (1981:56): "The choice between paradigms in any inquiry ought to be made on the basis of the best fit between the assumptions and postures of a paradigm and the phenomenon being studied."

It would have been possible to gain some information about the respondents' career changes and life changes using a quantitative methodology with survey questionnaires or highly structured interviews; however, to determine the extent of these changes and whether or not they were due to the peer-consulting experience, it was necessary to enter their world of subjective reality. This necessity was mandated because it would have been exceedingly difficult to propose a priori categories that accurately and completely covered the range of possible responses. To ensure the accumulation of information that was accurate and adequate enough to generate grounded theory, it was important to ask the respondents and allow response from their own perspective. This situation called into play the phenomenological and symbolic interactionist perspectives with the corollary that the naturalistic research paradigm, employing qualitative methodology, provided the best fit for the phenomenon being investigated in this study.

Phenomenological perspective. The naturalistic paradigm rests on the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology. This philosophy holds that there are multiple ways by which humans interpret their experiences,

depending upon their social interactions, and it is the subjective meaning of these experiences that constitutes reality (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:32; Wilson, 1977:249). Curtis (1978:xii) and Gurwitsch (1966:90) agreed on the following distinguishing features of the philosophy: a belief in the importance, and in a sense of primacy, of the subjective consciousness; an understanding of consciousness as active and bestowing meaning; and, a claim that there are certain essential structures to consciousness of which we can gain knowledge by a particular type of reflection.

This researcher adopted the phenomenological mode by attempting to understand the meaning that the respondents attached to events and interactions in the given situation. Abrahamson (1983:250) termed this understanding as: "subjective understanding." It has its roots in the European phenomenological tradition of Husserl and Schutz and was characterized by Weber in the term "verstehen". Verstehen has been translated as: an interpretive understanding of another's subjective state of mind (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:31; Abrahamson, 1983:250; Rist, 1977:44). Wilson (1977:250) concluded that it is not enough to know merely that feelings, thoughts, or actions exist; rather, it is necessary also to know the framework in which these behaviors occur.

Symbolic interactionist perspective. Entwined within the phenomenological perspective and basic to naturalistic inquiry is the concept of symbolic interaction. Denzin (1978b:7) noted the concept as resting on three basic

assumptions; first, social reality as it is sensed, known and understood is a product of social interaction whereby individuals produce their own definitions of situations; second, humans are capable of minded, self-reflexive behavior that shapes and guides their own behavior and that of others; third, in the process of taking their own standpoint and adapting it to the behavior of others, humans interact with one another. This interaction is emergent, negotiated and often unpredictable. It is symbolic because it involves the manipulation of symbols, words and meanings. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:33) summarized that: "human experience is mediated by interpretation ... objects, events, people and situations do not possess their own meaning; rather, meaning is conferred upon them." Meaning is defined through symbolic interaction.

The implication for this researcher is that he had to enter into the defining process in order to understand the respondent's perspective. In-depth interviewing was employed for the researcher to enter into the subjective reality of the individuals under study. The basic source of research data lies in human interaction and is only obtainable through participation in the process. In congruence with this study's procedures, Wilson (1977:247) emphasized that the participation must occur in a natural setting, since human behavior is significantly influenced by situational contingencies.

### Underlying Assumptions

In any research project, the inquiry paradigm chosen depends upon the assumptions the researcher holds about reality, truth, and human interaction. Guba, writing alone and in concert with Lincoln, has produced a useful summary of salient paradigmatic assumptions pertaining to reality, inquirer-subject relationship, and the nature of truth. (Guba, 1978; Guba, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Guba and Lincoln, 1982). These assumptions, paraphrased in the following sections, are the basis upon which this research was conducted.

Assumptions about reality. For the naturalistic inquirer, there are multiple realities. These realities are like the layers of an onion lying within and complementing one another. Each layer presents a different view of reality and none can be considered more true than another. Eisner (1981:8) elaborated on this idea stating that: ". . . knowing is not simply a unidimensional phenomenon, but takes a variety of forms . . . ." Phenomena do not converge to form one single truth, but diverge into multiple truths. The layers cannot be understood in terms of dependent and independent variables; rather, they are inextricably related to form a pattern of truth. It is these patterns that must be sought out, less for the sake of prediction and control than for "verstehen" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Wilson, 1977; Abrahamson, 1983; Rist, 1977; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). The object of this study was to seek out these patterns.

Assumptions about inquirer-subject relationship. The naturalist sees all phenomena as characterized by interactivity and although certain safeguards may reduce that interactivity, a large amount remains. Denzin (1978a:6) agreed with the latter statement in his discussion of subjectivism and objectivism relative to the naturalistic and scientific paradigms. It is seen as fruitless to think that interactivity can be completely removed; thus, the "wiser approach" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981:58) is to understand and take into account the influence of the interactivity. For this study, an important beginning was to determine the perceptions of the data gatherer and the effect of those perceptions on the developing information. Eisner (1981:8) concurred with this approach.

Assumptions about the nature of truth. Given their view of multiple realities and the complex subject-object interactivity, naturalistic inquirers "tend to eschew generalizations in favour of 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) and 'working hypotheses' (Cronbach, 1975)" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981:58). One must have a great deal of information about both situations before one can apply descriptions and interpretations from one to another. The focus of the inquiry is often as much on differences as on similarities (Eisner, 1981:7). Naturalistic inquiry thus leads to the development of an ideographic knowledge base, that is, one focusing on the understanding of particular cases or events, in this instance, the effect of peer consulting on the lives of the consultants involved in the

study.

### Derived Postures of the Paradigm

Guba and Lincoln stated that "the assumptions basic to the paradigms are barely visible in the day-to-day conduct of inquirers; rather, they reflect themselves in certain derivative elements" (1981:63). They continued, suggesting that each paradigm also has derived postures that cannot be deduced from or justified by the underlying assumptions. The following section includes some naturalistic postures as indicated by Guba and Lincoln (1981:63-75 and 1982:244-246). The postures selected are those relevant to this research.

Source of theory. Adherents of the naturalistic paradigm derive their theory from the real world of data as they collect it. This inductive approach generates theory as the research progresses. Glaser and Strauss (1978:53-57) labeled this product "grounded theory", stating that it requires the intense study of much data. They conclude, however, that grounded theory is worth the time and focus needed to generate it. Within the bounds of its limitations, the purpose of this study was to generate grounded theory about the effect of peer consulting on the lives of the consultants.

Traditional scientific inquirers in the socio-behavioral realm use a deductive approach, verifying hypotheses based on a priori theory. This theory is usually generated by experts using "mental experiments" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981:68), based on their general observations of

phenomena. Guba and Lincoln (1981:68), Eisner (1981:9), and Smith (1974:18) argued very strongly in favor of grounded theory in the social sciences. In keeping with this argument, the naturalistic paradigm was chosen for this research.

Questions of causality. Inquiry is often focused in the direction of determining cause and effect relationships. It matters not whether one is interested in prediction and control or "verstehen", cause and effect relations remain important. However, inquirers using one or the other of the paradigms deal with causality in different ways. (Denzin 1978a:25; Eisner, 1981:6).

Adopting a naturalistic inquiry approach, this researcher was interested in the question of whether one phenomenon, peer consulting, caused another in a natural setting. The key phrase is, of course, the "natural setting." The nature of this study was such that the "effect" in the causal relationship was unknown until the completion of data analysis.

Knowledge types used. Guba and Lincoln (1981) cited Polanyi (1966) as having drawn the distinction between propositional and tacit knowledge. Propositional knowledge is that which can be stated in language form, and tacit knowledge is composed of intuitions, apprehensions, or feelings that cannot be easily stated in words but are nevertheless sensed by the subject.

Naturalistic inquiry permits and encourages tacit knowledge to come into play. It contributes to grounded



theory and improves communication with the information sources in their own context. The scientific paradigm, relying solely on propositional knowledge, would have been inappropriate for this research where deeper subjective insights were desired.

Stance. Wolf and Tymitz (1977) concurred with Guba and Lincoln (1981) that naturalistic inquirers embrace an expansionist stance while the scientific inquirers embrace a reductionist stance.

Adherents of expansionism seek a viewpoint that will lead to the description and understanding of phenomena as a whole. They enter the field and build outward from the entry point, each additional inquiry step is based on the sum of the insights from previous steps. Glaser and Strauss (1978:54) stated that grounded theory cannot be derived without this approach. The design of this study was based on the expansionist stance.

#### Methodological Implications

The epistemological bases, assumptions, and postures of the naturalistic paradigm yield the qualitative methodology which has some specific characteristics relevant to this study. This presentation of methodological implications is based primarily on the work of Guba (1979;1981) and Guba and Lincoln (1981;1982), with support from other sources.

Instrumentation. The naturalist prefers the human being as an instrument for data gathering. Insightfulness, flexibility, responsiveness, ability to utilize tacit

knowledge, and ability to process and attach meaning to data simultaneously with their acquisition, are all human qualities that contribute to the holistic emphasis they can provide. Denzin (1978a:7) contributed that the inquirer is to be "placed squarely in the center of the research act." The nature of the information required for this research demanded that the researcher himself elicit the desired responses from the respondents.

Specification of rules. The timing of the specification of rules for data collection and analysis is different for qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Whereas the scientific inquirer specifies everything in advance of the research, the naturalist does not have this option. In this research it was necessary to unitize and categorize the raw data after they were collected. Guba and Lincoln (1981:73) argued that although the subjectivity of the process has been accused of making the results suspect, "steps can be taken to be sure that rules are unambiguously stated and systematically and uniformly applied ... and these techniques have the advantage that they can build on emergent insights."

Design. As was the case in this study, the naturalistic researcher can only produce an incomplete design specification in advance. To specify in detail would place constraints that are antithetical to the stance and purpose of naturalistic inquiry. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:56) concurred stating that "design decisions are made throughout the study - at the end as well as the beginning."

Setting. The scientist usually performs his or her work in a very controlled, laboratory type of situation. The naturalist, on the other hand, performs his or her work in the natural setting (Filstead, 1970:4; Denzin, 1978a:9). In this study it was appropriate to seek out the respondents in their own natural setting and interview them there. To do it any other way might have ruined the naturalness of their responses.

Analytical units. A variable or a system of variables constitutes the analytical unit of empirical science. Conversely, for the naturalistic inquirer it is necessary to seek out the complex patternings observed in nature. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:145) embellished the point:

Analysis involves working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.

Contextual elements. The object of scientific inquiry is to control all extraneous elements that might distract attention from or influence outcomes about the phenomena under investigation. Naturalistic inquirers seek the opposite position in that they welcome interference because it is a part of the real world context. Wilson (1977:260) called this process "the seeking of negative evidence" and deemed it fundamental to the development of grounded theory, which in this case was the objective of the study.

### Naturalistic Inquiry Summarized

The purpose of this section is to draw together these attributes of naturalistic inquiry that are appropriate to this study. The information included is based on that presented in the preceding sections.

Guba (1978:3) stated that naturalistic inquiry is an alternative mode of inquiry differing from other modes by its relative position along two dimensions: (1) the degree of manipulation of conditions antecedent to the inquiry, and (2) the degree of constraint imposed on outputs by subjects involved in the inquiry. In this study there was no manipulation of antecedent conditions and minimal constraint on the respondents' outputs. That is, there were no a priori categories defined and the respondents' responses were limited only by the delimitation of the study.

Wolf and Tymitz (1977:7) captured the requirements of this research in their definition of the naturalistic study:

one aimed at understanding actualities, social realities, and human perceptions that exist untainted by the obtrusiveness of formal measurement or preconceived questions . . . a process geared to the uncovering of many idiosyncratic but nonetheless important stories told by real people, about real events, in real and natural ways.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982:2) concurred, giving the following properties of naturalistic research:

The data collected has been termed soft, that is rich in description of people, places, and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures. Research questions are not framed by operationalizing variables; rather, they are formulated to investigate in all their complexity, in context.

They continued, stating that while naturalistic inquirers may develop a focus as they collect data, they do not approach the study with specific questions to answer or hypotheses to test. This again concurs with the rationale of this study where the main concern was to understand behavior from each subject's frame of reference. In describing the concept of naturalistic inquiry Bogdan and Biklen (1982:27) use the phrase "qualitative research" which Guba and Lincoln (1982:233) reveal as the methodology of naturalistic inquiry. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:27-30) list the following characteristics, all of which pertain to this study: (1) Qualitative research has the natural setting as a direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument. (2) Qualitative research is descriptive, with the collected data in the form of words or pictures instead of numbers. (3) Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products: How people negotiate meaning, how terms or labels come to be applied, how certain notions come to be taken as common sense, and what the natural history of the phenomenon under study is. (4) Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively, not seeking evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses held before beginning inquiry. (5) "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. Researchers who use this approach are interested in the ways different people make sense of their lives.

Guba (1978:6-7) cited the Willems and Raush (1969) definition (a synthesis of eclectic sources) as being the

most encompassing description of naturalistic inquiry. They found six ~~conveying~~ descriptors, all of which pertain to the procedures used in this study:

1. Naturalistic inquiry (N/I) is always a matter of degree. It can be characterized as a function of the degree of manipulation of stimulus and response modes. N/I cannot be pure in the sense of being absolutely free of constraints placed on either antecedents or responses; initial efforts by an investigator to discover the meaning of what he has observed will cause him to propose certain categories in which to assimilate and account for the noted responses. These categories lead him further into a verification mode, so that on subsequent observation he is more likely to select situations that elicit the response categories of interest. Most likely, the investigator will cycle through a series of observations that are, alternately, directed at discovery and then at verification.
2. The degree to which a study is naturalistic is a function of what the investigator does. Naturalistic inquiry is not determined by the nature of the subjects or the situation, but by the particular methodology the researcher chooses. Nevertheless, as experienced in this study, the choice of methodology is influenced by the nature of the information being sought.
3. What the investigator does in relation to stimuli, independent variables, or antecedent conditions is one crucial dimension. Manipulation of any element prior to observation is sufficient reason to regard a study as not

naturalistic.

4. What the investigator does in restricting the response range or domain of the subjects output is a secondary dimension; although, manipulation of output possibilities does detract from the naturalistic nature of a study. In the case of this study, it was necessary to focus the respondent's outputs on their experience as peer consultants.

5. Researchers may approach a phenomenon as if for the first time, with minimal determination by prior theoretical categories. The investigator is not obliged to have formed certain conceptions or theories prior to his work; rather, he can approach it with a pristine mind and allow his interpretations to emanate from and be influenced by real events, rather than the reverse.

6. The term "naturalistic" is to be taken as a modifier of "research", "method", or "inquiry" but not of a particular phenomenon. No one event, situation, or phenomenon is more natural than another; rather it is the approach to investigating it that is natural.

Perhaps the best summary of the data defining naturalistic inquiry is the graphic illustration devised by Guba (1978). This quadrant matrix graph, based on the Willems and Raush (1969) data is reproduced in Figure 1, with the "x" marking the approximate classification of this research project - low in restraints on antecedent variables and respondent outputs.

Figure 1: Representation of the Domain of Inquiry

Degree of Imposition of Constraints on Possible Outputs		HIGH		Scientific Inquiry	"Ideal" Experiment
		LOW	x	Naturalistic Inquiry	
"Ideal" Naturalistic Inquiry			LOW	HIGH	Degree of Imposition of Constraints on Antecedent Variables

### Conclusion

Opponents of naturalistic inquiry have termed it as unstructured, undisciplined, unsystematic, sloppy, lacking in rigor and messy, as well as using many other equally derogatory descriptions (Wolf and Tymitz, 1977:7; Eisner, 1981:5 and 1977:71; Guba and Lincoln, 1981:85). Wolf and Tymitz (1977:7) summarized the response of naturalistic inquirers "... let it suffice to say that such thoughts are unfair, inaccurate and simplistic ... natural inquiry is no less rigorous than traditional experimental research, it is simply different." Perrow (1982:686) concluded that "our world is more 'loosely coupled' than our rationalistic theories would ever allow" and continued, stating that the scientific paradigm does not hold all the answers.

In this research, the objectives, nature of the problem, and nature of the required data clearly presented a



scenario that best fit the epistemological bases, assumptions, and postures of the naturalistic paradigm.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This chapter contains a description of the specific procedures followed in this study. The appropriate methodological principles and their resulting procedures are described using references from authoritative sources. This information is then applied to the situational context of the study. The following sections include a discussion of the research design, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and the procedures used to ensure methodological rigor.

#### RESEARCH DESIGN

Because it was necessary to assess a number of individual respondents in different locations at different times, the chosen design falls into the "multi-site study" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:65) classification. This nomenclature was derived to delineate multiple site and multiple respondent studies from the case study which focuses on one subject, or one single setting, or one particular event or situation. The multi-site study is usually oriented more towards the generation of theory and, although the breadth of this study imposes some limitations in this area, it is an exploratory step towards theory

generation.

### Modified Analytic Induction

The procedure of analytic induction is used when some specific problem, question or issue becomes the focus of research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:65). Turner (1978:151-153) found that the original concepts underlying analytic induction were formulated by Znaniecki (1934), Lindesmith (1947) and Cressey (1950). The procedures involve following respondents or events through time, attempting to generate propositions that cover every case analyzed (Denzin, 1978b:27; Turner, 1978:156). Denzin (1978b:27) added that the researcher seeks out "negative cases" that do not fit the emerging propositions. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:66) stated that open-ended interviewing is the preferred data collection procedure. The actual analytic induction design mandates longitudinal work involving many respondents.

This research was conducted using a modified version of the analytic induction approach because neither time nor funding were available to permit use of the original procedure. The first respondent was interviewed to determine what personal effect had been generated by his or her experience as a peer consultant Resource Teacher. These data were synthesized to form a loose descriptive theory. After each subsequent respondent was interviewed, the emerging theory was modified to encompass data gathered in

the latter case. This procedure was followed until all respondents had been interviewed and an emergent theory was developed, encompassing all cases assessed.

### Sample

A purposive sample of five former Resource Teachers was selected mainly on the basis of availability and willingness to participate. However, the concept of "theoretical purposive sampling" (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982:38; Guba, 1981:86) was also adhered to; that is, individuals who did not appear to fit the emerging theoretical patterns were sought out. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:66) termed this process as the seeking out of "negative" cases. This procedure was intended to maximize the range of information collected and to provide the most stringent conditions for theory grounding.

### DATA COLLECTION

In accordance with the tenets of qualitative methodology and the modified analytic induction design of this study, the primary device employed for data collection was the in-depth interview. The author served as the interviewer. In the interest of triangulation, an open-ended questionnaire was also administered to the respondents.

### In-Depth Interview

Bogdan and Biklen (1982:2) cited the original sources of the varying synonyms for the in-depth interview:

... sometimes termed 'unstructured' (Maccoby and Maccoby, 1954), or 'open-ended' (Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook, 1951), 'non-directive' (Meltzer and Petras, 1970), or 'flexibly structured' (Whyte, 1979).

Although we are dealing with semantics, Whyte (1982:11) found fault with some of these descriptors, stating that the interview is indeed "structured in terms of the research problem," as in the case of this study. He went on to state that the interview structure is not fixed by predetermined questions, as in the questionnaire, but is designed to provide the informant with freedom to introduce materials that were not anticipated by the interviewer. The open-ended nature of the approach allows the respondents to answer from their own frame of reference rather than from one structured by prearranged questions. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:2) and Denzin (1978b:117) agreed that loosely structured interview guides may be employed by the researcher, who in this case was also the interviewer. Abrahamson (1983:334) stated that there must be a question or questions that orient the respondent to the topic.

The in-depth interview employed in this study was a semi-structured variety utilizing the following loosely structured guides:

1. How did your experience as a peer consultant Resource Teacher in the Social Studies In-Service Project affect you?

2. How has that effect manifested itself in you presently in terms of your educational career?
3. How has that effect manifested itself in you presently in terms of your personal outlook and behavior?

As Trow (1970:146) stated in his discourse on the interview:

The amount of information people can tell us quite simply and reliably, about their past experience is very great; and it is only in light of that information . . . that we can frequently understand their behaviors in the 'here and now'.

The interviewer's major task is to get the respondents to freely express their thoughts about the topic central to the research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:2; Denzin, 1978b:117; Becker and Geer, 1970:136; Guba and Lincoln, 1981:157). This task involves some procedures and techniques that can help enhance the outcomes. The following principles were adhered to by the researcher in this study.

There is wide agreement that good interviews are ones in which the subjects are at ease and talk freely about their points of view (Denzin, 1978b; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Cole, 1976; Whyte, 1982). These interviews produce rich data filled with words that reveal the respondents' perspectives, and thus the transcripts are filled with details and examples (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:136). In order to achieve such results, a climate of openness and trust must be established between the researcher and the respondent. Guba and Lincoln (1981:172) advised that the researcher make contact with the prospective respondents personally in a courteous manner.

This responsibility should not be delegated to secretaries or aides. In the interest of ethics, the purpose of the research and the content of the interview should be explained to the prospective respondents.

After access has been gained and one is faced with the task of the actual interview, special care must be taken to ensure successful data gathering. Whyte (1982:111) revealed that "like the therapist, a research interviewer listens more than he talks, and he listens with a sympathetic and lively interest." Abrahams (1983:334) suggested that after the respondent has eased into the discussion, "the interviewer's task is to provide the respondent with what Carl Rogers has termed a 'verbal mirror'." This process, fundamental to Rogerian therapeutic assessment theory, entails the careful, clear, and concise paraphrasing of what the respondent has said without implying evaluative judgement. In addition to occasional paraphrasing for clarification purposes, the interviewer must encourage the respondent to continue in a free and relaxed manner. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and Whyte (1982) concurred that the interviewer should use phrases like: "uh-huh", "yes", "interesting" and body language like the nod of the head, facial expressions, and hand motions to encourage the free and relaxed responses.

The interviewer must restrain his or her natural tendencies to interrupt, to contribute one's own opinions and to disagree or argue. Whyte (1982:111) concluded that there may be occasions where a respondent has meandered

beyond the boundings of the study and some gentle redirection is necessary; however, this should be done gracefully and carefully so as not to dampen the respondent's enthusiasm. Abrahamson (1983:335) contributed that the interviewer must be prepared to accommodate periods of silence without contributing or urging. The conversational pace of many people, especially when they are thoughtful, is punctuated by pauses of up to about twenty seconds (Abrahamson, 1983:335). If an interviewer ignores this advice, the resulting interruptions negatively influence the natural outcomes of the respondents' contributions. Rushing a respondent can also create within them anxiety or discomfort that again ruins the natural outcomes. An overlying theme must be remembered: the purpose of the interview is to find out what is on the respondents' minds, not to put things in their minds.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982:136) contributed that the interviewer should avoid questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" when guiding the interview's course. Particulars and details will come from probing questions that require an explanation. However, this guiding must not threaten the purity of the respondent's natural response. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:137) provided the following summary of important aspects involved in successful interviewing:

There are no rules we can give you that constantly apply across all interview situations, but a few general statements can be made. Most important is the need to listen carefully. Listen to what people say. Treat every word as having the potential of unlocking the mystery of the subject's way of viewing the world. If at first



you do not understand what the respondent is getting at, ask for clarification. Question, not to challenge, but to make clear. If you can not understand, assume that you are at fault. Assume the problem is not that the subject does not make sense, but that you have not been able to comprehend. Return and listen and think some more. It requires flexibility. Try different techniques, including jokes or sometimes gentle challenges. Sometimes you might ask them to elaborate with stories, sometimes you might share your experiences with them.

Guba and Lincoln (1981:147) suggested that a good naturalistic inquirer should be sensitive - open to a wide variety of stimuli and completely aware that the variety exists, be a problem finder and a pattern creator, be a constructor of realities, be trustworthy, be able to engage in bias free observation, and be patient and self controlled enough to listen rather than intervene.

The preceding procedures were followed in conducting the interviews for this study. Permission was secured from each respondent to tape the interviews. Assurances were given that any private information would remain confidential, names would not be attached to any information, and the general purpose of the collected data was to generate a theoretical perspective on how the experience of peer consulting affects the lives of consultants. Each respondent signed a release form (Appendix A) indicating his or her consent to participate in the study under the above mentioned conditions, The tapes were transcribed to provide an easier means of data analysis away from the field.

### Open-Ended Questionnaire

Bogdan and Biklen (1982:97-98) suggested that qualitative researchers sometimes ask people to write information for them. They added that "an advantage of soliciting compositions is that the researcher can have some hand in directing the authors' focus and thereby get a number of people to write on a single event or topic." This statement is very appropriate for this study where it was necessary to assess the respondents' experiences of a single event - their service as peer consultants. The primary purpose of the open-ended questionnaire was to act as a triangulation device in this study. A detailed discussion of the rationale for the questionnaire exists in the section on methodological rigor at the end of this chapter.

As in the case of the in-depth interview, this open-ended questionnaire (Appendix B) was structured only by the delimitation of the study - the effect of the peer consultants' experiences on themselves. It was designed to allow the respondents freedom to introduce materials unanticipated by the researcher and to allow them to answer from their own frame of reference. The same loosely structured guide questions were employed as in the in-depth interview:

1. How did your experience as a peer consultant Resource Teacher in the Social Studies In-Service Project affect you?
2. How has that effect manifested itself in you presently in terms of your educational career?

3. How has that effect manifested itself in you presently in terms of your personal outlook and behavior?

The questionnaire was administered to the respondents from one to three weeks after the main interview.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts and other accumulated data to increase one's own understanding of them and to enable one to present his discoveries to others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:146). Schatzman and Strauss (1973:145) added that a set of strategies and implementing tactics are required. The analysis involves working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what one will tell others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:146).

In the early stages of this study a high percentage of time was spent data gathering with a small percentage devoted to analysis; in the latter stages of the study this trend was reversed with the bulk of the time spent in analysis. The research design presented a situation whereby the inquiry began with questions of a broad scope and proceeded through a "conceptual funnel" - working with data all the while, ever trying to more fully understand what the data meant - making decisions as to how to check and how to

verify as the investigation unfolded (Owens, 1982:11). The ultimate aim of the analysis was to construct a grounded theory encompassing all the respondents assessed.

Guba and Lincoln (1981:91) stated that "focusing problems" emerge from the analysis, categorization, and interpretations of the respondents' outputs. Since the respondents' outputs were not specifically defined before the inquiry began, focuses had to be established by analyzing, categorizing, and interpreting the data after they came in. There are two identifiable sub-categories of the focusing dilemma: problems of convergence and problems of divergence.

#### Convergence Strategies

Convergence strategies are procedures followed to derive units or categories within which the data will be classified and interpreted. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:156) called these units "coding categories." The categories are based on themes that emerge from the data during analysis; thus, in this research they are called thematic categories. The convergence strategies employed in this study, based on Bogdan and Biklen (1982:155-170) and Guba and Lincoln (1981:91-97), are described as follows.

As the data analysis progressed, recurring themes or regularities were sought out. The utility of the categories was checked by evaluating the homogeneity among items within, and the heterogeneity between the categories themselves. Differences among the categories were designed

to be bold and clear. This was constantly checked by assessing the amount of unassignable data; which, if in abundance, would have indicated faulty categories. The development of the category system was not accomplished in one step; rather, early accumulation of data gave rise to initial categories which evolved and changed as the study progressed.

The completeness of the set of categories was assessed by the following criteria: a minimum of unassignable data in existence, relative freedom from ambiguity of classification, consistency when viewed internally, revealing a synthesized whole when viewed externally, and the relative inclusiveness of the existing data.

#### Divergence Strategies

Once a researcher has identified a preliminary set of categories, it is necessary to "flesh them out" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981:97). Although much of this was accomplished during the convergence strategies with the data assigned to categories naturally "fleshing them out", it was necessary to reestablish contact with the respondents after the initial interview to gain more information. Guba and Lincoln (1981:98) called this process "extending"; that is, seeking out more information that builds on known items. This process occurred after the initial categories were established, helping to clarify ambiguities and making the categories more complete.

Specifically, this process of analysis and synthesis

was accomplished by placing category code numbers opposite the appropriate transcript and questionnaire quotes. These individual quotations were then grouped and further analyzed to determine how well they fit into the given categories. The grouping was accomplished using a technique described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982:166) whereby photocopies of the transcribed data were cut up, the appropriate items being placed in folders for their respective category. In this manner, it was easier to move data items from category to category while assessing the proper arrangements. Also, it was easier to assess the homogeneity of the data within the categories using this method.

The names of the thematic categories were derived by this researcher, based on their conceptual content.

#### METHODOLOGICAL RIGOR

Guba and Lincoln (1981:246) proposed the following naturalistic analogues for the traditional rigor criteria: credibility for internal validity; transferability for external validity; dependability for reliability; and confirmability for objectivity. This section is designed to relate the procedures followed to ensure methodological rigor in the above-mentioned areas.

##### Credibility

In concurrence with Owens (1982:11), the research

strategy in this study followed a rather broad-scale exploration at the outset, simultaneously accompanied by checking for accuracy, seeking verification, testing, probing and confirming as the data collection proceeded.

Owens (1982:15) also suggested the use of "peer debriefing or consultation" which allows the inquirer to "disengage from the setting and discuss the progress of the work and the nature of the experience with qualified peers who are interested." There were five colleagues of this researcher who were engaged in similar research. These people were consulted regularly and a sharing of ideas, literature sources on methodological problems, fears, doubts and successes took place; in fact, this meeting became a regular occurrence, valuable to all involved. As LeCompte and Goetz (1982:42) and Guba and Lincoln (1981:247) agreed, this procedure allowed the researcher to receive advice about methodological steps in the emergent design and to relieve anxieties and stresses that might otherwise have adversely affected the inquiry.

Triangulation, a process whereby a variety of data sources, different perspectives or theories, and different methods are pitted against one another, was also used to cross-check data and interpretations. In compliance with Denzin (1978b:292), who advocated the use of multiple data gathering approaches, an open-ended questionnaire was employed in addition to the in-depth interview. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents one to three weeks after the main interview and proved to be useful

devices in cross-checking the data.

Although there were no existing literature sources with which to cross-check findings on the long term effect of peer consulting, data received on the initial effects were cross-checked with the research done by MacKay and Doherty (1982). This proved to be a valuable source of triangulation - the findings of this research concurring with MacKay and Doherty. The findings also seemed to fit well with some existing theories as described in Chapter V.

Efforts were also made to utilize a form of triangulation described by LeCompte and Goetz (1982:41) whereby "inter-rater or inter-observer reliability" was checked. This proved to be difficult since the respondents' outputs tended to be very phenomenological, such that other observers could not verify or dispute them. In the few cases where some actual observable behaviors were reported, the supervisors questioned felt that they did not have sufficient information to make judgements. In fact, many of the respondents had not been observed in their classrooms in many years.

Owens (1982) and Guba and Lincoln (1982) agreed on the "collection of referential adequacy materials" (Guba, 1981:85) to test interpretations made from other analyzed data. This process was adhered to in the study by keeping an "audit booklet" in which all transcriptions, notes, questionnaire responses, and tapes were kept. These materials can be used by the inquirer or an external auditor to verify structural corroboration. Guba and Lincoln



(1982:247) labelled this process the leaving of an "audit trail."

The last procedure to ensure credibility in the study was the use of "member checks" (Guba and Lincoln, 1982:247). Throughout the study, data and interpretations were cross-checked with the respondents.

### Transferability

Although the intent of this research was not to generalize findings to a larger population, a method was employed that, with more respondents, could have made this possible. This procedure is called "theoretical purposive sampling" (Guba, 1981:86; LeCompte and Goetz, 1982:38) and consists of sampling to maximize the range of information collected and to provide the most stringent conditions for theory grounding. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:66) added that the inquirer seeks out "negative cases", ones that do not seem to fit the emerging model. The respondents chosen for this research were deliberately selected because of the seeming different situations and conditions in which they were involved. This selection was based on the logic that their present state would probably be reflective of their past experience.

### Dependability

The reliability of this study was enhanced by the use of "overlap methods" (Guba, 1981:86) and the previously mentioned "audit trail" (Guba and Lincoln, 1982:247).

Denzin (1978b) concurred that "overlap methods", the use of two or more data collection procedures, enhanced the reliability factor as well as validity. The "dependability audit" (Owens, 1982:13) involves the leaving of an audit trail so that an external auditor can assess the results. This concept is similar to that of content validity, where an expert's opinion is utilized.

### Confirmability

Although triangulation and the previously mentioned audit trail also support confirmability, there is a third important step that was followed in this study. This is "practicing reflexivity" - the uncovering of the researcher's own underlying epistemological assumptions, reasons for formulating the study in a particular way, and implicit biases or prejudices about the context or problem (Guba and Lincoln, 1982:248). As Guba (1981:87) encouraged, this researcher kept a "reflexive journal" during the field work. This journal included all of the impressions, feelings, and thoughts experienced during the field work.

A thorough review of the epistemological bases of social science research also allowed this researcher to see where his own underlying beliefs and assumptions were with respect to the study. Also great care was taken not to allow inherent and a priori predictive hypotheses about the study to influence data gathering. Theoretical purposive sampling forced this researcher away from only those cases fitting the thoughts, hunches, and hypotheses held before

the research.

## CHAPTER IV

### THEMATIC CATEGORIZATION OF DATA

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the thematic categories that emerged from the data analysis. The development of the main themes involved three steps: one, the building of themes from data analyzed on each respondent individually (Appendix C); two, the combination of themes from all respondents (Appendix D); and three, the building of final main themes subsuming all initial themes (Appendix E).

The intent of this study was to investigate how the experience of peer consulting has affected the professional and personal lives of the respondents. The focus questions guiding the data gathering produced information on how the peer consulting experience affected the respondents and on how that effect has manifested itself presently in terms of their educational career, their personal outlook, and their behavior. All of the above information is included in each separate category, relative to its respective theme.

The text of each thematic category is composed of brief explanations by this researcher with the remainder being "fleshed out" by excerpts from the transcripts and questionnaires. Quotations by different respondents on the same topic are separated by additional space.

In the order of their presentation in this chapter, the categories are: broadening personal perspectives; fulfilling psychological needs; increasing self-confidence; improving classroom teaching; becoming resident expert; maintaining positive contacts; and reinforcing existing orientations. These themes are further classified as being either general or specific.

#### GENERAL THEMES

The three initial thematic categories, more general than the others, are presented in hierarchical order. This order reflects the frequency of their occurrence in the respondents' statements with the first being most predominant. These themes appeared to be interrelated and interdependent; nevertheless, each of them displayed an internal homogeneity and, when viewed in juxtaposition to one another, an external discreteness.

##### Category One: Broadening Personal Perspectives

The most commonly recurring theme throughout the analyses was a broadened personal perspective. This theme also contained the sub-foci of curriculum, resources and methodology; and teacher qualities.

General broadening. The following excerpts perhaps best illustrate the meaning of the theme:

It sort of opened my eyes, for instance, to the field of education, other than having viewed as a teacher in a classroom. I didn't realize for instance, what the Department of Education was all about. I still sometimes wonder in some aspects, but I don't think I really appreciated how many people were there doing all these different jobs.

I learned so much. I sat before the Board at the end of the year and they said 'What do you think you've learned from this?' and I said: 'I've packed ten years into one. I've worked with the teachers across all grade levels, it's been fantastic, I've worked as a consultant and I always wanted to do that' and I said: 'I also got to teach other grades'.

I felt, I think personally, that I learned from seeing other teachers operating. I know personally that I was fairly isolated in the classroom, and for that matter, not particularly anxious to relate to others . . . the first thing I discovered was that this was a general rule, and the second thing I discovered was that once you had started mixing, it was pretty healthy and problem sorts of situations could be worked out.

In my travels, one of the things that I did find out was that we're sure a lot better off in the city than in the county.

First of all it opened my eyes to other career possibilities.

It opened my eyes, eh, and I've heard people say: 'well they are different.' Well I didn't believe how different the jurisdictions were.

It does garner you overall, an experience that you cannot buy. It is compacted into a very short time frame and I think it is a marvelous experience.

Besides the overall increasing of experience and awareness, this general broadening of personal perspectives yielded some lasting effects on the respondents' lives.

If you are going to be a work-horse, there are certain people who will milk you dry you know, in that way you sort of have to be careful and you do learn through experiences like this that you should get in writing certain things, if you expect certain things out of it.

But I had always had this concept in my head - that systems are really detrimental to the best functioning of individual people - individual people have good ideas but the system holds them back. And I think I can see now that instead of taking that negative approach, what I do instead is say 'the system exists - now what kind of things can we pull out of it and use to our advantage?' So it's quite a shift - I tend to be more positive.

I suppose partly because of that project and the colleague I was conducting it with . . . I signed up for my course and as a result I am now finishing my Master's degree and presumably leaving fulltime teaching for life. So I would say that is a dramatic change.

Whatever effects it had on me in terms of teaching me how to give assistance, my new job will involve these things.

I feel my personal outlook and behavior have been broadened, become more 'solid' (secure) and cohesive; that is, outlook and behavior more consistent with each other, less role playing.

Curriculum, resources and methodology. More specifically, the respondents indicated a broadening of perspective and awareness about the social studies curriculum, the resources available, and particular methodologies for teaching it.

The other thing, I guess, that would be a positive experience was that I certainly got a general overall view of the social studies program.

And when I decided to take the Resource Teacher job, I knew I had to act with some integrity and accept the job as it entailed. So what I did was sit down and read through all the curriculums of social studies from grade one to twelve right off the bat to figure out what the existing thing was about - then I read all the new garbage that they gave us on how it was changing and so on and I thought, well this sounds like a good idea, it sounds like it fits in with what I've been trying to do in fact. So that was the seed that assisted in the whole change and by the end of the period of consulting I had really started to take a look at curriculum in other areas and I decided, right, there is something there. Curriculum is different than textbooks - curriculum has an outline, it has by and large attempted to address not only the developmental way that kids proceed but also a relevant need that maybe kids might feel.

I was involved with social studies the first time they changed the curriculum and I was reluctant to change . . . so this time I became involved in the change and I saw things in a different light. I guess that is another way it affects you, in that it not only broadens your perspectives on other teachers or other people but it also makes you a little more ready to make changes yourself once you realize that changes are very healthy and you were involved with it and it didn't hurt you, so when it changes again it isn't going to hurt either.

I think it made me much more aware of the different resources that were available, that you would bring in and use - this type of thing.

It gave me a better grasp of how to approach the topics and how to put it together. It also allowed me to watch a number of other teachers in action which caused me to learn certain things about different teaching styles and ways of doing things.



Teacher qualities. The awareness of other teachers, how they operated in their classrooms, and how they responded to the In-Service Project also had an impact on the Resource Teachers.

I was very impressed by the dedication of people. I had always thought that primary teachers were the most hard working people I had ever met.

The first thing that comes to mind is how impressed I was with the quality of teaching that went on at elementary in our jurisdiction. So that also helped to get rid of some of my negative attitude about how crummy the system was. We had some fantastic teachers that were doing terrific things already. They gave me lots of ideas, I sometimes thought, more than I gave them.

Some people would say hey this is good, I'm going to try this and of course that is a very positive experience.

Some of the broadened awareness left the Resource Teachers with a less than positive feeling. For some, this simply confirmed their belief about people but for others it opened new perspectives.

It certainly broadened my horizons with respect to teachers. . . it was just really enlightening to realize that various people are pretty set in their ways and that all the king's men and all the king's horses weren't going to change some of the ideas those people had. . . it broadened my perspective considerably and I don't go through life assuming that all teachers are tuned right in to the 1980's.

You knew that they would go back tomorrow and they would do exactly the same thing as they had been doing - there would be no change, and three years down the road there would be no change.

I don't think they have changed probably one iota, as a result of the in-service. So I would say that was one sort of negative thing.

It's a frustrating situation, just like the classroom - little Johnny doesn't do his homework - so you talk to little Johnny and tomorrow he hasn't got it done either.

There were a few teachers who did not, in any way, shape or form, understand the underlying theory. They did not know what I was talking about and at the end of all my in-servicing . . . they just used the new activities and concepts in their same old way. So there were some disappointments for sure.

I would imagine the greatest effect on my personal outlook and behavior has been that I tend to look more critically at what my colleagues do and how they teach. This involves areas other than the social studies as well. Also, with students transferring in from other schools and jurisdictions, at times it is almost maddening to see how other people are not doing justice to the various courses - let alone the method of teaching the course. This critical look at others, their teaching loads and so on, is almost depressing at times.

#### Category Two: Fulfilling Psychological Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of human needs is subdivided into physical and psychological categories. The psychological needs are often referred to as higher level needs. The fulfilment of these higher level needs - self-actualization, self-esteem, and social - proved to be the second most predominant theme emerging on how the Resource Teachers' lives were affected by their peer consulting experience.

Self-actualization. The peer consulting experience seems to have met the respondents' needs for inner reward,

self-fulfilment and variety.

If you have presented something to your peers and it has really gone well - you know it has gone well and they say so - it makes you feel like Gretzky does when he scores a goal. This guy scores enough goals that one more may not be much of a thrill, but it always is. I think that's about the same thing; if you've had many successes, why would one more really make that much difference, but it does. We like to be successes, we all like to be told we've done a good job, and it's particularly gratifying when it comes from your peers.

When asked about positive feedback from superiors, the same respondent added: "Peers, superiors, a pat on the back is a pat on the back". Another respondent contributed more:

But what I loved was by the end of the full day, hearing "Gee I'm glad I came today, I got a lot of things I can use tomorrow. And that was the best thing, the whole attitude changed and so when they came back for the second day, they wanted to come.

It gave me a sense of satisfaction.

I felt extremely challenged, useful to many, and proud. The feeling of pride came after doing the first couple of workshops, both of which generated very positive feedback, and grew throughout the year - it became a warm glow associated with doing a job well. All in all it was a growth experience.

Another respondent related an experience of having presented the rationale for the new curriculum to a school board and a Kiwanis club:

They had a lot of questions and really went away quite impressed. . . they were really appreciative and a lot of fine things were said as a result of it. They gave a little certificate of thanks for coming to the Kiwanis club . . . and that was a good experience, I enjoyed it and it was very positive.

This same respondent told how their jurisdiction has since undertaken more peer-based staff development activities and how they were received:

We had our own people explain what to do and how they're doing it and people came away from that saying that was good and really positive things were said. . . . you know, compliment them on sharing their ideas.

This self-fulfilment or self-actualization also seems to have some lingering results for the Resource teachers. One respondent captured it this way:

If you're talking challenge and things that are more phenomenological, in that sense in terms of reward, you certainly know you're not getting paid extra for it, then you have to be satisfied by what you are doing and be very self motivated.

This person then compared the peer consulting experience to teaching students:

They give me that boost, you know, and you have to get it from there because you're not going to be sitting around waiting for gold stars from somebody else - district office isn't going to send it to you.

In describing the type of person this respondent identified with, the following was given:

They're all superstars, they're just good hardworking people, they don't expect a gold star every day, they get their jollies just by doing a great job.

I was on such a high that things were so terrific in my classroom (as a result of the Resource Teacher experience), that everything else, all the other benefits, they were just gravy.

Another main thrust in the area of self-actualization was fulfilment of need for variety; that is, change of pace.

or change of environment.

I tended to be sort of an introverted person and it made me get out and open up quite a bit, that was probably good for the character. The impact of that obviously has led to some career changes and changes in consciousness and probably subconsciousness.

I was looking forward to it because I felt at that particular point in time I needed a break, I'd been teaching for about ten years since I'd been at university, and I suppose I was - well, not burned out - but maybe getting a little bored with the job.

I didn't realize I had been in a rut until I started doing it (the Project), but after that I was exhilarated and felt not in a rut.

I occasionally need a break . . . or a change of subject area . . . I was ready to come back to the classroom and I certainly have experienced a refreshing feeling . . . It gave me a refreshing break.

Even the idea of getting people out of their ruts, perhaps, and mixing with their colleagues was a very sound approach.

Self-esteem. There was a common sub-theme of ego-building, recognition and higher profiles that emerged from the respondents' outputs. This seemed to be a very positive and rewarding experience for the Resource Teachers.

I suppose that the other effect on me is that I became a little better known because I came in contact with a lot of people . . . that was an enriching experience . . . I can't say enough about those kinds of things.

And it was very positive, it made me grow - like there's no place in the district that I could go now, where some people don't know me.

I was asked to do this and so I would have to say that was a very positive thing to be considered the social studies expert in the district . . . so it was a boost to my ego.

I think the fact that I was picked by the head of the social studies department for Alberta Education - I suppose that was an ego boost.

It's an ego builder for sure.

This experience also gave me a little closer contact with senior officials in the Department of Education and this tends to give one . . . a feeling of importance - you can communicate with the big boys.

I became well known throughout my district, and in a couple of others, and earned the respect of my colleagues.

Social. The Resource Teachers' experience also seemed to fulfill a higher level social need - one of a giving, sharing, and generally philanthropic nature.

Because I was having so much success in the classroom with this approach, I wanted to share it with other teachers, so I talked to other teachers about trying specific strategies that I had discovered. I tended to share the materials that I was developing, or had found through being a peer consultant.

I managed to get into all those rooms eventually, and in most cases was invited back because after the first session I was less threatening (to them). In that sense it was positive and there was some sharing of ideas.

In some small way I started to help teachers build up a rapport with what Central Office is really there for, which is to assist teachers, right? . . . so for at least a dozen people I knew I had an

impact in that regard and I think that was meaningful.

I'm grateful for having had the opportunity to share knowledge I have and that I so enjoy sharing with others.

And of that informal sharing of ideas, the aspect most enjoyable and most profitable was talking shop.

Other respondents described how teachers in their jurisdictions have changed since peer-based staff development activities have become common.

They are funny animals, for some reason or another by nature, and they tend to, when they've got something that they've come across - they used to want to protect it as their own little God given what-ever-it-is. We find now that, given the opportunity, they are quite happy to share the knowledge or information they've found with other teachers.

A lot of sharing, it encouraged a lot of sharing. I know as a direct result of it, not only did we have sharing going in the social studies field, but a lot of sharing going on in other areas.

### Category Three: Increasing Self-Confidence

The last of the general themes is the increasing of self-confidence. It largely reflects a self-confidence and security in relation to the respondents' careers and career aspirations; however, there appears to be a spill-over into more general areas as well.

I suppose in terms of my career, it gave me - well - more confidence. You know, more confidence with the material, with the choice of methods that a person uses, and also I guess just more confidence in dealing with parents, parent-teacher

interviews, this type of thing.

It has made me feel very secure, no matter where I go. When you stand up and you talk for two days with people and you give them ideas, you show that you know what you're doing.

I generally liked and respected the people who were conducting the Project - still - by and large a person would have to sit there and think that you have done every bit as well. So that too sort of opened your eyes to the fact that you might be able to do other things . . . it increased a person's confidence . . . as to what you might be able to accomplish later.

That security thing is there - you just try to get rid of me - there's no way . . . the backlog of respect and so forth is there - so I think, in terms of my career in terms of having a job and boy - it's solid.

If you want to change jurisdictions you feel that because of your experience, you stand a greater chance of success at getting the job you want to apply for.

I know I can do it, I've lived through it and I'm even stronger . . . so now I have the assurance, much stronger inner feeling wise, definitely in terms of applying for and feeling qualified for jobs like that - yes indeed.

Higher career aspirations and motivations were also affected by the confidence the peer consulting experience generated.

It didn't get me any good jobs or lead me on to any higher jobs but it may have just opened the door a bit as far as higher expectations are concerned.

In terms of my career, I wish it had manifested itself more . . . when things will lighten up the opportunities will be there - but it is terrific



stuff to have had - right now it's in the bank.

Should I wish to go further up the ladder of success, I wouldn't hesitate to use the peer consultation experience as a reference to indicate support for my abilities and capabilities.

Now I know I'm qualified to work with all levels of colleagues in a consultative capacity . . . in other words I'm more 'together' than I've ever been, ready for anything the future brings and well qualified for it.

The manner in which the respondents conduct their day to day career activities was also affected by their increased self-confidence.

Basically the experience has given me greater confidence in my subject area and has therefore probably made me a better teacher of social studies.

I probably operate from a little stronger of a power base than previously.

I did get the impression of a certain power . . . that I could foresee, I suppose as a result of it. I suppose it raised a sort of ambition, in a sense, that I didn't have before . . . it probably also opened up the possibility of being a little more demanding - making more concrete suggestions, exercising a bit more authority under certain circumstances. Not just being so laissez-faire and accepting whatever other people are doing. They have to be able to support what they are doing at some point.

The confidence also manifested itself in a more general sort of a way.

By being involved with peer consulting, I probably developed more confidence in myself when it comes to dealing with adults in general and teachers specifically. I also came to realize that I

probably am very knowledgeable in my field and I have a lot more common sense solutions and appreciations than a goodly number of people who are in the teaching business. This experience also gave me a little closer contact with senior officials in the Department of Education and this tends to give one more self-confidence.

This has served me in my non-professional career - i.e. speaking to groups of people, at public forums - asking questions, developed leadership abilities, and although I'm not outwardly aware of it, I think it has also assisted in my organizational abilities when taking part in a discussion or presenting materials.

#### SPECIFIC THEMES

The following four themes are more specific than the previous three. They also seem to be residuals of the effects generated by the initial three; however, all of the themes, general and specific, revealed dynamic interrelationships and interdependencies among themselves. The four themes in this section are not presented in any meaningful order, nor did any one appear to be more regularly occurring than another.

#### Category Four: Improving Classroom Teaching

It would seem that the respondents experienced a more positive perception of their own classroom teaching resulting from their term as peer consultants.

My own teaching has obviously been greatly enriched by all of the information I received, processed, and evaluated throughout my resource

year.

It's one of those recurring type of things like - okay, the Alberta Education exams this year, my class was six marks above the provincial average. That's an ego boost.

I was teaching three grades I had never taught before - I was darn lucky that I had the background in this theory . . . otherwise I couldn't have done it . . . I really think it made my teaching very much stronger.

Specifically in terms of curriculum . . . it did help me relate my two areas to the other curriculum areas and the other grade levels.

Certainly my teaching day has to have been affected by it because I know much more about the source materials.

I do feel that I have much more confidence in the process of dealing with material and in terms of how the material is presented - group work, class discussions, library research, etc..

Prior to the experience, I did not believe in following the curriculum . . . now after peer consulting, . . . when I went back into the classroom . . . that was a major change . . . I read all the curriculum guide and attempted to integrate what it was saying into my own hands-on integrated approach . . . it was phenomenal . . . I knew I was teaching more than I ever had before, I knew the kids were learning more than they ever had from me before . . . not only did the kids enjoy themselves, and a lot still come to see me, . . . but their test scores were phenomenal - really, really high.

#### Category Five: Becoming Resident Expert

There was concurrence among the respondents that a major effect of their Resource Teacher experience was that they had become perceived as experts in social studies for

their jurisdictions. This image of the Resource Teacher seems to have persisted up to the present.

When it comes out in a month or two - or a year later when they phone you up and says 'I've got a problem here, could you help me with it' - now you know all about social studies.

Everybody treats me as though I am the social studies person in the district - still. People phone me up and say 'I've just gotten this assignment this year, can you give me anything on it'.

I guess it's a positive experience when you have an institute and social studies teachers get together and they say 'well what are you doing' . . . they always wanted to find out.

I would have to say that it was a very positive thing to be considered the social studies expert in the district.

I helped order every piece of social studies material in that school . . . mine was the final word.

But it's nice to think that they look at you in that particular manner . . . they do that in a positive manner . . . so whenever there is a meeting in social studies, even though I don't teach it anymore, I'm involved.

Some respondents reported some negative fallouts from being perceived as the resident expert in their jurisdictions.

One thing which might be negative as a result of that though, is that because you've done the peer-based consulting, you should be able to teach any social studies whether you liked the particular course or not . . . you're the authority type thing - you should have no problem . . . I think it's just an uncomfortable type of thing.

And when I had to go back to the classroom the following year it was very very difficult . . . I'd worked hard, I had respect . . . but it also got me a feeling that there was jealousy . . . there were some teachers who went out of their way to make my life miserable . . . there was a back-lash that surprised me, but then there are all personality types . . . I had to just develop a thicker skin and for me, that's probably good too.

#### Category Six: Maintaining Positive Contacts

In their term as Resource Teachers, the respondents made many contacts and acquaintances with other people: teachers, other Resource Teachers, Alberta Education personnel, and local jurisdiction central office people. Emerging from the data analysis, there was a theme indicating that many of these positive contacts have been fostered and maintained up to the present.

Since being out peer consulting and back in the classroom, I have maintained contact with many of the peer consultants that I met and have become these personal friends with them. The ones that I did not become close personal friends with - many of them I still contact on a professional level.

I just made some really good contacts with people that I never had before and they're just good people and it's always great to see them again and I'm sure that my relationships are positive with a lot of these people.

The thing is that now I know I can call those people anytime and, say, if I needed something, they'd give it to me because we've done so many things back and forth.

Well, outside of my career, I could tell you all kinds of personal things - if I hadn't taken the job as Peer Consultant I wouldn't have met the

person I married.

And any of the people who call me up and say 'I used to be a Resource Teacher, can you help me out with something?' - there's an immediate bond because I know what they've gone through and if they've lived through it I know they're good people.

I wouldn't say I developed any friendships from it but I did make contacts with people that I would never have known before and when I see these people periodically now, those contacts are very positive.

As a result of it we had some fairly positive experiences - I went to the Western Canada Film Showcase - and that was directly the result of that (previous contacts in the Project) and I've been in and worked with Alberta Education on two or three different occasions, sorting through materials to see about curriculum fits and that type of thing. That's been - well - it's enjoyable.

I developed a great relationship with him (the superintendent of a neighboring district) from nothing before.

I came to know the people at our central office personally - I got to know them as people and that was fantastic. Thereafter, when someone would be complaining about something . . . what I used to do was say well that's the way the system is, you know you have to try and overthrow it and blah, blah . . . What I started to say then was we have people at central office that will assist, that can understand . . . and so not only would I direct myself to central office when I was distraught about something, but I would direct other people too.

#### Category Seven: Reinforcing Existing Orientations

Some of the respondents were reluctant to give their peer consulting experience full credit for some changes in

or effects on their lives. They did, however, acknowledge their experience in the Project as contributing to these effects or as reinforcing beliefs, behaviors, and orientations they already had.

It sort of reinforced my belief in what I was doing, it made me a little more comfortable in doing it, enabled me to branch out.

There were things that were solidified in my mind.

It should be noted that some of this came about because of my involvement in city politics, as opposed to peer consulting. On the other hand I may just think it's this way - maybe I'm an easy touch or maybe others get to do things and I don't know about it.

The changes won't be astounding but they will, on the other hand I think, be very important changes. I would think I . . . was well aware that people could do things in a variety of different ways . . . and this experience sort of reinforced that.

It is difficult to say these things are directly related to peer consulting, as about at the same time I was involved in other similar pursuits. I do, however, feel that the peer-based consulting would have had some bearing on confidence and organizational abilities - it is just difficult to say how much.

I shouldn't give this particular project that much credit for the change in me, in the sense that it was just a vehicle - it was just an opportunity, a catalyst I guess . . . . It allowed you to find out certain things about yourself - interests and so on - at really no risk because you were going right back (to previous job).

So I guess all those things sort of happened at once. So to say that any one in particular affected me more wouldn't be a true picture . . . . I guess it (the Project) has complimented - all those things have been complimentary. In other

words, they've all sort of worked together in a very quick succession.

The preceding themes are composed of responses from the individual respondents. Care was taken to subsume all responses from all respondents in the appropriate categories. This was in keeping with the convergence strategy outlined in Chapter III; thus, there remained an absolute minimum of unassignable data - only that which was not related to the effects of the peer consulting experience.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

The intent of this research was to determine what effect the experience of peer consulting has had on the professional and personal lives of the Resource Teachers. It was an exploratory, inductive, hypothesis generating mode of research utilizing qualitative methodology. In-depth interviews conducted by this researcher accounted for the main body of data obtained; although, open-ended questionnaires were also administered to the respondents.

The sample consisted of five former Resource Teachers from the 1981 Alberta Social Studies In-Service Project. This sample size created a limitation in that it was rather small to attempt generalizing the findings to the entire 125 Resource Teachers who participated in the Project; however, the process of theoretical purposive sampling did produce a maximally broad range of respondent orientations. This process created the most stringent conditions for generating grounded theory encompassing the assessed cases and, most importantly, provided an insightful framework from which to base further research.

The purpose of this chapter is fourfold; one, to present a summary and discussion of the study's findings; two, to present the conclusions derived from these findings;

three, to generate a grounded theory based on the findings and conclusions; and four, to discuss the implications these results have for the educational enterprise.

#### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The thematic categorization of data in Chapter IV revealed seven emergent themes describing effects sustained by the Resource Teachers as a result of their peer consulting experience. These effects displayed dynamic interrelationships among themselves with one or more often contributing to the development of others. In fact, these interrelationships seemed to be much like the proverbial "vicious circle" with the initial general effects contributing to development of the ensuing specific effects. These specific effects then seemed to complete the circle by contributing back to additional development of the initial effects.

The three general effects which seemed to serve jointly as a matrix for the remaining four specific effects were, in the order of their frequency of occurrence in responses: a broadening of personal perspectives, a fulfilling of psychological needs, and an increase in self-confidence.

The latter four specific themes, having emerged in no particular order, were: an improving of classroom teaching; the becoming of a resident social studies expert; the

maintaining of positive personal contacts gained during the program; and the reinforcing of orientations previously existing in the respondents. These specific effects seemed to contribute to one another as well as back to the initial effects.

The following sub-sections contain a summary of the substantive content comprising each of the themes and a discussion of their interrelationships. The three general themes, occurring in their order of frequency of mention, are dealt with first - the latter four following in the order listed above.

#### Theme One: Broadening Personal Perspectives

The most commonly recurring effect was a broadening of personal perspectives. It included a general overall broadening and a specific broadening in the areas of curriculum resources and methodology, and teacher qualities.

The general broadening seemed to reflect an overall increase in personal knowledge, experience, and skills, all related to the administration of education and personal development. Specific examples included: developing a perspective other than that of a classroom teacher; discovering the variety of differences among school jurisdictions; gaining new insights from seeing other teachers operate; a revealing of new career possibilities; and gaining an understanding of provincial educational machinery beyond the classroom level. This broadening of perspectives had several lasting effects on the respondents,

including such things as career changes, increased career aspirations, a more positive outlook on the value of systems and organizations, and a personal growth leading to more efficient and meaningful interaction with other people and organizations.

All of the respondents indicated a greater knowledge and experience of social studies curriculum, resources, and methodologies after their term as peer consultants. This resulted from their exposure to other teachers, other jurisdictions, Alberta Education personnel, other Resource Teachers, and resource banks.

The respondents also indicated a heightened awareness of the qualities of other teachers. By and large they were pleasantly surprised by the quality, innovativeness, and dedication in the teaching they observed. This was especially true at the elementary level. On the other hand was the painful reminder that a small minority of reactionary, resistant, and/or marginally capable teachers also exist.

The broadening of personal perspectives had spin-off influences on other effects as well. Greater self-confidence was instilled as a result of increased knowledge and experience, the respondents now perceived themselves as better teachers since utilizing new knowledge, their increased knowledge and public profile caused them to be looked on as local social studies experts, they tended to maintain contact with some people they had met during the Project, and the whole process tended to give them a greater

sense of self-actualization, self-fulfilment and self-esteem.

#### Theme Two: Fulfilling Psychological Needs

The second most predominant effect was the fulfilment of higher level "Maslovian" needs - self-actualization, self-esteem, and social interaction.

In terms of self-actualization, the peer consulting experience seems to have met the Resource Teachers needs for inner reward, self-fulfilment, and variety. Positive feedback from teachers regarding help given and work-shops presented, positive feedback from superiors over a job well done, inner reward and satisfaction at seeing attitudes change as a result of one's efforts, and pride at having done a good job were all contributing factors. This impact seemed to leave the respondents with a sense of increased motivation and excitement about their jobs, a factor ongoing in the present. Self-actualization also occurred as a result of the need for variety being fulfilled. The experience seemed to provide a refreshing break from routine, as one respondent put it: "out of a rut".

Self-esteem needs were also met through the gaining of personal recognition, higher personal profiles, and ego building. These contributors to self-esteem resulted partly from the high public visibility of the experience and partly from the positive feedback, received from successful performances or from being selected as Resource Teachers.

A philanthropic, giving and sharing, higher level need

was also fulfilled by the Resource Teachers' experience. It was a personally rewarding experience to give aid to or share resources and advice with other teachers. This aspect in turn contributed back to self-actualization and self-esteem. It appeared that the respondents simply tended to value and be rewarded by interactions with teachers, other Resource Teachers, and/or supervisory personnel.

As with the effect portrayed in the previous theme, the fulfilling of psychological needs had impacts on some of the other effects. The sense of well being growing out of fulfilled needs contributed to a more relaxed openness, thus enhancing broadened perspectives. Motivation for innovative classroom performances ensued and increased confidence resulted from the positive feelings about themselves. The respondents, radiating the above-mentioned qualities, obviously became more personally congruent with the image of resident expert and would also have their existing orientations reinforced.

### Theme Three: Increasing Self-Confidence

This last of the general effects reflected mainly a self-confidence and security in relation to the Resource Teachers' career activities and career aspirations: confidence in the classroom with methods and materials; confidence in communicating student achievement with parents and supervisory personnel; confidence about job security and prospects for advancement or mobility; confidence that the peer consulting experience would enhance their credibility

in the eyes of present and future employers; and confidence that the experience would increase the demand for their services.

Some respondents also felt that they were now more confident in themselves; in general sorts of ways: more confident in dealing with people in general and more confident in their own general administrative capabilities arising largely from the broadened perspective of seeing others work.

The increased self-confidence was probably, at least partially, a result of the effects described in the previous two themes; however, the self-confidence in turn generated a willingness to open up and explore, thus broadening personal perspectives. The positive feelings associated with confidence fueled the feelings of fulfilment and actualization. Confidence is obviously a factor in more effective classroom performance, fulfilling the role of resident expert, showing a desire to reach out and maintain contacts with others, and to be reinforced in one's own existing orientations.

#### Hiatus

Effects described in the following four themes are more specific in nature and seem to grow out of impacts generated by the effects reflected in the previous three general themes. The following summary and discussion of the specific effects reveals the relationships between each one and its relative counterparts.

#### Theme Four: Improving Classroom Teaching

The respondents reported a more positive perception of their own classroom teaching behaviors after the experience. The increased knowledge about resources and methods and a greater understanding of the curriculum as a whole were significant contributors. The self-confidence generated by the whole experience also contributed to the improved classroom performance. Once the Resource Teachers had experienced what they perceived as improved teaching, this in turn contributed to the fulfilment of the higher level needs. When students, other teachers, parents, and supervisory personnel began to share this perception of quality teaching, the step for the Resource Teachers to be viewed as resident experts was much smaller.

#### Theme Five: Becoming Resident Expert

There was concurrence among the respondents that their Resource Teacher experience has resulted in them being perceived by others as the resident social studies expert ever since the Project. They were called upon by other teachers, central office personnel, and for some, other community groups. This phenomenon was attributable to their broadened perspectives, knowledge and experience, their image as a "master teacher", their radiance of self-confidence, and their contacts with other social studies experts established during their Resource Teacher experience. The role of resident expert would then



contribute to self-fulfilment and self-worth among the Resource teachers themselves. Overall this role seemed to be a very reinforcing one for the Resource Teachers. Some respondents reported negative fallouts such that other teachers behaved jealously toward them and that they were sometimes expected to teach any level of social studies, whether or not they enjoyed that particular course.

#### Theme Six: Maintaining Positive Contacts

In their term as Resource Teachers, the respondents made many contacts and acquaintances with other people: teachers, other Resource Teachers, Alberta Education personnel, and local jurisdiction central office personnel. The respondents indicated that, among these contacts, many of the positive ones have been maintained up to the present. This situation was a direct fallout of the broadened personal perspective and opportunity to meet and interact with these people. Exchanges with these contacts gained the respondents new knowledge and ideas, which in turn contributed to improved classroom teaching, which in turn fostered self-confidence, self-fulfilment, the role of expert, and the reinforcing of their own inner perspectives.

#### Theme Seven: Reinforcing Existing Orientations

Some of the respondents were reluctant to give their peer consulting experience full credit for some changes or impacts in their lives. They did, however, acknowledge their experience in the Project as contributing to these

impacts or as reinforcing beliefs, behaviors, and orientations they already had. The combined impact of all the other effects would probably contribute to this reinforcement and conversely, this reinforcement would contribute to more confidence, a good feeling about oneself, and a willingness to explore and experiment with innovations in the classroom.

### CONCLUSIONS

The following comment, made by one of the respondents, provides a fitting focus for the conclusion section:

In retrospect, or even at the time, I had some questions about what actual impact I was having on what was happening (as a result of the Project) and I suppose it had some positive effect on other people. The only thing I am sure about, in retrospect, was at the time it was having a heck of an impact on me as an individual - far more than on others.

This comment adequately captures the magnitude of the effect sustained by the Resource Teachers as a result of their experience in the Social Studies In-Service Project.

There are two main conclusions arising from this study: one, that there has been a very positive effect on the Resource Teachers as a result of their experience in the Project; and two, that the findings are credible and dependable, judging from the content of existing literature relative to the subject. The following sub-sections will present a detailed discussion of each conclusion.

### Positive Effects

Aside from a few minor disenchantments, the findings of this research overwhelmingly indicate that the Resource Teachers' experience as peer consultants has had a positive effect on their professional and personal lives. This effect has indeed influenced the way they behave and how they relate to and interact with their environments up to the present - and will likely continue to influence them in the future.

As a result of the respondents' experience, they now exhibit the following positive qualities:

1. They have an increased knowledge and understanding of the administration and politics of education beyond the classroom sphere.
2. They have an increased knowledge and understanding of social studies curriculum, resources, and teaching methodologies.
3. They have an increased awareness of what other teachers are doing in classrooms and how it is being done.
4. They have gained a sense of self-fulfilment and inner reward that has motivated and encouraged them up to the present. Ongoing effects from the experience continue to fuel the fulfilment of these higher level needs, i.e. resident expert, ongoing contacts, and improved teaching.
5. They have become more confident in themselves, not only in matters relating to education but also in other areas of their lives. Most respondents indicated higher career

aspirations and some even experienced career changes as a combined result of confidence, awareness, expertise, and credibility gained during the Project.

6. They perceive themselves as better teachers now than they were before the peer consulting experience.

7. They are perceived by others within and sometimes without their jurisdictions as experts in social studies affairs.

8. They maintain professional development contacts acquired with other Resource Teachers, teachers, and other educational personnel during the Project.

9. They found that the mental stimulation of their experience often reinforced orientations they already had, thus confirming to them their own competence and self-worth.

10. All of these qualities seem to work together in a dynamic way, making the respondents generally more well rounded, self-fulfilled, happy, and competent in their educational pursuits.

One might conclude by adding that the combined influence of these multi-faceted effects has left the school jurisdictions, teachers, students, and communities as the prime beneficiaries reaping the final rewards. People with these qualities cannot help but be attributes to the efficient and effective administration of education.

#### Credibility and Dependability

In an inductive research such as this one, it is important to return to the literature after data analysis to

check whether the emerging themes are either supported or refuted by it. In the case of this exploratory study, there was no existing literature on actual long term effects sustained by peer consultants as a result of the peer consulting experience; however, there was a good deal of literature and theory that was indirectly related to the findings, the dynamic interaction of the effects, and the conclusions.

It is this researcher's conclusion that these sources help confirm the credibility and dependability of the findings and conclusions generated in this study. The following sub-sections will relate relevant literature or theory sources to the respective results of this research.

Efficacy of peer-based consulting. As was noted in Chapter II, the concept of peer-based consulting in staff-development programs has been proven workable and effective. The findings of this research would contribute additional credibility to that claim. One might even argue that the efficacy of the approach is due in part to the positive effects sustained by the peer consultants themselves.

MacKay and Doherty (1982:60), in their evaluation of the Social Studies In-Service Project, reported that some of its side effects were the positive and negative effects on the Resource Teachers. This assessment, done during and immediately after the Project, indicated the following self-benefits perceived by the Resource Teachers at the time (MacKay and Doherty, 1982: 78,81,82): 1) Opportunity to

meet, interact with, work with, and learn from other professionals in Education System; 2) Increased knowledge and understanding of Social Studies curriculum and instruction; 3) Increased personal skills and growth; 4) Professional growth; 5) Improved teaching skills; 6) Status and potential for career advancement; 7) Change of pace from teaching; 8) Awareness of and sensitivity to teacher concerns; 9) Renewed respect for people in the teaching profession; and 10) Opportunity to assist other teachers:

These findings are congruent with those of this research, the only difference being that the long term effects display a maturation that has brought many of the initial effects to fruition; that is, as indicated in the ten conclusions of the previous section.

This research revealed no significant long term negative effects whereas MacKay and Doherty (1982) did cite some at the time. This can be explained by the nature of these negative effects, all being such that they were connected to the actual processes of the Project. Once it was finished, these negative influences were removed and the positive effects were left to mature and cause growth in the Resource Teachers over the long term. The following negative effects were cited by MacKay and Doherty (1982:79,83): 1) Time (long working hours and unrealistic deadlines); 2) Lost contact with pupils in own school; 3) Uncompensated costs; 4) Disadvantages to teachers and students when taking over class again; 5) Loss or fear of loss regarding re-assignment after term as Resource Teacher

ends; 6) Frustration with dual role as teacher and Resource Teacher; 7) Loss of sleep; 8) Passive resistance of some teachers and negative attitudes of administrators; and 9) Inadequate Resource Teacher training.

Human needs and motivation. The second most predominant finding of this study was that the Resource Teachers' experience with its ongoing effects has fulfilled their higher level psychological needs. Pansegrau (1983:159), researching teacher perspectives on in-service education, found that teachers involve themselves in in-service activities to meet various needs within themselves. "The value of a particular in-service activity is determined by the individual, his needs at that moment in time and whether the activity has satisfied these needs" (Pansegrau, 1983:160). Leithwood and MacDonald (1981:108) had similar findings. Their research was geared toward the reasons given by teachers for curriculum choices. The results indicated again that teachers were motivated by the desire to fulfil certain higher level needs.

MacKay and Doherty (1982:72) found the following reasons for Resource Teachers accepting their job in the Project: 1) Change of pace (need for a change); 2) Challenge - excitement; 3) Learning opportunities; 4) Desire and competence to help implementation of curriculum; 5) Opportunity to meet, work and learn from other teachers; 6) Interest in Social Studies and new curriculum; 7) Personal and professional growth; 8) Unique experience (variety); 9) Potential for career and/or advancement; 10) Commitment to

new curriculum; 11) Need for in-service; 12) To be involved in Project; and 13) To improve own teaching. It might be noted that these reasons reflect higher level needs, and that the findings of this research show that most of the above-mentioned needs were fulfilled in the long term.

Findings in this research also revealed that some respondents felt increased motivation as a result of their needs being fulfilled. This coincides with elements of Etzioni's theories on organizational types and compliance types and motivational theories of Herzberg, Alderfer, and Maslow. Hoy and Miskel (1982:39) stated that educational organizations usually fall into Etzioni's classification of "normative organizations" that is, ones populated by professionals, usually working self motivated in isolation from other teachers, administrators, or supervisors. Weick (1982:673) agreed calling schools "loosely coupled organizations". Etzioni called the involvement displayed by employees in normative organizations "moral commitment" (Hoy and Miskel, 1982:37).

Herzberg, Alderfer, and Maslow agree in their theories that this type of organization has most members being motivated by the fulfilment of their higher level needs (Hoy and Miskel, 1982:151; Schein, 1980:86).

Other theories. The results of this research also revealed some relevant connections with other theories.

The dynamic and complex interrelationships among the effect themes fits very well with the "complex man" assumption in Sergiovanni's (1980:80) contingency theory;



that is, that the inner motivations and mental processes of man are: complex and variable; varying from situation to situation; interacting as a result of needs and experiences; in a constant state of flux; and impossible to be correctly described in rigid oversimplified theories.

Also, the seventh effect theme - reinforcing of existing orientations - fits with Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (Ryckman, 1982:8); that is, people tend to seek out situations where their behavior can be comfortably compatible with their existing orientations. This perhaps suggests that the people selected as Resource Teachers were more likely to sustain positive effects because their existing orientations were already compatible with the behaviors necessary to conduct a successful in-service program. The reasons cited by MacKay and Doherty (1982:72) for Resource Teachers accepting the role of in-service consultants would seem to support this claim.

Conclusion. Based on the research and theory reviewed in the preceding sub-sections, one might conclude that the findings of this research are credible and dependable. The process of literary triangulation has shown the findings to be consistent with contents of other research and theory.

## GENERATION OF THEORY

Whereas the preceding sub-sections related the findings of this research to other theory, this section will present a grounded theory based on these findings. One of the main objectives of this study was to generate a grounded theory encompassing the cases assessed. Glaser and Strauss (1978:53) and Burgess (1982:210) agreed that grounded theory should be central to the qualitative research process.

Process

Smith (1974:18) stated that a theoretical model consists of two or more interrelated propositions, a proposition containing two concepts in cause/effect relationship, and a concept being an abstraction representing a class of events - effect themes in the case of this study. Baldamus (1982:218) outlined a two part operation for sociological theorizing: 1) the perpetual reorganization and the increasing restructuring of symbols representing the core meaning of conceptual elements existing in the framework of the research and 2) the seeking out of available conceptual frameworks that have proved to be clarifying in other contexts or have become established by usage. He then suggested that a process of "double fitting" (Baldamus, 1982:221) be employed whereby the meaning symbols of conceptual elements and the chosen

framework or combination of frameworks are both reorganized and restructured to create a suitable fit. He concluded that it may be necessary to invent a conceptual framework within which to organize the emerging conceptual symbols.

The perpetual reorganization and restructuring Baldamus referred to was very much a part of this study throughout the data analysis process. The development of an appropriate conceptual framework within which to classify the concepts was the main function of the theorizing process.

Glaser (1982:226) distinguished between substantive and formal grounded theory:

By SUBSTANTIVE THEORY we mean theory developed for a substantive or empirical area of sociological inquiry - such as patient care, race relations, professional education, geriatric lifestyles, delinquency, or financial organizations. By FORMAL THEORY we mean theory developed for a formal or conceptual area of sociological inquiry - such as status passage, stigma, deviant behavior, socialization, status congruency, authority and power, reward systems, organizations, or organizational careers.

Both types of theory can be called middle range in that they fall between the minor "working hypotheses" of everyday life and the "all inclusive" grand theories (Glaser, 1982:226).

"Substantive and formal theories exist on conceptually ordered distinguishable levels of generality, which differ only in terms of degree" (Glaser, 1982:226).

These distinctions make it clear that the grounded theory generated as a result of this research is substantive. The focus of the study and the nature of the

findings and conclusions are too specific to meet the demands of formal theory. However, as Glaser (1982:225) described, this theory could be combined with other substantive theory in the formulation of the more general formal theory. Glaser (1982:226), suggested that substantive theory can be generated in the following manner. Translated to this context: focus on the substantive area - effects on Resource Teachers as a result of their job experience, and make a comparative analysis between or among groups within the same substantive area - the Resource Teachers who served as respondents in this study.

#### A Substantive Theory

The following substantive theory was developed utilizing a combination of processes as outlined by Smith (1974), Glaser and Strauss (1978), Baldamus (1982), and Glaser (1982) in the previous section. The model is entitled: Peer-Based Consulting Effects on Consultants. In concurrence with Smith (1974), it is constructed of a series of interrelated propositions.

#### Proposition one:

Service as peer consultant causes broadened personal perspectives, fulfilled psychological needs, and increased self-confidence.

#### Proposition two:

Broadened perspectives, fulfilled needs, and increased confidence converge and combine to reinforce each other and cause improved classroom teaching, role as resident

expert, maintenance of positive contacts, and reinforced existing personal orientations.

Proposition three:

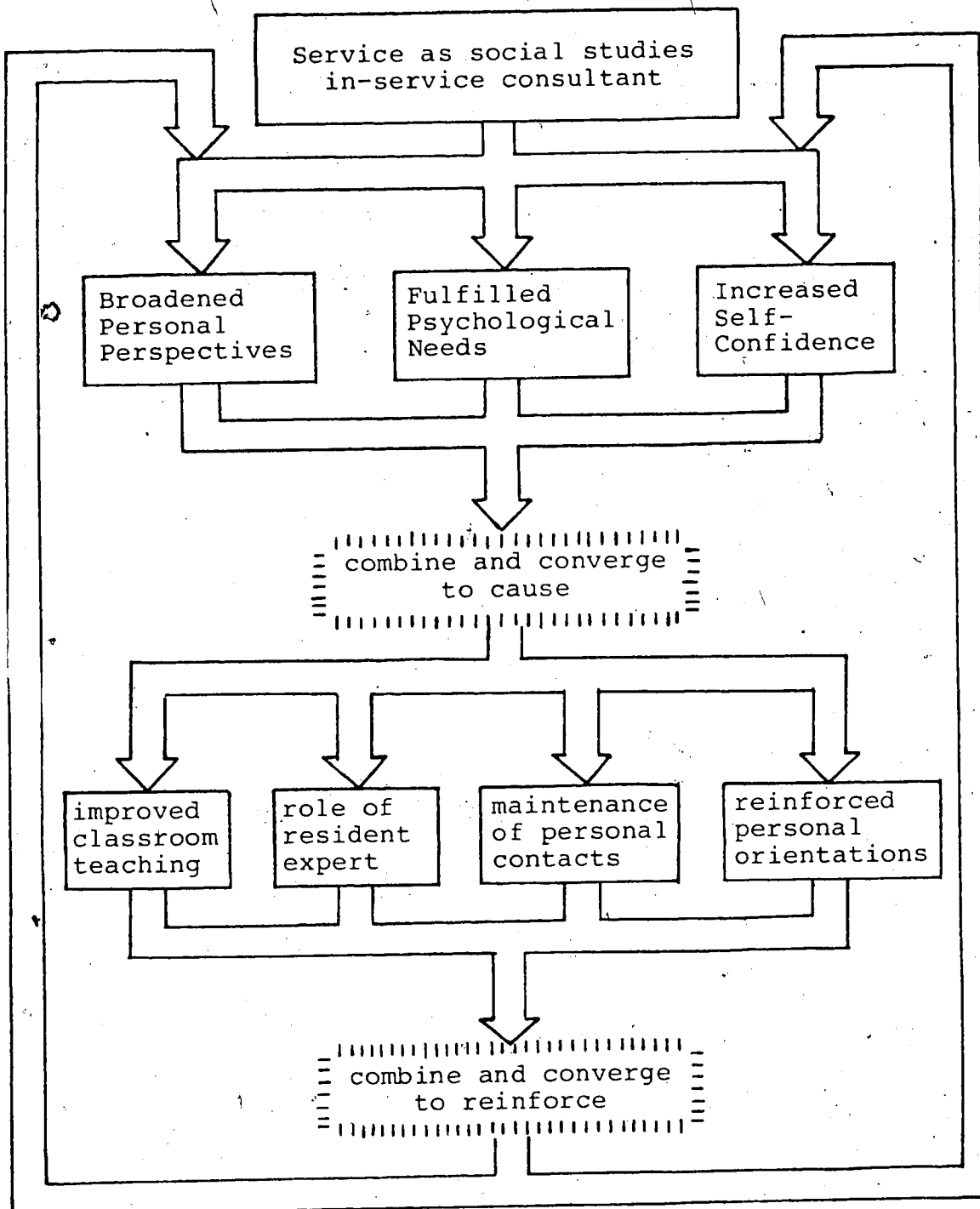
Improved teaching, role as expert, maintenance of contacts, and reinforced orientations combine and converge to reinforce each other and broadened perspectives, fulfilled needs, and increased confidence.

Proposition four:

The complexities of human nature and situational contingencies cause a dynamic and complex interrelationship and interdependency between broadened perspectives, fulfilled needs; increased confidence, improved teaching, role of expert, maintenance of contacts, and reinforced orientations.

Figure 2, "A Theoretical Model of Peer-Based Consulting Effects on Consultants" presents a graphic illustration of the substantive theory as outlined in the preceding propositions. This graphic illustration was constructed following the guidelines and procedures as outlined in Smith (1974). It has, included within it, all of the key concepts and relationships revealed in the findings and conclusions of this study.

Figure 2: A Theoretical Model of Peer-Based Consulting Effects on Consultants



## IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this section is to discuss some implications arising from the research results and to make some appropriate recommendations to the province, school systems, administrators, and teachers.

### Staff Development

It would seem the main implication arising from this study is that peer-based consulting should be used as much as possible in in-service staff development programs. The very positive self-enhancing and program-enhancing effects sustained by the peer consultants underscore this suggestion. In a period of time when there is strong pressure for educational accountability - curriculum quality, teacher quality, administrator quality, and school system quality - it would seem that universal and ongoing in-service staff development programs are one of the only viable methods of attaining sought after quality improvements. The recent inclusion of an in-service policy in the provincial Program Policy Manual (Alberta Education, 1984a, 1984b), as discussed in Chapter I, would imply that Alberta Education is moving in that direction.

### Recommendations

The above scenario raises some implications for various stakeholders in the educational field. In the following

sub-sections these implications will be stated in the form of recommendations to these groups.

Provincial education departments. Judging from the findings of this study and literature reviewed throughout, it would seem that provincial and/or state education departments should seriously consider the use of planned and organized peer-based consulting for introducing innovations and changes or for maintaining and improving educational qualities. These programs could be province or state wide as in the case of the Alberta Education Social Studies In-Service Project (Alberta Education, 1981).<sup>o</sup> Alternatively, as in the Jefferson County (Colorado) Science Curriculum Implementation Project (Fullan, 1982), the programs could be regional, based on perceived needs in selected areas.

Further, it is recommended that these programs be planned, organized, and implemented in harmony with the literature on educational change and the evaluations of past peer-based programs.

School systems. The success of peer-based in-service programs, as documented by MacKay and Doherty (1982) and The Texas Research and Development Center (Fullan, 1982:170), would imply the local jurisdictions should organize their own peer-based programs to meet their district wide or regional needs. The educational climate in Alberta today adds an urgency to this recommendation. The same caution, regarding literature and evaluation studies, extended to the departments apply to the school systems.



Administrators. One of the negative effects noted by this research and MacKay and Doherty (1982) was that some administrators were indifferent and sometimes even resistant to the implementation of the peer-based program. It would seem that well organized and supported peer-based in-service programs would make the administrators job easier in the long run. Therefore administrators should encourage, support, and even initiate the use of peer consultants in in-service staff development programs. Again, this group must adhere to the methodologies already proven effective.

Teachers. The literature has shown that teachers are the greatest beneficiaries in successful peer-based programs. They should therefore support them, encourage them, and cooperate with the colleagues who are acting as peer consultants. As revealed in the literature review, research has also shown that when teachers do seek help, it tends to be from peers, thus it should be a natural process. Teachers should also accept opportunities to serve as peer consultants, the rewards of which are well worth the added work, commitment, and responsibility.

Researchers. There is a need for further research in the area of peer-based consulting. A study encompassing a larger sample of the 125 Resource Teachers should be done in replication of this research. As well, other similar peer-based programs should be evaluated much as MacKay and Doherty (1982) evaluated the Social Studies In-Service Project. A study might also be done, in light of Levinson's Adult Development Theory, investigating the differences in

peer consulting effects between people in the various adult development stages.

#### CONCLUSION

Fullan (1982:ix) concluded: "how to get new educational programs to work in practice has increasingly frustrated and mystified those involved in education over the last two decades." He continued, stating that in most cases the outcome of attempted improvements have at best been marginally successful and all too often the situation is worsened. His recipe for success is that "if change attempts are to be successful, individuals and groups must find meaning concerning what should change as well as how to go about it" (Fullan, 1982:ix).

Finding meaning for all involved parties implies communication between their subjective realities. The collective subjective realities must be individually modified by consensus to become one objective reality. Only then does the proposed program have a chance of successful implementation. This type of communication mandates the use of qualitative research methods on the part of planners. In-depth interviews or open-ended questionnaires must be administered to a representative sample of stakeholders to assess their subjective realities so they can be accounted for. It is the hope of this researcher that administrators of change begin to consistently utilize these methods.

In terms of in-service staff development, it would seem that a well planned peer-based approach might increase the chances of programs being successfully implemented. Dawson (1978:51) stated that in-service programs must "confront teachers at their own level of perception of reality." This is much easier to do when utilizing a large number of peer leaders in a program. Fenstermacher and Berliner (1983:17-18) added that in-service programs must have the dimensions of worth, merit, and success from all stakeholder viewpoints. They agreed that heavy peer support and leadership only enhanced the dimensions.

The findings of this research and the literature reviewed in conjunction with it seem to imply that positive effects of peer-based consulting on the consultants, the recipients, and the planners would make this approach a viable one for immediate and massive implementation. Are you listening? - teachers, administrators, school boards, and governments?!!

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
RELEASE FORM

APPENDIX A  
RELEASE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
voluntarily consent to participate in an interview with Hal Kluczny, a master's candidate in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta.  
The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I understand that anything I say will be treated as confidential. The information given by me will be used solely for research purposes and all identifying information will be removed. I also agree to all the interview being recorded on tape with the understanding that the tapes will be erased when the research project is complete.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE



## APPENDIX B

THE EFFECT OF PEER CONSULTING ON THE CONSULTANTS:  
AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

The literature on human behavior suggests that our experiences have certain effects on our lives. Many of these effects may have long term implications for us. The purpose of this questionnaire is to explore the effects of your experience as a peer consultant Resource Teacher in the Alberta Social Studies In-Service Project of 1981-82. The following focus questions are designed to provide a guide for your responses:

1. How did your experience as a peer consultant affect you?
2. How has that effect manifested itself in you presently:
  - (a) in terms of your career?
  - (b) in terms of your personal outlook and behavior?

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(an additional eight lined response pages included in original)

APPENDIX C

STEP ONE: INITIAL THEMES DEVELOPED FROM  
DATA ANALYZED ON EACH RESPONDENT

## APPENDIX C

STEP ONE: INITIAL THEMES DEVELOPED FROM DATA  
ANALYZED ON EACH RESPONDENT

## RESPONDENT # ONE

1. More confidence in self..
2. Broadened personal horizons.
3. Better known in educational community.
4. Positive contacts with other educators.
5. Higher career expectations.
6. Ego building, satisfying, and self-fulfilling.
7. Became known as resident expert.
8. Reinforced beliefs.

## RESPONDENT # TWO

1. Improved classroom teaching.
2. Broadened awareness of curriculum.
3. More sharing and interaction with others.
4. Self-fulfilment.
5. Positive and ongoing contacts with other educators.
6. Broadened personal perspectives - teachers and systems.

## RESPONDENT # THREE

1. A refreshing and welcome change.
2. An ego boost.
3. Positive interactions with other consultants.
4. General overview of social studies curriculum.
5. Became known as resident expert.
6. Broadened personal perspectives.
7. Self-confidence in career related areas.
8. Positive and ongoing contacts with other educators.

## RESPONDENT # FOUR

1. General overview and perception of curriculum.
2. Created desire to share with others.
3. Overcame insecurities.
4. Broadened personal perspectives.
5. Positive interaction with others.
6. Aware of new career possibilities.
7. Gained personal confidence.
8. Refreshing break - out of a rut.
9. Sense of power and importance.
10. Reinforced existing orientations.
11. Improved classroom teaching.
12. Personal development.
13. Ego building.

## RESPONDENT # FIVE

1. Broadened personal perspectives.
2. Gained personal knowledge.
3. Self-fulfilment.
4. Higher personal profile.
5. Greater motivation for career advancement.
6. Became known as resident expert.
7. Gained feeling of security.
8. Improved classroom teaching.
9. Positive contacts with other consultants.

B

APPENDIX D

STEP TWO: SYNTHESIZED COMBINATION  
OF THEMES FROM ALL RESPONDENTS

## APPENDIX D

STEP TWO: SYNTHESIZED COMBINATION  
OF THEMES FROM ALL RESPONDENTS

1. Reinforcing of existing orientations.
2. Broadening of personal perspectives - curriculum and teachers.
3. Becoming known as resident expert.
4. More self-confidence.
5. Maintenance of positive contacts.
6. Fulfilment of higher level needs.
7. Higher personal profile.
8. Improved classroom teaching.
9. Getting out of a rut.
10. Increased job security.
11. Peer-based consulting as a career reference.
12. Increased desire to share with others.

APPENDIX E

STEP THREE: FINAL MAIN THEMES

SUBSUMING ALL OTHERS



## APPENDIX E

## STEP THREE: FINAL MAIN THEMES

## SUBSUMING ALL OTHERS

1. Broadening Personal Perspectives.
2. Fulfilling Psychological Needs.
3. Increasing Self-Confidence.
4. Improving Classroom Teaching.
5. Becoming Resident Expert.
6. Maintaining Positive Contacts.
7. Reinforcing Existing Orientations.

together, the whole school--- it's going to be a problem... it is not worth it. You have to be able to get along, and work, enjoy it, have some fun in your job, but not if you're uptight and worried all the time, you've got to watch what you say, and there's conflict; I'd get out and I'd suggest to anybody else in that situation to leave; it's not worth it really.

One assistant principal, when frustrated about the lack of communication between the principal and himself, became assertive with the principal in order to improve the situation:

I really felt that I had to get to know him and he had to get to know me, because I really don't think he was utterly convinced that: a) I could teach, b) I could be a vice principal. So it took us until about November to get on the right track, like we weren't even discussing things. And one day I just thought to myself, this is crazy, I don't know what's going on in the school. I said to him, "We need to meet on a weekly basis and discuss what's coming up and discuss staff meetings so I know..." It has become a really good time where we sit down and discuss what's happening, who's doing what, what we should do in the staff meeting, what the agenda should be, what kind of things --- like, he shares all the principal kinds of things that come across his desk, the information they get as principals -- they get all sorts of really interesting information that I never get to see unless he chooses to share it. And he xeroxes it now and leaves it on my desk, which I felt was a real positive thing because they don't have to do that. That was probably the biggest breakthrough that he and I had and I think it was about that time that he thought, hey, that class is shaping up, because he knew it (my class) was a difficult group.... so that started to reassure him...

This person transfers to different schools to gain the desired experience:

One of the reasons I left that school was that I thought I was particularly lacking in that area (budget)... the principal's past experience with budgeting in the school was that it was best that he do it all himself, and I didn't think that he would be opening up totally in the next one year... I thought I could learn the finances someplace else, that's why I moved here...

I move around because I like to take what one principal can give to me, and learn from them, and what they're not strong at I can move to another principal, and learn what they're strong at, until I am able to be a principal, but as I move more and more, I find there's more and more things I don't know about. But maybe that should be identified to people.

This person felt that at this level, the onus for professional development is on the individual:

There have not been ongoing training sessions, but that is not to say that there are not things that you can avail yourself of. You can go to special sessions, usually those things are provided at conventions. A lot of the onus, once you reach the position, is upon yourself, to avail yourself of different kinds of inservicing, to read--- we have a good professional library... as well as other organizations you can belong to that provide leadership training. Then you can always upgrade yourself by taking university courses. The primary onus is on yourself.

#### Self-evaluation of Readiness for Promotion

Assistant principals often referred to the areas in need of further training and experience in determining their degree of readiness for promotion. Budget, teacher

appraisal, and effective teaching strategies were key concerns.

The need for training in budget and teacher appraisal was indicated:

Realizing how much more I need to know before I become a principal, that's one of the things, not having worked with the budget, and especially teacher appraisal, I am going to have to take some courses on that type of thing, otherwise I am not going to be able to do a job as well as I would like to do. If I applied for a principalship next year and got it, I'd do the job, but, I didn't apply this year and I don't know whether I will apply next year. I don't think I'm ready.

Teacher effectiveness and more university administration courses:

Before I become a principal, I've got to learn more about teacher effectiveness, helping good teachers become better, helping teachers who are competent become more competent, helping teachers who are not competent become competent, and building skills for helping those who are not competent and probably never will be competent find something else that they can do. That's number one. I'm still not 100% sure that I will be able to handle the finances, that's only going to come through practice. I will probably in the next little while, go back and get a masters degree in educational administration. The more I learn the more I see there is to learn. Those are the basic things that I think I have to learn before I think I will be ready, and then if I apply and don't get it, I will be really disappointed, and think maybe I should have applied two years ago and get myself known.

Budget and more administration courses:

I do have some administrative classes from the university, which I think are important and I'd like to have more than I have. But it's a matter of learning what you have to do. In our system, budget is a terribly big burden for any principal. If you went straight from a classroom to being a principal, you wouldn't know where to start. There are so many hours of work, forms, formulas; it's just terrible. I wouldn't be ready to be a principal next year. I have helped the principal this year, with budget, hopefully I will take over more next year, just learn.

Budget:

I think I have done just about everything in every role that the principal has this year at some time, when he has been away. I think I am learning about the whole thing; some areas I have had more experience in than others, and the budget is one where I do feel I need the practice. I haven't worked very much with parent liason groups, not because I'm not interested, the meetings are on the same night as A.T.A. so I just can't be there.

I wanted to, and I wanted to this year and I couldn't because of time constraints again. The one thing that I have not been able to do in this school as an assistant principal, is to actually work with the dollars and cents of the budget. I have been in on the developing goals, objectives, priorities, whatever, but where it actually comes to costing those priorities out and doing the paperwork... going through the budget manual... that part I haven't done.

Generally speaking, yes, (this has been a training ground and I could assume a principalship) but the only big question mark is the dollar and cents... when you step into that place in the fall, you really have to know what you are doing when it comes to the budget.

I don't feel confident enough to do the job (of principal). He does a lot more PR for example than I ever do... the whole budget thing scares me; the writing of newsletters and things like that, I don't like; the running of the staff meeting is not something that I would enjoy; so right now I'm just not ready for anything like that.

Not ready yet for having to make the final decisions:

I am not really a pusher, a go-getter, and people have asked me, "You have been an assistant principal for so long, why don't you apply for a principalship?" They have suggested that, "Hey, you could handle it all right." I say, "Well, maybe I could, but I am still learning, even though I have been an assistant principal for fourteen years." I call myself a slow learner in some areas. I am comfortable, and if I get bored or in a rut then I will consider it. But here, the principal gives me enough responsibility and enough authority if you want to call it that, where I am basically almost like the principal at times... But then there's final decisions that bother me, they say I'm an old softie at times, but I figure, thank goodness, (principal), you're the principal, you've got to make that decision after we have talked about it. I find that very hard and maybe someday I will have to learn how to do it. But I'm not ready for that right now.

More knowledge of curriculum:

The curriculum bothers me. If I ever became a principal, I would have to check and double check... I try to keep up with them but it's not my forte to read all these pamphlets that come in...

More knowledge of learning disabilities:

I am starting to feel that I need to learn about learning disabilities, because of the

integration of the handicapped... if you're going to be a good administrator you have to understand more about learning disabilities than I know about... a gap in my education, in everybody's education unless you take those courses... I do feel that need, that gap in my education.

One person feels that the more they learn, the more they see there is to learn:

I am leaving here at the end of the year, knowing that I am less prepared than I ever was to be a principal and that's not a reflection on her, it's a compliment to her, because she's taught me that there are more things than I realized about becoming a principal.

#### IV. A JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

When describing what the job is like, the assistant principals referred to the constant variety; the interruptions; the need to be flexible, to expect the unexpected, to be organized, and to get along with people---to be a "jack-of-all-trades." They identified the rewards associated with the position, as well as the frustrations. They identified the personal characteristics and qualifications that would be required to do the job in view of what it is like.

### What the Job is Like

The assistant principals all reported that the job is dynamic, interesting, and varied:

Jack-of-all-trades? Master of none?

Everyday is different.

But I enjoy it. It's challenging, it's interesting, you never know what's going to happen.

It's a very dynamic job. I really like it. I really enjoy it.

It is routine, but it's not. So many other things happen in a day.

It's kind of a nice position. You're not the principal who has the final decision, sometimes that's scary, if you're stuck with the final decision that affects so many lives, and yet you have enough decision making that you feel good about it and that's the part that I like.

Well, it's interesting, if you don't like to get into a rut. You never know what's going to happen, and you can plan to sit and mark tests or do a project on something new one morning and it might be a week before you can get back to it... You have to work closer with the whole staff... you have to be known to the kids... you have to know about the whole school, where the furnaces are, where the power is; the caretakers are here, but the meter man will come in and want to know where's this, that, and the caretaker is not around. You have to know how the school runs, mechanically, electrically... when maintenance



people come I like to go with them and find out what's wrong so that I would know the next time... you have to learn to get along with central office staff... the parents, both the principal and I deal a lot with parents; you have to know when to be firm and when to back off... you have to learn how to do a lot of paperwork... It's an interesting job. As I say, if you want to get into a rut, don't become an administrator, because you never know what's going to happen.

I am very pleased. I would not want to do anything else unless it was to be a principal. Have my feelings changed? Yes, they probably have; things look differently viewing the role than actually doing the role; so I'm sure some of my feelings have changed, but not my liking of the position. I haven't been disappointed. It has lived up to my expectations and probably more than my expectations. It has also been more frustrating than I expected it to be sometimes. No, I wouldn't change it.

#### Hours of Work

In describing what their job and their work life is like, many assistant principals elaborated on their work hours:

I am usually at my desk at seven in the morning; I'm a morning person... I always try to have specific plans one or two days ahead of time for my class because I never know when I'm going to be interrupted. I have to be prepared to not be in the classroom, today for instance, the principal was unexpectedly away; he sent a sub in for himself; the sub went into my class, and I came into here... try to do some marking at noon hour and again after school... if I don't have a meeting after school, I usually go home about four or four-thirty.

I'm not a morning person, so I don't get in here really early. I'll get here about eight-thirty and then I usually leave about five o'clock. As the summer gets closer and I play more golf, that would be five o'clock about three days a week. But from the first of September till about the first of May, my hours are generally eight-thirty to five... four of the five days a week, I am either in the gym supervising lunch for half an hour of the fifty-five minute lunch hour or supervising intermurals... I take very little home. I probably should take more home, but I have a young family and want to spend some time with them... I come back here for two to three hours on Sunday nights, from seven to ten generally, that's where I lay out my plans for the week...

I like to get to school really early. It gives me a chance to gather my wits, plan my day, and I'm a list maker; I write a list of everything that has to be done that day... the principal comes in shortly after I do; we talk about what the day holds... I come about 8:00 a.m. so that gives me about thirty minutes before the students come.

Noon hours could be my own but I choose for it not to be, but I eat with my class (bussed students), which is not normal, but I do anyway because it makes things move a little faster, then I go into the staff room for a little while, just to pick up on what's going on, or what the latest worries are, or what the ups are, and that kind of thing, and then I walk the halls after that... Sometimes I'm here till four-thirty, five, and other days, like today, I intend to rush out, because there's a hockey game on... I like to stay at school until my work is done, rather than take it home... I make good use of my administrative time, I do it all here...

One person noted that in administration, you work until it's done:

That's one thing with administration, you just keep working until it is done, sometimes it continues when you are at home, you get a call, a child has not come home yet... that's the hardest thing to get used to for me because I am a very organized person. I find that my life is very disrupted; you start one job and you have to leave it and go to another job, and then come back to the first thing; you can't be terribly organized, to say that I'm going to work for this long... you can't do that because if someone needs you, they need you.

In describing his hours, this assistant principal shared his philosophy of keeping work hours reasonable and having more to life than just your work:

I like to get here about seven-thirty. I like that half-hour on my own. I get my day organized... at eight the staff start coming in; some come in with a problem; then about eight-thirty I wander into the staff room to see what people are doing and again, you try to read people and see who might be a little up tight... I wander into the halls, see the kids, then go down to the office and make announcements... our classes are over at 3:25 p.m. I help on the computer one day a week at noon and after school. On those days I get out of here at four-fifteen or four-thirty. But usually once the kids are gone and most of the staff is gone, I'm out of here by quarter to four. Once I've done my jaunt around the school, I take off, unless there is something that has to be done... The principal's philosophy is that if it can't be done by then and it has to be done, fine, we will stick around and finish it, but if we can do it early in the morning and during the day, then at quarter to four, why stick around just for the sake of sticking around... I try to organize my time; sitting in the staff room during lunch time for an hour doesn't really appeal to me, I use my lunch hours... I'm not going to spend my whole life teaching, like

some of our staff. I keep telling them that they are going to burn themselves out... I try to stress to them... you have got to have some fun time, go out and do some of the things you want, have a change of pace, but day after day... I couldn't handle that. If I had to do what they do, I would be out of teaching. There's too many things out there that I feel that you've got to--- that's my little sign up there, I look at it every morning--- "You only live once, but if you live right once is enough."

This same person feels that they would change careers if they needed to give up all their free time, even at this middle or later stage of their career:

I try not to work evenings and weekends if I can help it. There's dedication and there's dedication, and if I can get away with it, and I'm doing my job in the time I have allotted for my job--- if I need that time, fine, as long as I don't do night after night after night. If I did, I would seriously consider going back, and even at my age, consider getting something else. I am not the type of person who could handle that.

One assistant principal stated that meetings and involvement in outside activities fill up his time:

I am usually here about eight o'clock, and I usually leave around four-thirty... I don't usually take work home, because I don't have the time... usually I have two to four meetings after school in a week... A.T.A.... community... coach hockey... swim club... liason meetings with the school board... school staff meetings...

Most assistant principals indicated, as this person elaborated, that they start back one or two weeks before

school starts in the fall:

We come back the middle of August; this year it might be a little later, because school doesn't start until after Labor Day... but there's a lot to do, timetables have to be copied out, schedules have to be made, book rooms have to be straightened out, piddly little things... I don't know if I'm required to be here, but how else would I get things done? It's nice. It's a leisurely way of doing things, and it gets done. That's when I do my teaching planning for the year as well. I don't mind coming back at all.

#### Disciplinarian

The assistant principal as disciplinarian is a dominant theme in the literature. These assistant principals report that they do deal with discipline, but that the duty, which they report is not excessive, is shared with the principal:

We work closely together (on discipline). If it is anything to do with the playground and I'm here, I handle it. If it is serious enough to warrant suspension or if it's an incident that we see someone's name repeatedly in the book, then we handle it together; other than that, verbal communication. We keep each other informed.

He does more of the discipline because he is around more than I am, and people are reluctant to take me out of my classroom, and rightly so, because when I am teaching, that is my primary role and must remain that.

Whoever is in the office answers the phone. Whoever is in the office handles the discipline. There's not one bad guy among the administrators. Whoever is there, does it.

It depends who is here and what's going on. I tend to deal with the majority of the minor things... If it's minor the principal and I don't even collaborate. But if it's some major thing... we make notes, talk... but whoever is around and how serious it is...

It's handled by both of us. If something comes up and I am available, and I've got the time, I deal with it. We try to deal with it right on the spot. We have a school wide discipline policy, that I initiated...

One assistant principal stated that although the amount of time spent on discipline has been reduced with the introduction of school-wide discipline programs, discipline is not a big issue because the teachers are good:

At the beginning of the year, there was a lot more discipline. But a lot of people have been working under the same system, so it's really eased itself out a lot. I very seldom deal with a lot of discipline. I think everyone has sort of taken another look, but I also think there weren't a lot of problems to begin with. The teachers are really good teachers.

#### Clerical/Custodial

The assistant principals indicated that clerical and custodial types of duties were minimal and were largely handled by the support staff in the school:

I don't do very much of that (running off sheets, setting up chairs, etc.). Sometimes I change bulletin boards, but that to me is part of the role of a teacher, so that I do. We pretty well have kids doing a lot of those kinds of things, setting up chairs, those

kinds of things. There are some things, like cleaning the gym storage room, sort of keeping an eye on that; I work fairly closely with the facilitator, who comes in once a week, checking the equipment... But basically we've got such good people working in the school, like the caretaker is excellent, the secretary is really good. A lot of the stuff I can do is over and above that, which is really nice.

Not especially (clerical duties), not the second year, the first year, yes, but it was learning those particular things... the biggest rude awakening, all those things that I didn't know how they got done when I was a classroom teacher, I found out who did them! And all the leg work, and clerical things, I did them, but a lot of that changed the second year because I was able to make use of other staff members, sharing those kinds of things, so that I would look over the forms that came in, and anything that caught my eye I would ask about, but there was a lot more passing on to the teachers, the responsibilities as well.

I really don't do, I can't think of what I do that is specifically clerical. Orders come to me, but they have been cleared through the other channels (subject coordinators); I just kind of okay it... I write memos once in a while and that sort of thing, but I don't really think there is much clerical work. There's a lot of action... more in the field kind of action, practical kinds of things.

### Supervision

A few assistant principals have had teacher supervision as part of their responsibilities:

Supervision both of children and of teachers. With supervision of children, I don't go out on supervision. What I do do, as do both of the other administrators, is we constantly

walk the halls, at recess and noon hours, just to have the extra bodies around... make ourselves really visible... Supervision of teachers means going into classrooms to some extent... I make up the supervision schedules, and do some chasing. Supervision of instruction, each one of us look after several areas. I look after language arts and special ed.

This assistant principal tries to keep teacher observation very informal, but still finds it difficult:

Classroom supervision, in the sense of going in and observing teachers, making suggestions for change, or doing write-ups, I don't do those very much, I just do write-ups for myself and keep them on file. The principal does the formal write-ups. When an evaluation has to go into central office, he does those. But part of my job is to go in and make sure that what needs to be done is being done... I try to go into every class at least once. With the new teachers, especially those that we feel need a fair amount of guidance, I've been a lot more times... quite often meet after school, I will make suggestions, help them write up their lesson plans better... I think they probably feel more comfortable with me going in than they do with the boss going in because I try and keep it very informal. In most cases it is really easy to be very positive because there really are some super teachers, but there are some new ones who are a little raw and need some suggestions... it's a very awkward situation; I don't feel comfortable at all, going in and doing that, because there's a good relationship and all of a sudden, here you are going in and you're evaluating. I feel awkward, that's the only part of the job I feel awkward about... it's something that has to be done and that's what I'm paid to do, that's part of it, so I do it; but not something that I do with any degree of relish.

One assistant principal would prefer to go into



teacher's classrooms as another pair of hands:

I would rather spend time in teacher's classrooms as another pair of hands, helping out. That is usually how I go in. We are very welcome in the classroom. Teachers really like to see us; they'd like to see us a lot more. I would say that by and large they don't see us as any kind of a threat in the classroom. Now there may be some who feel that way, but if there are I don't know who they are. We don't do written evaluations based on any of these visits. The principal does the written evaluations. I am not the staff's immediate supervisor, the principal is; so when it comes to written evaluations, he does those. Primarily, the written evaluations would be for permanent certification or someone going from a temporary to a continuing contract or something like that...

#### Rewards

In describing what the job is like, the assistant principals indicated a number of things that contribute to the rewards of the job, that make the job worthwhile.

I would say that feeling of support you get that people think you're all right and that you can make an impact.

Being able to help other people accomplish what they want to accomplish.

One person talked about an incident in which a teacher provided support and positive feedback:

A teacher, who is not a critical person, but the type where, if you get her support, you've really got a lot of support; she doesn't say a lot; she said to me, in front of the principal

and a couple of other people, "You know, I don't what it is, but since you've come to this school, you've really made a difference." I was so surprised, because I didn't think she felt good or bad about me, but I didn't think she felt all that good about me... I was surprised she said it, and that she said it in front of the people she said it.... That really did make a difference for me; all of a sudden I realized, hey, you aren't battling upstream the whole way; some people are noticing that some things are happening.

Helping teachers and being thanked:

Being able to help teachers. Everyday there is some little reward. Just for somebody to say thank you, that helps, it's a reward in itself, so there's lots of little rewards and some big ones.

Positive feedback from parents:

We had our spring concert, which was very successful... we had some phone calls, letters, and comments from parents, that was very rewarding. Every once in a while, you get a call from a parent saying thank you, that is a reward. There are so many rewards, so varied; most of them are small.

Not money:

If you want to do it for money, forget it, unless you are in some place like Ainley or something, where you are getting a horrendous allowance; but don't become an assistant principal or principal if you are looking at the administrative allowance because for the average school it isn't worth it, if that's all you're doing it for.

Being privileged to what is going on in the school:

The rewards aren't anything unless you look for them, like, I took a paycut to come to this school, but the travelling is better, but not the money. I may take another paycut to go to the next school... There's more to this business than I thought there was. One of the things about being a vice principal is that you are privileged to things; you are able to find out about things. You are able to do more things; maybe that's a reward; I don't know.

Successful accomplishment of an unpleasant administrative task:

I was given the choice of appraising that person or not, and I knew it was going to be tough, but I said I'd do it. I did it and it wasn't easy, and unfortunately she resigned. But it was the best thing that happened overall. Yeah, I did a good job on that. And that sticks out in my mind as a tangible reward... The students benefited, the staff benefited, the teacher benefited, will benefit in the long run. But it wasn't pleasant to do.

Seeing a project through from conception to completion:

When you start a project, and you organize it, first of all, the idea is yours, and you plan in your mind, then you plan on paper, then you talk to staff, you put your plan into effect, then finally when it's over, and you can sit back and you realize that it was successful, that you accomplished what you set out to accomplish--- that is a great reward, just knowing that you were able to plan something and bring it to fruition.

Making a difference:

One major thing... we're now going into expressive language, and receptive language... finally got the teachers believing in this

kind of thing; so big changes are happening there; so that really made me feel good because that really was initiated by me. And the second big change is that we have just finished restructuring our report card, and it has fallen into place extremely well, as well; so I'm on a real high right now. I'm extremely tired because we put in a lot of hours.

#### Helping children with problems:

I think the biggest reward I get out of it, dealing with some of the children who have all kinds of problems, academically, socially... you work with them for three or four months... the reward I see is when you see them changing, and they aren't having so much trouble out in the playground... the kid sees it is better this way... he sits and cools off rather than using his fists... The other thing is you work hard to try to get the staff to work as hard as they can together. There's always cliques, but if you can make it a comfortable, and relaxing as possible, staff relationship, then you can just watch and the school just seems to click, click, click; everybody is doing real good. And when you can get something like that going for a month or two...

#### Self satisfaction is a reward:

The highlights are, for me anyway, a self satisfaction with what I'm doing, feeling good about the things that I do and the fact that I have helped to initiate changes. Quite often staff members will say, "That was a super idea," or "Thanks for that piece of advice." Or if I say to someone, "You know you really did a super good job," or "I really like that bulletin board you did," and you see them beam then you know that you've made their day for them. Intangibles; I can't think of a tangible reward. I am not in it for the money. There are a lot of people who are under the impression that administrators make

huge big allowances. The amount of allowance I get is so piddly, I don't think anyone would want to go into it for the money. But it's all the intangible things.

Self satisfaction primarily I guess.

### Frustrations

In describing what the job is like, the assistant principals indicated a number of frustrations.

This person was frustrated because he was not able to make the final decisions, and also because he does not have enough time:

My greatest frustration is the fact that the ultimate decision rests with somebody else, and as much as you may want to do something, if you don't get it passed there, then it doesn't go. And I think that those kind of decisions made, particularly those affecting the people you work with are the hardest to deal with, because you do want to treat people fairly, and I felt that (in one incident) we were painted with the same brush because of the decision that was made unilaterally. Then, my next biggest frustration is that I am dying to do all sorts of things like professional development, or curriculum across the grades, or some sort of program development, and there a) isn't enough time because I'm teaching too much, and b) there is again, this limitation--- like, there seems to be, if you're willing to stretch out and get it, there seems to be money available out there because I had no problem at all in getting what I needed, and there seems to be a lot of people willing to support you if you show a grain of initiative, but if you're working with someone who isn't all that interested in doing it--- like, I'd just like to get the school year over with, it becomes an uphill.

Others felt frustrated by not being able to make final decisions:

As a vice principal my hands are sometimes tied because the principal doesn't view that particular goal, what I want to do or the teacher wants to do, and therefore it does get done. And that's frustrating, but that's his or her professional opinion as well, and maybe in the long run I'll learn that they were right, and a lot of times they are.

There are some things that I can't make a decision on my own and if they come up when the principal isn't here, and I have to wait, that is frustrating.

Not enough time:

I don't have enough time. I need more time... I don't feel that it is ever easy to do two jobs, but I think administrators should teach... you could be a better administrator if you had more time. But having said all that, I think it is quite possible to do both jobs, just making sure that you find the time. You could be better with more time, but everybody could be.

Sometimes I wish I had a little more time to sit down and think, and be more inventive, and make some changes. You get going along in sort of a nice rut...

I like being an assistant principal and I like teaching. I like both aspects of my job. What I find frustrating is that you don't have enough time to do an adequate job of both, particularly when you are working at three-tenths or two-tenths, or something like that. You still have the full brunt of your administrative duties to do; if it's cut back, you just have less time to do it in, plus an

increased teaching load, plus whatever else you're involved in. Sometimes I feel that maybe I should jump one way or the other, either become a full-time teacher and concentrate on that, or go into administration with more time, move to a school where I could get more administrative time.

Not being able to spend enough time with the staff, not being in the classroom enough, getting to know kids. I would like to go into the classroom where you know that a teacher needs extra time, another pair of hands... a few years ago we were able to do some of that, but the assistant principal's time has been cut and cut and cut, now we can't do that kind of thing... it's nice to go in and find out what they are up against... you can teach a class for them, see what their class is like... at the same time you get a feel for what is going on; the teacher feels good about you being in there; they feel good about you; the morale is good... those are the kinds of things that really build staff morale.

However, three assistant principals indicated that although shortage of time was sometimes a frustration, they felt that overall their allotment of administrative time was adequate:

I make good use of my administration time. I don't take it home at all... Yes, I think it's pretty equitable, but then again, I haven't had that much more so I don't know...

I find that very adequate (allotted administrative time)... usually it's balanced off very well... My schedule has not changed much at all, that's partly because I think I do get a generous amount of administration time. Had I less time to do the same duties, yes, I would be spending a lot more of my own time.

This person finds that he can get most administrative things done in his allotted administration time:

Yes, I take very little home...

However, this person indicated that he goes in most Sunday nights for a couple of hours to do his marking and preparation.

Teacher appraisals are frustrating when you are not sure what to look for:

Both (appraisals) caused me a lot of anxiety. It was the first time that I had ever been in someone's class, and my personal feeling is that as much as you try to make these things positive, teachers rightly or wrongly feel that you are looking for something; so I went in probably with more trepidation than the teachers I was observing, because having to write something down, which was something I did not have to do in the first two years; this is the first year I am doing it; I was worried about how I would write things down, what I would look for. I tried to find something from our board about things to look for, appropriate behaviors and strategies that good teachers show, other than that I am just looking for things that I like, which may be just my personal style... I didn't find anything from our board. I talked to a number of people, principals, whether or not there were things available like that... I went to the library... I wish we had things like that: I wish things like Madeline Hunter, and teacher effectiveness programs were more available to principals and assistant principals because I know that appraisal of staff is something that some principals look forward to with an awful lot of trepidation, because they're not trained in the skills. I'm not trained in the skills... I found it very difficult to go into someone's class and



identify things that were not right. It was easy for the people who were excellent teachers; it was just a matter of being specific... tell them this is what you did, this is why it worked and even if they know that, it's nice to be patted on the back... but where I found it difficult was the teacher who was having difficulties... I would like checklists, more information readily available... according to our superintendent and what looks to be the trends, administration is going to be much more involved in appraising (formative) and evaluating (summative).

Teacher appraisals, if not positive, can be very difficult tasks:

The same incident, the appraisal, there were a couple of times that I thought, well, let's carry her for two months and then make sure she doesn't come back here, but then I thought, well no, that's not handling things right. Maybe it's time to just head back to the classroom because I don't like this!

Neglecting excellent teachers:

Some of the other frustrating things, coming to the realization that, like in a class of thirty students, you always have some that are better than the others and some less able. You can get caught in the trap of spending your time with the less able students. And the same thing happens in schools... some excellent teachers doing a tremendous job... you can neglect them.

Lack of funding:

Lack of money is frustrating. I might as well say it--- government grants bother me, but I don't have any control over that; the principals don't have any control over that. It's frustrating to want to do something and

find that you don't have the bucks for it.

Parents can be frustrating:

There are times that dealing with parents becomes very frustrating... we have 99.9% proof that this boy threw a rock and broke a window in the school, and the boy just denies, denies, denies, and changes his story five different times, but Dad says, "My son will never tell a lie." And the frustration of not being able to teach the student to be honest, admit it if he did it...

I got about three nasty calls from parents, not about my students, but about what some teachers had done or somebody had beat up their child on the way home from school, insinuating that it was all the school's fault. But those days don't happen every day fortunately, and there are not many parents like that fortunately...

Sometimes there are unexpected frustrations. You think you are doing something that you think would really help a student and the parents complain, but that happens as a classroom teacher too.

Too much of other people's responsibilities:

Okay, maybe I'll mention that too. The first year I did too much. I did things that were not my responsibility. I took things off the teacher's shoulders, "If you've got any discipline problems, send them down to me." And learned very quickly, that yeah, I got everybody's discipline problems. All of sudden they stopped handling them and that didn't mean the discipline problems went away, but they ceased to be able to handle them and do things that they can do. The second year I changed that a little bit.

### Constant interruptions:

I didn't know there were going to those constant interruptions. I think that's the thing that aggravates me the most are the constant interruptions. I understand that they have to be but if I could change one thing, that is what I would change.

### Not enough communication with the principal:

Another frustration is that sometimes he forgets to tell me something that is going on, and people assume that I know when I don't, and I find that very frustrating... It affects my job so much... I can't be organized if I don't know what is going on. That's one of our problems that we are working on, trying to work out a method so that we communicate everything with each other. Sometimes I do something that surprises him. If we did have a regular time to communicate and we wrote down what we were going to talk about... sometimes I do write a list, and go in and shut the door and say, "Okay, have you got an hour?"

### Small irritations:

Frustrations are just the kind of day I'm having, small things may bug me. Often times it will be people who are not where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be--- that really frustrates me. Or people who are late, that really frustrates me. Or people who forget to do what they are supposed to do. Or if suggestions that have been made for change have not been followed through on. Or not knowing what to do with incorrigible children is very frustrating. Or you've bent over backwards doing things for somebody and they turn around and make a negative comment... sometimes, not very often, but sometimes, it is almost a thankless job... but not once have I ever thought this job was not worth it... only fleeting frustrations... it could get

very frustrating, but I think you've got to not let it get to you.

I wish they'd give me a phone.

Trying to be fair with students, making the best decision:

Lots of times I have to make the final decision... but when you are dealing with personal, kids, their feelings, what is right, what will help the most, I find that the most frustrating possible. I could be a little more aggressive with kids; I could scare them and so on, but I very seldom raise my voice, and sometimes figure, the only way this kid is going to learn is by me raising my voice and... then I figure, no, that's not me. That's the most frustrating thing, dealing with kids' emotions when you've got them in a discipline type thing... dealing with the staff is frustrating sometimes, but nothing like dealing with the kids. Paperwork, trying to keep up is another frustrating thing but that's part of the job and I don't particularly like a lot of paperwork but it's there... another thing is when you have something planned and you have to get something done and you're trying to work on it and you get interrupted seven or eight times... and your train of thought keeps getting broken, that's frustrating but I accept that... to me the only main frustration is dealing with the kids as persons, when they send five down and you try to get the stories straight... five different stories...

When asked if there was a critical incident in the last month that made the job seem worthwhile, this person indicated a general feeling of low morale as standing in the way of positive feelings:

Not over the last month or so, I don't think. The morale is low in schools, not just our school, every school; subs say the same thing, because there are so many people that are declared surplus, that are worried about their jobs... teachers are getting bombarded in the news continually either by the Department of Education, or by the university, or by the parents, or just by the newspapers in general... about incompetent teachers, intolerant teachers, teacher evaluation. Everybody seems to be kicking teachers lately. You take that plus declining enrolments, greater social problems, all kinds of things like that, teachers feel as though they are under a lot of stress. I think the economy has something to do with it as well. There seem to be greater and greater demands put on teachers as far as all the new curriculum that is being changed, updated... computers... evaluation... maybe it just has something to do with the way we live... Right now, I feel low.

This person indicated that frustrations are minimal and are forgotten by the next day:

I would say three or four times in the last nine or ten years, have I got up in the morning and thought, gee I can't stand this; you know, my mind has been--- oh, I've got this and that to do today, but not to the point where I feel that I don't want to come back. There are nights when I leave here that I feel, this isn't what I want, but you have a relaxing evening, and feel, okay, let's go back and see if you can handle that in a different way so you don't come out so up tight at night. But I would say honestly, three or four times in the last nine or ten years is all I have felt like that.

#### Characteristics For Assistant Principals

When describing what the job is like, a number of

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assistant principals suggested the characteristics that they think would be necessary to be an effective assistant principal.

They need to have a broad vision for education and be a model for others:

I think they have to be able to take on educational leadership. I think they have to be able to look on a school as a larger place. You are a model in your teaching; you are a model in administration, in whatever you are doing. You have to be able to show these people that are your peers that you have something to give, that you have something to offer.

Good educational background, varied teaching experiences, good interpersonal skills, and be a leader in more ways than one:

I would say you need to have a good backing educationally. I think you have to know what's being taught in schools; you can't just know one grade and stop there. You have to have an idea of what's going on; you have to know expectations for many grade levels, or at least for one division, know what to expect from a grade four, grade five, grade six for instance. Maybe you can't know every division but you have to know at least that... you have to have a few teaching experiences... in terms of education and in terms of discipline... I think you really have to have good interpersonal skills. You have to be able to tell people what you want them to do in a nice way. Like this year, with the clerical staff, you can't just go in and say, "Will you put this up for me?" because although you may be entitled to say that, a lot of people can't take someone who's too out front, so you have to be able to get people working for you and then when they get to know you, you can be a little more directive... you have to be able to take on the authority and not wear it as a

heavy authoritarian role but wear it with enough subtlety that you get your point across but that you don't alienate them...

If you're going to be a leader in this school you have to be a leader in more ways than one. I think too, in your personal life you have to be able to model good teaching, fairness, I don't know, those kinds of things that we look to in people who lead other people. I think you have to be on that leading edge, whether it's in your personal life, whatever. I believe in taking in cultural events, going to things... staying abreast of life... be prepared to devote a lot of time...

Good time management skills, a "strong stomach," and someone who wants to be a principal:

Someone who could use their time well. The biggest thing I'm finding is that my time on task is pretty critical. I think even though I indicated to you that the time I'm spending at school is not a great deal different than it was when I was teaching, the burden of responsibility is different. Someone who is going to go into administration had better have a strong stomach; it's not a place for ulcers. Someone who can deal well with the public. Probably someone who hopes to be a principal. I don't know whether I'd advise someone who just wants to be an assistant principal, just to get out of the bunch, and then leave it at that. Because it is such a middle man position. I don't know if that's come through heavy enough or not, but there's some things you can do and accomplish and feel good about, and there are some things that you feel powerless over, you are just kind of in the middle and have no control over and become frustrated with it.

A successful teacher, good with people, creative, and even-tempered:

I think first and foremost (an assistant principal needs to be) a successful teacher;

somebody who likes children; is well organized; has good rapport with parents, with people in general in the district; somebody who is creative, has good ideas and will work to put those ideas to fruition. You have to remain cool in emergencies. You have to be able to take a lot of abuse from parents, sometimes. And you have to be able to take that abuse without losing your cool, and try to calm the parent down...

#### A sense of humor:

One thing that you really need to help you keep your perspective in this job is a sense of humor. It's very important that you see the funny side of some situations because if you didn't, you probably would cry... I'm thinking particularly of the things that are happening in our economy, that are effecting the children's lives... hard to believe that they even exist... pretty important to have that sense of humor, to see the lighter side sometimes, to believe the sense of despair that you feel sometimes.

Someone who exhibits leadership qualities, is good with people, self-confident, and a hard worker;

If they want to get into administration, they should have shown leadership qualities in some way, either taking part in extracurricular activities in the school or working for the Department of Education on evaluation of books, or something where you do something that's outstanding and that's different from everybody else... visibility to get it, then the continuation of the leadership... the ability to handle people is of prime importance... self-confidence, hard work, when I got the job I asked my principal what I should do, he said, "Pay attention to detail." I understand that now, you really have to read the fine print before you jump to any conclusions... you're the boss to an extent, but you're not a dictator; you have to take



other people's viewpoints into account, which you don't have to necessarily do when you're teaching in the classroom, I mean, you're the boss, and you run the show the way you want. When you are an administrator, you have to know or find out what's good for most of the people most of the time... sometimes we have to give up things we feel strongly about because the staff feel strongly the other way, and you've got to be able to do that.

Assertive rather than aggressive; a humanitarian; and diplomatic:

Someone who is not aggressive. I feel an aggressive person is a poor choice. Someone who is assertive but knows when to back off and not necessarily feel that they always have to win. If you have to be a winner all the time, you are going to have nothing but disgruntled staff. Someone who is not afraid to take some risks, who will show initiative... someone who has compassion for kids... you've got to be able to talk, joke and laugh with kids, not be up here where you're next to God. You've got to be able to have a community type school where kids can come to talk to you about just about anything. Sometimes it gets to me but to them it's important, and you've got to be able to talk to kids. Humanitarian, be able to feel for the kids, empathy, do your job, but the rat race some of these kids are in, sometimes, all they need is a touch, a hello. I try to call them by name. Diplomatic, you've got to work with parents, office, staff, and children. You've got to learn to give a little, take a little, compromise where you can... dealing with the people and make them feel good... everybody, the parents, make them feel at home, you watch and the school atmosphere--- it's a pleasure being there. I don't like disharmony, I try to get rid of it.

## V. POTENTIAL OF THE ROLE

The assistant principals had visions of what would best develop the potential of the role. They viewed the position positively, saw it as being essential, and fulfilling a need in the schools. They had suggestions for the optimum development and utilization of the assistant principalship, primarily as a member of an administrative team.

One assistant principal discovered that the position had more potential than was first anticipated:

In some ways I really hadn't thought of it as being a very effective job; I wasn't sure that I could do anything in it. I thought of the job as a little bit better than a teacher, but not really what I really wanted, but now after working in it for --- I realize you can do a lot of good, especially if you work with someone who is willing to give you a little bit of rope. But to be honest, when I first took the job, I was happy about it but I really saw it in the category of sort of a joe-boy, like, you do a lot of the little jobs that somebody else doesn't want to do and you don't really have much authority. That's how I perceived it. But actually, now that I've done it for --- I realize that, yes, there is a top line where your authority stops, there is this one person who you are always subject to --- the principal --- but you can do a lot if you can prove yourself and if you're willing to try and do things a little differently...because I really think they're looking for it out there, that teachers are more than happy if you're willing to do it. I think we need a whole new model of vice principal because I don't see it as just this job where you do the textbook rental and you collect up the balls for the playground. You know, I really see it as a much more dynamic role than that and I'm really glad to hear someone's doing something about it because I think people too long have looked at the vice

principal as that kind of a person, you know, secondary, who picks up all the jobs like lunchroom supervision and all the other garbage in the schools, so to speak, and really doesn't have any authority. But I think that can really change, particularly if you look at the school and look at the administrative team, where you have the strong and weak points of two people together, and you work as a team and that's something I've really tried to encourage this year. And I think we've succeeded to a certain degree.

I think if they (assistant principals) have the support of the principal and the support and belief of the teachers, that they could bring about major changes... you've got to provide arguments and proof, and research or whatever else, and if you can make them see it your way, then you can bring about big changes.

You can have a real impact on staff morale. You can have a tremendous impact on the direction you go in terms of being an educational leader. For example, our computer program... our teacher effectiveness program... our discipline program... our gifted program... our whole language program...

#### Essential Role

The assistant principals all felt that the role is essential to the effective operation of the school:

I don't think one person (the principal) can carry the load. I really think it (assistant principalship) can be a very essential position, as much as you make of it. I think some people might say, why do they even bother? But you do need to have someone else, one person can't be there all the time. So there's that angle, and also, if you look at

it as a team, it's a lot easier for everybody involved. One time, when the principal's mother died, he went away for a week, well you couldn't just appoint a teacher on staff, ... a lot of things do come up, and I don't think anyone would feel all that comfortable about it. I think it's important to have two people at least. Whether one has to be a lot more superior than the other is debatable.

I think the job as it now is described in our system is very demanding and is going to get even more demanding, and any school over six teachers, even five teachers, needs somebody to take some of the load off the principal... And I think if you do away with the position, you do away with a very good training ground because to leap into the position of principal from classroom teacher--- because even if I had been given extra prep time to do the books and so on, I don't think it would prepare me to become a principal nearly as much as being an assistant principal.

A lot of schools do not even have an assistant principal anymore in the elementary level. At this size we usually do and we should have. It's left pretty well up to the principal and his staff, and with decentralized budgeting, where the schools are allocated so much money and they can do what they like with it, and I think because it saves principals money, a lot of them are dispensing with the role of the assistant principal, just having themselves as the sole administrator; but they are the smaller ones. I feel very strongly that it is a very bad move, because first of all, it is a training ground for principalships, also, whenever the principal leaves the school for a meeting or anything, he has to designate somebody to be assistant principal in his absence, and that person is not paid an administrative allowance and yet they take over the extra duties. I don't think it should be allowed at all... There have always been, in the very small schools, just one administrator and that is because there was not the work load, but we see it more and more

since we went to decentralized budgeting, in larger schools. That seems to be a trend in our system.

I think the assistant principal is quite essential. I am dismayed at the trend that I see in our system. At this size school you couldn't, or shouldn't operate without an assistant principal; there's a lot of work for one administrator. If a school is small, under one hundred, you can't afford to have an assistant principal and there isn't that much work to do.

I think it's necessary as a liason between the principal and the teachers. It's also nice to have three different people with different areas of expertise; and I suppose, just to have another person or two, for brainstorming or running ideas off of, otherwise, it might become a dictatorship.

Nowadays, no, I don't think a principal could (be without an assistant principal), there are just too many things going on constantly, the outside bombardment, the inside bombardment, the organization, no... even if they were a full-time administrator, they would lose contact with something, the staff, the students, the working... I don't think they could. I sure wouldn't. If there was only one administrator in this school, it sure wouldn't be me.

Probably (a principal could work without an assistant principal) but he would go nuts. Yeah, he could probably do it, if you had a really dynamic, efficient, well organized, general limitless energy sort of person, yes, maybe. And a really dynamic staff, people willing to grab the bull by the horns, where they'll be here by seven-thirty every morning. You would be asking a tremendous amount of the staff--- and the principal; I think too much.

It could probably be done, but I don't know whether I would advise it. I am sure some things would suffer... How could you get your principal to deal with all the things that he does plus what I do?

#### Predicted Future of the Role

Several assistant principals predicted the direction that the role would take in the future.

This person envisions an expanded role for the principal, and a need for assistant principals to handle "administrivia":

I think that as our board tries to make principals become more leaders in evaluating teachers, leaders in implementing curriculum, that a lot of the administrivia is going to fall on the vice principal; and that's necessary because you have to know how it works before you can give it to someone else.

With increased cutbacks, two people are worried that assistant principalships will be reduced:

They are starting to close the smaller schools. They are a luxury we can't afford anymore. But I don't think the assistant principal will be done away with in larger schools. But in fact, some of the larger schools have done away with the assistant principal position and I am not happy with that. I would hope that that trend is reversed, but if the school board keeps on freezing budgets as they have this year, it will get worse because principals and staffs will have to cut costs any way that they can.

It seems to be declining, that's my impression, not only in elementary schools,

but also in the junior high schools to a certain extent, and even in the high schools... principals are finding that they are having to declare their assistants surplus. They don't want to but their enrolments are declining, or their budgets are shrinking, and they've no choice... I think eventually, possibly, who's to know for sure, but the system may suffer for it eventually, because if you don't have people out there who are being trained and you have principalships open, who are you going to put in there?... It's assistant principals that become principals.

This assistant principal hopes the position becomes more significant:

I hope they (central office) see it should get more significant. They deal directly with the principal almost all the time. They assume the principal is working with the administrative team in the school... some of the comments that I have heard is that the assistant principals are part of the team; they are doing their job. I don't see them or haven't heard any rumors of them cutting administrative time.

Assistant principals have untapped potential:

Given this program that's coming up (a teacher effectiveness program), and if our school system goes into it the way our superintendent wants to, I really think it's (assistant principalship) going to become more important. I think they're going to realize that we've got untapped potential in assistant principals because a lot of them are young and very, very energetic, and they're fresh or more fresh out of university, and usually a little more willing to take courses, and when I think of me running this program next year, I'm not going to neglect assistants because they're the people who can get out there and do a lot of good work. I mean, principals, we definitely need to do some work on, but

there's a lot of people out there who don't want to be bothered, but their assistants are willing and able.

Evaluation was seen as a future duty and potential concern:

Then the assistant principal and the principal evaluate teachers... Well, the minister has been promoting evaluation. If he has his way everyone is going to be evaluated every year forever. I hope he doesn't have his way, because you are going to have many, many hours of work. I think evaluation is fine depending on what its purpose is and I think that probably everybody being evaluated every three or four years would be fine, but not every year--- it's a waste of time. Most teachers are very efficient and they don't change from year to year. If someone has some problems or is transferring, it is important, but not to evaluate the same teacher year after year when they are very good teachers, a very bad use of time.

The idea of teacher evaluation is new this year. It is voluntary this year and compulsory next year. My principal said he wanted me to be involved with it. What we did this year was the first step. We went in for observation. He asked me how many I could handle... so I went in and observed those (three) teachers. I suppose I will be evaluating those teachers next year; so it is going to be one of the functions of the assistant principal along with the principal.

When asked how they felt about doing the observations, the assistant principal said:

Well, I didn't mind the observations but the school board's idea of evaluation and the minister of education's idea of evaluation and mine are at odds, therefore it's not going to



an easy role, because obviously I am going to have to do what my employers tell me that I have to do and I don't want to in the sense that I see teacher supervision as a formative type of evaluation. The minister sees it as a summative type. I suspect that there is going to be no common meeting of minds over that, so I will simply have to do as I'm told. It is all fine if the evaluation is good, but if in fact there is a teacher who needs help, it's not going to be something I'm going to enjoy.

A change in the direction of school administration toward educational leadership was predicted:

A lot of principals received these positions in a time when all you had to be was a manager, and a lot of them are still managing a school and not doing a lot of educational leadership. So, the only thing that I see happening, and I'm not sure that it will happen in the near future, but I sense that it will happen, is that school boards may start to really push the idea that you're not just a manager; you can't just run and count up the paper and the tacks that are used, and this type of thing, that it's not just to be a management situation and if you are not prepared to become an educational leader in the school... principals might rethink whether or not they want to be a principal for the rest of their life... I think in the past, it's been a very cosy position for a lot of people. They got into it and they sat there until they retired. Not to say that they didn't run their schools, they probably ran them fine. I mean, nothing ever burned down or anything like that, but in terms of really doing anything educationally, that is where we could pose some real questions.

Our superintendent is keen on the idea of moving people around... will be threatening for some people, because some people have been resting on their laurels... educational leadership becoming a major role of the job and the idea of yearly reviews for principals

and not necessarily evaluations, but some sort of accountability, where it isn't just a matter of balancing the budget anymore.

#### Administrative Team

Throughout the interviews, as often indicated in the quotations, the assistant principals spoke favorably about working as a team with their principals. As well, the assistant principals observed the potential value of administrative teams in school administration.

I think I would start by looking at the role and really making it a more important role in the eyes of probably the principal, because that's what it boils down to, that's how much authority you get is how much he or she is going to give you, and I'd like to see, rather than principal/assistant principal, you may have to name them that way, but I'd really like to see more along the lines of an administrative team. Granted, you may have the final say, but let's work together as a team; let's agree on what we're going to do. You pick up my shortcomings, I'll pick up yours, sort of thing. I really think that team approach is one that would be very effective.

The very best use of the role would be that the principal and assistant principal were the same, that they worked as a team, that it wouldn't matter who you went to, but that would never happen because the assistant principal is not a full-time position in elementary. But as much as it could be, I think that sharing everything, duties, responsibilities, knowledge of what goes on, would be the ultimate. I suppose you could go to the other extreme, make two separate lists of jobs, and have no overlap or sharing. That to me, would be a very bad kind of thing, the very worst way to operate.

The first year at the other school, we were appraised as a team, and the first thing that came through was that each person knew their job very clearly, but that there was a lack of communication among the three of us as to the overall picture of the school. It emphasized to us the need for a team approach, the communication between the two (or three) people, and the getting together to discuss who does what, was it successful, how is it going, and consequently what are we going to... yes, the team, I believe in that.

In relating what should be, this assistant principal described a team situation that their spouse is a member of:

Their school has done so much, and she's such an interesting lady, like, it's not really, "I'm the principal and you're the vice principal,"... (there is a first assistant principal and a second assistant principal) so they work as a real group; they do a lot.

This assistant principal is satisfied with the types of duties assigned, feels that they are largely administrative types of things, but feels that as a team, they need a set time to meet:

I wish we did have (a set time to meet), in fact, I find it very difficult being in the classroom most of the time, to be able to meet with him when he is not busy with other people, or out to meetings. It is very hard to get a time. I wish that we did have a set time once or twice a week, hopefully next year we can do that.

Some, in recommending an administrative team, elaborated on the operation of their team:

I think we have it here (administrative team).

The administrative team, meaning that the two or three administrators are working together, backing each other up, providing a joint front, helping each other in tight situations, making suggestions that will keep things going, or whatever. It's not where, the principal says, "This is the way we're going to do it, so you go and carry it out." He says, "Well, what do you think, how should we do it?" And then the three of us sit and hash it out. Or we'll say, "Okay, this is how we feel, let's go to the teachers and see how they feel."

We work pretty well as an administrative team. I go my way on some things... and he's got some of his, and the majority of them, we work together... we meet regularly. In the morning from nine-thirty to ten-thirty we are both off, and we talk in the morning before school, for a few minutes. We catch each other when we can or when we need to.

#### Assignment

Many assistant principals commented on the types of assignments that they would like to see.

One person would like to teach different classes:

One of the things that I would like to see, instead of being so devoted to one class, taking my teaching time and spreading it through six classes, because when you deal with kids, it's nice to see how they work all day long, not just when they come to my office and they need some help or they need to be disciplined. So in a way, it would be nice to be on a rotational basis, where you worked an hour with each class,...

Program development:

I'd like to see the assistant principal a lot more involved with the program development in the school.... like getting the library organized, set up the materials,... work out some sort of program so that school is not just what you do in your classroom everyday. Those kinds of things a lot of people do in their classrooms, but you need somebody in a position like this, (assistant principal) to be able to do that for a school.

This person would like to have been a liason person in the library and elaborated on the merits of combining an assistant principalship with the library:

One of the things that I thought I'd like to do was the library... I thought that the library is a benefit to everybody, and it's somewhere that I can make a little impact and everyone should feel it.

...as a liason person in the library. None of our schools have librarians, we can't afford it; we have one librarian in our system. But an assistant principal could do famous things in the library, because it's a challenging area, and somebody has to take control of it because of the fact that it is so related to the whole curriculum in the school. To me that would be an excellent way to use a vice principal.

Some central office assignment of time and duties:

...if their job was widened and if it was layed out by someone more than the principal, obviously he has to have --- let's say he had 35% time where he could use this person to do testing, or whatever, and then the superintendent or whoever, had 35% time where he said in this time I want the vice principal to do these types of things...

Although there may be a change in focus, the desire to

continue teaching was expressed:

If I didn't teach though, I think I'd miss the teaching. I enjoy working with the kids; strictly administrator, unless you put a lot of effort into it, you would lose some of that contact, with what's going on with the kids. I enjoy the combination, it's just right. I would have a hard time going back just to teach but I also think that if I ever do become a principal I will continue to teach. I wouldn't want to strictly teach and I wouldn't want to be strictly an administrator.

One person reiterated that allocation of sufficient administrative time is necessary.

If they are going to have an assistant principal in a school, they should be around half-time... when they start getting three-tenths or less, forget it. Like next year, when I am down to two-tenths, that's going to be bad. I've anticipated that it is going to be tough enough that I have already looked at the calendar to see when I am going to be back here, not as the assistant principal either, but as --- the teacher, just getting organized for next year. Once September comes, forget it. The minute the teachers walk in the door, I don't do anything for myself for probably the first month. All you are doing is doing things for other people, and rightly so. There are things that have to be done... you are just troubleshooting all the time, helping people get over... transfers... problems... fine tuning... set up schedules, timetables, coordinate facilities... it looked great on paper, but sometimes there are conflicts that must be solved.

#### Training

Several assistant principals had suggestions for the training of assistant principals.

A job description for assistant principals and a training guide for principals to follow was suggested:

The first thing I would do is try to identify things that are common to all schools, that an assistant principal does. There may not be many of them, but by asking for job descriptions from the schools you could come up with a composite as to a number of things that the assistant principal does in the school. Then I would provide some kind of guide for principals to follow to train assistant principals.

One assistant principal suggested teaching effectiveness strategies and interpersonal skills:

I think on-the-job is one of the most effective, especially for these little jobs around the school, that you don't know; and that, you could get easily in a few days just being by the side of someone, being walked around and shown. And then, I think in terms of greater training, you have to be dealing with a person who has a curriculum focus, who has a program focus, and who really is an effective teacher and effective person, who can by attraction rather than by promotion, get people to believe in them. I would hate to see someone come into a school, brand new, and start saying this is how it has to be, and we're going to do it this way, and you're going to do it this way, and we're all going to like it. That wouldn't work. But I really think that in your training you have to be trained to believe that what you can do is... you have to be able to do. Now I don't know how you train a person to do that. I think you have to start with a certain kind of person; but there are effectiveness strategies that you can teach someone. I think interpersonal skills are a really large part of that, maybe some training in how to deal with people, how not to take things personally, how to deal with people who do come to you with their problems, because I think you have to be pretty objective, whether it's kids, or teachers.

Direction for administrators on effective teaching so that they can model it for teachers:

I think that there has to be some sort of training in this whole idea of effective teaching. I think it's really going to come the route of the principal and the assistant principal. And they can show it again, and model it, then it will come down to the teachers and come into the schools. And teachers are willing, willing to try anything if you can attract them to it.

One person, commenting on his own training, indicated that training should include more important things than how to fill out forms:

Well, there were a couple of days at the beginning of the school year where we were taken and shown all the forms and things, but you see, that kind of stuff, again to me, is so beside the point compared to what I really think the job is. To me, filling out forms and tending to textbook rental --- anybody should be able to do that. It's clerical work, now granted, if it isn't done, you run into problems...

Courses on evaluation, budget, and utilization of personnel:

I think we should have some kind of courses for evaluation of teachers, or how do you write a budget, or how do you make optimum use of the personnel that you have... different schools do it differently, and if we could hear what other people are doing, I think it would open up more horizons for us and give us opportunities to try different things.

Provision for interaction with other administrators:



I would say that one of the best things to do is be able to talk to other assistant principals, vice principals, and even principals. Programming, budgeting, courses on dealing with people, talking in front of large groups... but to me the most valuable thing is talking with other administrators; what they do here; what they do there; to me that's the most important.

One person stressed that selection of the right sort of person to accomplish desired objectives should precede training:

When you talk about training to become a vice principal, I think you've got to look at people who are really educationally minded, that are willing to run a school not just in terms of balancing the budget and counting the books, it's got to be greater than that. However we train them... well I don't know if there should be training prior to a position, but I think that when you go to appoint someone to a position, you have to have a pretty good idea of what you are looking for and what sort of outcome you want --- and then you'll get the right sort of person for the job --- and that's what's changing. Superintendents are saying, "We don't just want someone who's going to go into a school and just sit there behind a desk. We want someone who is going to strive for excellence, and we want someone who is going to manage by walking around." You know, this whole search for excellence is really affecting the whole educational system. They're looking at schools as though they are private companies... it's becoming a consumer's market, parents driving from school to school to decide where they're going to put their children, and making educated choices. School's got to be more than just a building.

## Evaluation

Evaluation was repeatedly a concern.

This person stressed the use of formative evaluation:

The province is going to mandate that all teachers be evaluated, and the systems, districts be evaluated, and you know it's going to happen. What happens to me now is that I become both an assistant principal and an A.T.A. person, and I have very strong feelings on evaluation. I am in favor of evaluation, but not just any kind of evaluation. The A.T.A. has a lot of good policy on evaluation and I believe in it. Basically, except for a few instances, like permanent certification, or someone going from an interim to a continuing contract--- those can be summative evaluation--- but by and large, I feel our role should be more of a type of formative evaluation. So that you can continue to be an educational leader in your school, in that when you walk into the classroom the first thought that pops into that teacher's mind isn't "What's he here for, and what's going to happen, and is this going to be written up?" But instead, you're welcomed into the room; you are not seen as a threat, and then you can become an educational leader.

This person sees the teacher effectiveness program as the best means for formative evaluation:

In our school, I've gone through the teacher effectiveness program... you had to go as a team, an administrator and a teacher, the idea being, we would go through the course, then I would conference the teacher. I would go in with something specific to observe. The consultant would be there as well and then I would conference the teacher and the consultant would conference me on my conference, the idea being to build my administrative skills... we have done a number of inservices in the school... sent half of our staff for inservices on classroom management... ideally would like to add different people each year until everyone has gone through the course, and then each person

would be conferencing someone else. We are going to double the program in the fall.

#### MISCELLANEOUS CATEGORIES

A number of interesting reflections did not fit entirely into the pattern of the themes presented, but they are significant and warrant inclusion. These reflections are presented under the categorical headings.

#### Gender

The assistant principals presented mixed views on gender distinction related to the appointment of administrators. Some of the comments indicated that in some cases gender distinction has been reduced or eliminated, but some indicated that gender distinction may still exist to a certain extent.

A female assistant principal felt that it still is a man's world:

I think you have to be particularly good if you're a woman. Even though our system really does try hard to be fair to women, and they really are, we have a lot of women working, because they work so damned hard, they get their money's worth. But I still think that it's a man's world out there; and I encountered it when I came to this school; but it soon was eliminated because once you... a person is a person as long as you can do the job, and as long as you don't have a person who is really biased that will always hold true. But I firmly believe that a woman applying for this job has to be extra good, extra involved, extra outgoing, extra

committed. I really do. I don't think it's easy. It's easier now than it ever was. But it's not easy...

This female assistant principal feels that improvement will come with time:

I think it's a long, slow process in education, part of the whole deal of women proving themselves in society. I think the younger generation of men coming up are better, more accepting of women. And I think the situation will improve gradually as the old, chauvinist type of males retire, and the younger ones, who are more used to treating women equally come along and run society, that eventually there will be equality... The school board has been trying in recent years to promote women... I have no complaint about them...

This same woman hopes that she will be a principal of a large school, which she thinks shows confidence in women on the part of the school board:

I hope to be a principal in a school that is fairly large. Women are still having to prove themselves to our school board, probably to all school boards, because I've noticed going through the list of female principals that they are quite often principals of small schools. I know two exceptions, one in high school, one in elementary, but both of those started off in very small schools. So I think that women have to be twice as good as men to be accepted... I think it shows a lack of confidence on the part of the board.

One male assistant principal recommended that ideally there should be both a man and a woman if there is more than one administrator in a school:

I don't think that the skills and the things that you have to learn are related to gender. Although I do think it's very important, in a school where there are two administrators, that there be one of each.

A male assistant principal commented on the opportunity for either gender:

In the past, as our system expanded, the joke around here was that anyone who wore pants was asked to become an administrator. I see things changing, in fact, I see more women being encouraged to go into administration, but I don't think that it should be any different, any easier for a man or easier for a woman. And I think that now with the involvement of the A.T.A. and the way times have changed, I don't think there is any prejudice anymore.

Another male feels that there is little or no distinction:

No, I think probably, maybe women would disagree with me, but I am aware of as many women being appointed administrators, either principals or assistant principals, as men. There's an age group of people that I moved along with, and women that I have taught with, and men that were classroom teachers that have become administrators. I don't see a tremendous amount of distinction.

This female assistant principal feels that she has been treated fairly and that there has been no gender distinction:

The school district has been exceptionally good about treating men and women equally...

This male assistant principal agrees with the female

assistant principal that the school district treats females and males equally:

As far as I'm concerned there isn't any difference in opportunity for men or women. In this school district there are more lady principals in relation to other places. I have no qualms about that. Women and men are equal in their job opportunities and if they are qualified for it and they can do it... I've always felt that in an elementary school, a man/woman combination is good... we are lucky that we have a couple of women teachers we can call on since we have two men administrators.

Two people referred to other types of gender distinction.

This person, who was the first woman assistant principal in this school, observed that not having women in administration influenced the students' thoughts about the role of women:

You should have heard some of the things I got from the kids when I got here, like "How can a woman be a vice principal?"... But it's been a really good experience, the girls in my room have such a better concept of themselves... like I'm not a feminist or anything, but I just believe in --- like in the school, only the boys were allowed to take down the chairs, only the boys were allowed to take out the phys. ed. equipment, it was too heavy. So we changed a lot of those things when I came, because I don't believe in that. Kids, boys or girls can do a job, and that I think has been really good for the kids.

A male assistant principal experienced gender distinction:

The reason that I applied (for a transfer) is that I found it very difficult to work as a sole male on a staff... there were things that were being asked of me simply because of gender... that's why I asked for a move.

#### Personal Future

Two of the assistant principals interviewed indicated that they already knew of changes for the next school year. One person was transferring as an assistant principal to another school. One first year assistant principal applied for and received a central office position as an "animator." He felt that his assistant principalship contributed to obtaining the position in central office:

I really do feel that this job was very instrumental to me getting that job, because it's been a real learning experience for me, and just to have any administrative experience is a good learning experience.

He commented on his future:

This job (as central office animator) is going to either close doors or open doors... I'd like to have my masters finished in the next year... always wanted to teach teachers, would like to teach at the university some day... not boring old ed. admin. classes, I really think we need teacher training, and I'm talking about management training, specific teaching strategies training, like you can know as much as you want about geology and get out and teach, but it doesn't matter how much you know about geology if you can't teach it... I really don't think that teaching should be at the university. I think you should get your background and learn your subject area but I don't think you should learn to teach at the university. I don't

think it's the area; I think we need to go back into this idea of teacher training where you actually have teaching strategies and the university uses the worst teaching strategies there are... But five years from now, that's an area I'd like to move to or maybe as a principal of a school... maybe I'll take a year off and travel...

I can't see myself teaching for ever and ever and ever... I think you burnout... kids need someone who is young and dynamic... I'd like to write sometime, write a book; I really like developing things. There's a lot of areas I'd like to go into, I'd like to study music...

Most assistant principals saw themselves as principals in the future:

Maybe I'll be a principal. I think if I went for a principalship, I think I would like one in a smaller school. I don't know why numbers should make any difference at all, because policies are the same, you get the same discipline problems, and everything, but I have this set in my mind, that if I am going to be a principal, I'd like to be one in a smaller school.

In five years, still in this school district, I think. I've been here since I started teaching. I like it. I like the personnel and the way they run things. In five years, I could be a principal. If my health stays the way it is, I want to retire as soon as I can. Teaching, when you get older, you get set in your ways and changes become difficult. I will retire as soon as I can. I think before I retire I would like to try a principalship even for a couple of years.

I see myself as a principal of an elementary school (in five years time).



I am sure I will be in the system somewhere (in five years time), whether as an assistant principal or principal, I don't know; I hope a principal in a school that is fairly large... I will retire when I am sixty, in seven years time.

One person felt certain that he would be in a different school but was uncertain about a principalship:

Five years down the road I probably won't be here. It is time that I left; I've been here six years, the longest I've been in one school... I will be in another school... you can become complacent; there's nothing like moving to get going. In a new situation you feel that you have to prove yourself, show people that you are a capable person, whether you are a teacher or an administrator... in ten years I will be near retirement... I don't know whether or not at that stage I would be willing to jump in and face the frustrations (of a principalship)... right now my family, my kids and their needs put a lot of demands on my time... Ten years from now, there will be just my wife and myself. I may feel that I have more time, less demands on my time, more energy, and feel that, hey, now's the time to go for it. I know that probably in the next two or three years I am going to make up my mind to either stay as an assistant principal or go for an administrative position... My life is really full... I'm a jack-of-all-trades, master of none.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present: a summary of the study; the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the findings; a comparison of the findings of this study to the related literature discussed in Chapter Two; a discussion of the findings related to personnel administration theories; and the implications for school administrators, school districts, and universities, as well as recommendations for further study.

#### SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the administrative role of the elementary school assistant principal in selected schools in Alberta. Six assistant principals within three school districts were studied. The field research qualitative methods of in-depth interviewing, observation, and categorical analysis resulted in the formulation of 33 categories, which then formed the basis for five themes. The themes which emerged from analysis of the data were:

1. Assistant principals have a vision for the improvement of education. This vision generally motivated the assistant principals to apply for an administrative

position, and contributed to their elated feelings upon receiving an appointment. They hoped to gain the opportunity and the authority to do some of the things that they visualized, such as increasing school effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, parental involvement with the schools; and instituting a school-wide discipline policy, a gifted enrichment program, and a library improvement project.

2. The assistant principals experienced a number of changes upon becoming an administrator. There were some initial feelings of insecurity and isolation. There were changes in their teaching due to a new focus on administration in the school. There were changes in their relationship with the students and the staff.

3. The assistant principals view the essence of the position as being a training ground for a future principalship. They reported a dependency on the principal for assignment of duties and for consequent training, but they indicated a self-responsibility for ensuring their own success.

4. The assistant principal is a jack-of-all-trades. The person fulfilling this role needs to be flexible and receptive to change because the job has constant variety, interruptions, demands, and changes. The major frustrations associated with the position included not having the ultimate authority for decision making; not feeling prepared for such duties as teacher appraisal and budgeting; and not having

sufficient allocation of administrative time. Secondary frustrations included having to deal with unreasonable parents; lack of funding for desired programs; lack of communication with the principal; and constant interruptions. The major rewards associated with the position were self-satisfaction; positive feedback from staff, students, and parents; seeing their ideas implemented; and being privileged to all information relating to the school.

5. The role is seen as having great potential. The position is viewed as essential, fulfilling the need for the training of future principals, as well as contributing to the effective administration of a school. It is thought that the role should be clarified and expanded. The best utilization of the position is as a member of an administrative team.

The miscellaneous categories of gender and personal future were included. There were mixed feelings about the existence of gender distinction in administrative opportunities. Generally, the assistant principals felt that in some cases there is evidence of previous gender distinction, as indicated by the greater number of male administrators, but that this distinction is not as evident in the appointment of administrators today.

The assistant principals generally see themselves as principals within the next five to ten years. Most intend to retire in their fifties and intend to pursue other educationally related careers and interests.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study of the six assistant principals, the researcher concludes that generally speaking:

1. Assistant principals are dynamic, energetic, highly motivated people who are expecting to be trained for higher administrative positions, particularly a principalship.

2. The position is a valuable one for directed training. The assistant principals' mind set and expectations are receptive to direction and influence; the assistant principal is expecting to be learning and training. Moreover, the assistant principal, as second in authority to the principal, needs to know all aspects of the principal's job so that he or she may assume the principal's duties in that person's absence.

3. There is a potential for conflict in time and interest between administrative duties and teaching duties due to a change in focus. When teachers become assistant principals, it is because they have a broader vision for their influence, that is, a vision beyond their classroom. There is an interest in, and a commitment to administration, such that it often becomes a priority.

4. There may be a sense of isolation, separation, and even loneliness on the job, particularly for new assistant principals. If there is an increased emphasis on teacher evaluation as one of the duties of the assistant principal, this separation and isolation may become more evident.

5. The job is interesting, filled with variety, has many interruptions, and is often shifting or changing.

6. The position is viewed by the assistant principals as essential and as fulfilling a real need in the school.

7. The assistant principal is largely dependent on the principal for training, duties, and future advancement.

8. Assistant principals feel a need for further training particularly, in teacher evaluation and budgeting.

9. Assistant principals feel a need for greater interaction with other administrators.

10. Although there are frustrations associated with the position, the assistant principals generally view their positions as rewarding and fulfilling.

11. The optimum use of the assistant principal is as a member of an administrative team, where the assistant principal is given increasing authority and responsibility commensurate with his or her ability and experience.

#### COMPARISON OF FINDINGS TO THE RELATED LITERATURE

In concurrence with other studies and the literature that has been written about the assistant principal, this study found that the role of the assistant principal is multi-faceted, that it is viewed as fulfilling an essential role, particularly when it is as a member of an administrative team; that the problems associated with the position include

lack of role definition, and in some cases lack of administrative time. There was an acknowledgement of the dependency on the principal for training. However, the six assistant principals felt that their principals, for the most part, have been fair and have provided opportunity for growth and training.

In agreement with Powell's (1978) study, there is a need for additional training for incumbents and newly-appointed assistant principals, as well as inservice programs related to the various duties of the assistant principal to provide both information sharing and interaction.

The view held by the assistant principals that ultimately they are responsible for their own growth, was compatible with Brown and Rentschler (1973) who offered advice for assistant principals to gain more control over their professional development.

The finding by Newton (1983) that deficiencies in Staff Personnel would not likely be overcome by practical experiences on the job is consistent with the expressed need for further training on teacher appraisals in this study.

In concurrence with Collett's (1969) observation that assistant principals in large composite high schools have left behind them the roles of clerical assistants and supervisor of extracurricular activities, it appears that for the most part elementary assistant principals have also made gains toward more meaningful duties.

The finding in Windsor's (1976) study that principals and assistant principals had a difference in perception of planned training experiences, is difficult to assess in this study: there was no clear cut difference evident. However, the assistant principals do feel that there are areas in which they need further training.

The preference for operation as an administrative team was highly consistent with the recommendations of Gross, Shapiro, and Meehan (1980), Rankin (1973), Sprague (1973), and Childress (1973).

Findings from this study which were not consistent with the related literature pertained primarily to the importance of the position and to the relegation of assistant principals to disciplinary and clerical duties as suggested by Culver (1978) and Bordinger (1973). McLeod (1959), Enns (1959), and Longmore (1968) concluded in their studies that assistant principals spend much of their time doing clerical duties.

The assistant principals in this study indicated that disciplinary duties were shared by the administrators depending on who was available, and that there were few clerical duties since the support staff in the school are very effective.

There appears to be a change in the appointment of women to assistant principalships when the perspectives of this study are compared to Longmore's (1968) study.



There appears to be an improvement in the allotment of adequate administrative time in some cases compared to the findings of McLeod (1959) and Windsor (1976).

Indications of a negative self image as suggested by Bordinger (1973), and, unfair assignment of duties as suggested by Brown and Rentschler (1973) were not present in this study. The assistant principals held a positive image of themselves and of their position, and felt that their principals were fair to them. They felt that they have an influence on the direction of the school and that they can make a difference. The assistant principals felt that their position was at least as good as they had hoped.

In conclusion, the findings from this study are most compatible with the more recent studies, and indicate that although there are still areas in need of improvement, generally gains have been made in the assignment of administrative time, the assignment of meaningful duties, the preparation for principalships, the reduction of gender distinction in appointments, and the working of assistant principals as members of administrative teams.

#### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

While the intent of this study was not to prove nor disprove existing theories, but rather to discover the reality, it is interesting to reflect on the relationship of the findings to the work and thoughts of others in the field.

of personnel administration. Upon reflection of the findings, it became apparent to the researcher that the perspectives of the assistant principals are consistent with many of the theories and discussions regarding motivation and supervision of personnel.

### Motivation

The themes, "vision for improvement," "jack-of-all-trades," and "great potential," are consistent with motivation theory, particularly with the work of Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg, Chris Argyris, Douglas McGregor, and others, whose studies and theories suggest that the most effective way to motivate employees is not just by improving work conditions, raising salaries, or shuffling tasks, but by encouraging growth, through increasing expertise, responsibility, accountability, sense of achievement, and recognition. According to Herzberg (1968:54) "The only way to motivate the employee is to give him challenging work in which he can assume responsibility."

Maslow's "theory of an internal need hierarchy has become one of the more popular conceptualizations for human motivation" (in Hoy and Miskel 1978:97). In the model based on his theory, Maslow proposes five basic degrees of need priority: (1) Physiological needs are those basic biological functions of the human organism; (2) Safety and security needs relate to a desire for a peaceful, smoothly running,

stable society; (3) Belonging, love, and social needs; (4) Esteem needs, the desire for being highly regarded by others. Achievement, competence, status, and recognition satisfy this need level; and (5) Self-actualization needs where the individual is working at top potential, peak satisfaction, effort, achievement, and personal and professional success (Hoy and Miskel 1978:98-99). Maslow identifies two basic kinds of needs: deficiency needs, which are the lower order needs which must be satisfied before the second, growth needs can develop. Growth needs, relating to the development and achievement of one's potential, are higher level needs which become activated only as lower needs become satisfied. Maslow maintains that gratification of a lower order need releases the person from the domination of one need, allowing for the emergence of a higher level need.

In this study, the assistant principals' motivation for pursuing an assistant principalship, and their voiced rewards of self satisfaction and positive feedback from peers is basically compatible with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where once secure and reasonably confident in their position, the individual's deficiency needs are satisfied and they are able to respond to their growth needs of recognition, achievement, autonomy, responsibility, and accountability.

The assistant principals expressed good feelings about themselves, and were positively motivated by increased responsibility, freedom, and authority. This is consistent

with Herzberg's two-factor theory of hygienes and motivators which has a close conceptual relationship with Maslow's hierarchy theory. Sergiovanni and Carver (1980) discussed Herzberg's motivation-theory. Motivators, related to growth needs and job satisfaction, are satisfiers, and include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement. "The motivation to work beyond what is necessary to meet minimum requirements comes from the satisfier set --- achievement and recognition, for example." (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1980:104) Hygiene needs are dissatisfiers, are related to conditions of work, and may contribute to job dissatisfaction if not present. "Since the dissatisfiers are related to the conditions of work rather than the work itself, they have little motivational potential for most people." (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1980:103) Hygienic factors, although not motivators, must be maintained and must meet individual needs for job security, fair treatment, interpersonal relations, salary, and working conditions. Motivation factors, the higher order, growth needs, are intrinsic, are associated with the work itself, and provide people with opportunities for psychological success.

The individuals in this study indicated reinforcement and motivation by Herzberg's motivators and Maslow's growth needs. The perspectives suggested a desire for growth related activities. The rewards were recognition,

responsibility, authority, being privileged to information, and increased autonomy and authority. Ambient factors such as pay and working conditions were neither motivators nor demotivators. The assistant principals indicated that since the administrative allowance was not large, money was not a significant reward. Perhaps, as stated by Sergiovanni and Carver (1980:110):

Feeling underpaid but fairly paid may be the best that we can hope for. The basis upon which one decides if he or she is being paid fairly is comparison. Thus teachers as individuals and as groups continually compare their earnings with others in the same district, in other school districts, and in other occupations.

One of the questions asked by the researcher, if it was not naturally addressed by the subject, was based on Herzberg's critical incident technique (in Steers 1981:299): Can you think of an incident over the last month or two that made you feel that this job is really worthwhile? The responses included: positive feedback from staff or parents, completion of projects that they had initiated, success with problem students, and doing a difficult administrative supervisory task well. Recognition and the work itself seemed to be most closely related to affective responses. Pay and working conditions were not mentioned related to worthwhile critical incidents, supportive of Herzberg's thinking that although these may be dissatisfiers if not thought to be minimally reasonable, they were not satisfiers.

In a study by Birarda cited by Sergiovanni and Carver (1980:85), it was found that the lower level needs are generally well satisfied for teachers, but the higher level, growth needs are not being well satisfied. There is a perceived deficiency in the growth needs area, especially at the esteem level. "Esteem still appears as a dominant area of perceived need deficiency, actually increasing for all but the oldest group." The researcher hypothesizes that seeking esteem and other growth related needs may contribute to the assistant principal's desire for a position which they perceived allows for greater responsibility and influence.

Further though, there were concerns expressed regarding evaluation, parental pressures, and government pressures. In Birarda's study (in Sergiovanni and Carver 1980:86-87), security deficiencies were reported and possible influences were suggested:

But esteem is rivaled in 1977 by important increases in perceived need deficiencies for all groups at the self-actualization level on the one hand and (except for the 25-to-34 age group) security on the other. Changes in the work demands of educators and in the work environment may well be contributors to these increases in security. One can reasonably speculate that accountability, increased lay participation, state- and provincial-mandated competency testing, and general increases in the political nature of education influence feelings of security. These pressures, combined with the prospect of older educators facing retirement in an age of economic uncertainty, can take obvious tolls.

## Job Enrichment

Perhaps the assistant principals' general positive view of their position even, though there seem to be many pressures and frustrations, can be related to job enrichment theories, where these people have had their jobs, compared to when they were strictly teaching, enriched through increased opportunity for task variety, task uncertainty, task significance, task identity, responsibility for results, and knowledge of results. These characteristics were described by Sergiovanni and Carver (1980:126-127):

- Task variety implies building into the teaching job a greater assortment of tasks. It is assumed that varied work increases interest. This is in contrast to curriculum-building strategies, for example, which emphasize breaking down teaching episodes into small parts and assigning them to "specialists."

Task uncertainty refers to tasks which involve information processing and cognitive stimulation...

Social interaction recognizes that individuals at work generally derive satisfaction from interacting with others and for many, this source of satisfaction can be an inducement for working or at the least a stimulus to building commitment and loyalty to the work group and school. Despite the wide acceptance of importance of social interaction among workers, and recognizing that significant gains are being made in schools in using teaching teams, teaching is still a relatively private activity.

Task significance refers to the perceived importance by teachers of the work to be done. It is often assumed that providing teachers with detailed objectives increases task significance when indeed the opposite may be

the case. Task significance requires an understanding and appreciation of what the educational program as a whole tries to accomplish and how one's individual efforts fit into the larger view.

Task identity, related to task significance, requires that one have a larger view of what the school is about and that one sees how his or her part contributes to this larger purpose...

Responsibility for results requires that teachers be given a great deal of discretion over task activities but held more accountable for obtaining results...

Knowledge of results refers to feedback as to the quality of one's performance. Clearly, without feedback it is difficult to derive satisfaction from accomplishment.

Sergiovanni and Carver (1980:127) reported suggestions by Staw and research by Hackman and Oldham. "Staw suggested that task variety, task uncertainty, and social interaction are characteristics associated with task behaviors which lead to greater intrinsic satisfaction, more voluntary participation on tasks, and greater persistence in pursuing tasks." The research by Hackman and Oldham (in Sergiovanni and Carver 1980:128) suggested:

...personal and work outcomes such as intrinsic motivation, high-quality work performance, high satisfaction with work, and low absenteeism are a function of the presence in individuals of three psychological states: experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes, and knowledge of results.

To a certain extent, the assistant principalship has



provided all of the above suggestions for job enrichment, except perhaps, social interaction. It is interesting to note that this is a perceived area of need expressed by many of the subjects.

Herzberg (1968:60) also suggested principles for job enrichment, which he calls "vertical job loading" and which involve the motivators: responsibility, personal achievement, recognition, growth, learning, and advancement.

They are:

- A. Removing some controls while retaining accountability
- B. Increasing the accountability of individuals for own work
- C. Giving a person a complete natural unit of work (module, division, area, and so on)
- D. Granting additional authority to an employee in his activity; job freedom
- E. Making periodic reports directly available to the worker himself rather than to the supervisor
- F. Introducing new and more difficult tasks not previously handled
- G. Assigning individuals specific or specialized tasks, enabling them to become experts

These principles are consistent with the nature of the views the assistant principals have about their position.

Argyris (in Hoy and Miskel, 1978:97) suggested a continua where infants begin as dependent and submissive with few skills, surface abilities, and short time perspective and develop toward adult ends of independence, autonomy, many abilities, development of a few abilities in depth, and a longer time perspective. He suggested that jobs should be

structured to allow individuals to develop their abilities, leading to increased responsibility, independence, and autonomy, and thus allowing maximum motivation. In concurrence, the assistant principals wanted direction and structure to learn the job, and felt rewarded and stimulated when they felt they had earned and were granted increased responsibility and autonomy.

The views of the assistant principals toward students, staff, and themselves, indicate that they are operating under McGregor's Theory Y (in Steers, 1981:120):

Theory X managers assume that the average worker: 1) is lazy and dislikes work; 2) must be coerced and closely controlled on the job; 3) wants security instead of responsibility. Theory Y managers, on the other hand, assume that the average worker: 1) has the capacity to enjoy meaningful work; 2) is self-directed and needs little supervision; 3) actively seeks responsibility; and 4) is capable of being imaginative and creative at work.

Particularly when discussing teacher evaluation and presenting their feelings about formative evaluation, the assistant principals generally supported McGregor's Theory Y view.

The themes, "vision for improvement," "jack-of-all-trades," and "potential of the position," appear to be closely related to, and consistent with, many of the motivation theories. The findings of this study, as they relate to motivational research have implications for staff

development at all levels, particularly if it is believed, as Sergiovanni and Carver (1980:xi) suggested, "that the growth and development goals which we hold for youngsters are best achieved by teachers and other adults who are committed to these goals also for themselves --- both as persons and professionals."

### Selection and Training

The themes, "things change," and "a training ground," relate to the literature on supervision of personnel, particularly selection, including characteristics for effective leadership; and training, including induction/orientation, training for change, training for improved performance, and training for promotion.

Considering the dependency of the assistant principal on the principal for training and development as acknowledged by the subjects, Castetter's (1981:138) recommendation should be considered: "During the past few years, the concept of centralized recruitment and screening and decentralized selection has gained acceptance as a procedure for giving unit administration a voice in the selection of the personnel for whose direction they will be responsible."

### Induction

The initial feelings of insecurity and uncertainty

expressed by some of the assistant principals substantiate Castetter's (1981:189) position on induction of personnel:

Induction may be defined as a systematic organizational effort to assist personnel to adjust readily and effectively to new assignments so that they can contribute maximally to the work of the system while realizing personal and position satisfaction... A school system can recruit, select, assign, reassign, and transfer personnel, but until these individuals become fully adjusted to the work to be performed, the environment in which it is performed, and the colleagues with whom it is performed, they cannot be expected to give their best effort to attaining the goals of the institution.

Castetter (1981:193-195) outlined the goals of induction under the headings: information, need satisfaction, position compatibility, assistance, support development, acceptance, assimilation, adjustment, orientation, retention, security, and continuity.

As evidenced by the assistant principals' desire for upgrading and training for new needs, such as teacher appraisal, budgeting, and school effectiveness, ongoing induction as further suggested by Castetter (1981:211) would be valuable:

Although induction is commonly thought of as an activity focused upon personnel new to the system, it can also be construed as a career-long activity designed to keep all personnel abreast, periodically, of changes in organizational plans and policies, changes in position function and technology, and --- of vital concern to all members --- changes in personnel policies and procedures.

## Training For Change And Promotion

The finding that "things change" for those moving into assistant principalships is closely related to training. Musella (1982:8) indicated that, "Training purposes fall into two categories: (1) improvement of performance in the present position, and (2) preparation for another position." He further stated that "All we know about change indicates that all change requires some amount of successful training." Acknowledging the extent of change that an individual may experience upon entering administration, there is a need for training and preparation. Musella (1982:9) also stressed the involvement of the school district in developing training programs:

The other major purpose of training is to prepare one for another position --- promotion or transfer. The school district must assume major responsibility for the development of the "farm system," that is, the ongoing training of staff for positions which the organization will need filled in the future. The school district, upon identifying these positions, should describe the type of person (skills, knowledge, experience, personal characteristics) needed to be successful in the position, and develop appropriate training programs. Consequently, this means more than having an effective selection process; it means developing the pool of acceptable candidates.

This is consistent with the finding that the assistant principalship is an essential position and that it is or should be a training ground. Training of assistant

principals then, should be done to prepare them for the changes they will be encountering; to improve their performance; and to prepare them for promotion.

### On-The-Job Training

Hinrichs (in Dunnette 1983:854) identified the most common on-the-job training techniques:

1. Job instruction training essentially is the process of having a trainer explain the job to the trainee, observe his performance, and provide feedback about his performance.
2. Orientation training is merely a systematic effort to ensure that a new employee has all of the basic information he needs to function effectively.
3. Apprenticé training is like a period of internship in which the trainee works under the guidance of an experienced supervisor for a specified period of time before achieving journeyman status.
4. Performance appraisals in many organizations fulfill a training and development function by providing feedback about the appropriateness of on-the-job behavior and performance.
5. Coaching is the process of ensuring that training and learning occur in the day-to-day man-manager relationship.
6. Job rotation is widely used in management development as a technique to systematically ensure that trainees are exposed to a variety of organizational functions.
7. Assistantships or various committee assignments similarly are used to provide personnel development.

However, Hinrichs (in Dunnette, 1983:854) identified some of the problems associated with on-the-job training:

All of these on-the-job techniques are based upon the philosophy that people learn a job

best by doing it. However, this conclusion may or may not be justified, and there are a number of obvious problems with many of the on-the-job programs:

1. They may be inefficient, resulting in low productivity and waste.
2. There may be low involvement of the trainee in the training process...
3. The quality of instruction diffused through an on-the-job situation may be less competent than instruction concentrated in the training department.
4. Too often in the on-the-job situation training takes second place to getting the job out.

These observations regarding on-the-job training, which is the usual type of training for assistant principals, combined with the observations of the assistant principals, may have implications for a systematic training program which includes a variety of approaches and provides direction to the principal, who is expected to play a major part in the training.

#### Characteristics of Effective Principals

Many of the characteristics for assistant principals identified by the subjects and that they appear to exhibit are consistent with characteristics identified in studies of effective principals. Perhaps an indication that these individuals may be well suited to their position and to a future principalship is their overall vision for what their school should be like.

In a review of more than 75 research studies, Persell

and Cookson (1982:28) stated that, "Effective principals appear to have a vision of what their school should be like. Without this mental picture, the leadership role can too easily fall into the trap of reacting to negative situations and not creating positive situations." Having a vision for better education is the foundation for high expectations. Once these individuals have visualized improvements, they may then form high positive expectations, leading to appropriate behavior for achieving their visions. This theme then, has implications for the selection and development of administrators. Also, individuals who possess and demonstrate characteristics associated with effective leadership would likely be an asset and contribute greatly to an administrative team situation.

As indicated by their involvement in many aspects of the school, their hours of work, their willingness to be involved in activities both in and out of the school, and their motivation to do and learn more, these individuals are exhibiting other characteristics of effective principals. Persell and Cookson (1982:27) stated that, "The effective principal is a forceful, dynamic individual who is open to new ideas and has a high energy level." These findings, that these assistant principals exhibit characteristics of effective principals, may be indicative of existing effective selection procedures.



### Administrative Teams

In expressing their support for, and desire to be part of, an administrative team, the assistant principals identified communication, cooperation, and trust, as being necessary. They desired a set time, or at least opportunities for regular communication with the principal. Their desires are compatible with the essential characteristics for management teams identified by Erickson and Gmelch (1977:8):

For any management team to operate effectively and efficiently, it is essential that team members possess several basic characteristics. Team members must:

1. Be able to invest significant amounts of time.
2. Be able to work cooperatively rather than competitively toward common goals or purposes.
3. Have open and clear lines of communication.
4. Have trust in the integrity of their colleagues.\*
5. Encourage and work to understand the full explanation of minority opinions.
6. Have an acute skill in listening (versus hearing) to the opinions of others.

Erickson and Gmelch (1977:10) also refer to McGregor's Theory Y manager as being appropriate for team management:

...administrators holding Theory Y assumptions about their employees would find that the team management concept provides opportunities for a more effective operation of their school or school system. The Theory Y administrator believes that team members are basically self-directed, creative, motivated to become self-actualized, and that they desire to make contributions and decisions that will enhance organizational goals. Team management would,

therefore, unleash the type "Y" potential in each member.

It becomes apparent upon relating the findings of this study to various related theories in personnel supervision, that the perspectives of these assistant principals have many implications for the selection, training, and development of staff in the quest for effective leadership.

#### IMPLICATIONS

The findings and consequent conclusions of this study have implications for school districts, principals, assistant principals, universities, and for further research. However, since this study focused on the perspectives of only six elementary school assistant principals, generalizability must be considered in terms of comparability; and the implications of this discovery study take the form of questions to be considered, contemplative suggestions, rather than directives.

#### Implications For School Districts

Based on the degree of transferability and applicability of the context of this study to the school district's environment, the following implications may be valuable in the development of policies regarding assistant

principalships in elementary schools.

In view of the findings of this study, including both the positive aspects and the negative aspects of the role as perceived by the subjects; and considering the relationship of the findings of this study to the related studies cited in the literature review, school districts could:

---provide for greater role definition, so that less is left to chance that it will be both a training ground and an administrative position which is contributing to the effectiveness of the school.

---identify duties which are deemed to be applicable to the assistant principalship system wide, which could then be utilized as the basis for the job description of assistant principals.

---provide direction and training on system wide policies and procedures regarding such areas as budget, evaluation, discipline, effectiveness strategies, and public relations skills; including orientation for new assistant principals and updating inservices for incumbents.

---consider a more structured, specified job description and training program for beginning assistant principals; and less structure, more flexibility, freedom, authority, and responsibility for experienced and career assistant principals.

---encourage rotation of duties within the school to broaden the experience of assistant principals.

---consider instituting a program for assistant principals to visit different schools in order to broaden their experience and to expose them to different methods and new ideas.

---provide opportunities for assistant principals to meet with other administrators periodically in order to share ideas and concerns as a means of increasing awareness of alternatives and of providing stimulation and motivation.

---provide assistant principals with a contact person in central office to discuss issues and concerns.

---ensure that appropriate and adequate administrative time is granted to assistant principals.

---encourage school administrators to consider alternative teaching assignments which could allow for greater flexibility, and possibly increased interaction with a greater number of students in the school.

---consider stressing formative evaluation of teachers by assistant principals to maximize the advantages of the middle man position and of the collegial model.

---provide career information describing the various aspects of the position for individuals considering an assistant principalship to enhance realistic job previews.

---involve principals in the selection process to enhance compatibility of the administrators within the school.

---provide direction for principals on the training of assistant principals.

---stress administrative teams in school administration; including provision for training on what constitutes an administrative team, and how to work as members of an administrative team.

#### Implications For School Administrators

School administrators could:

---ensure that they are familiar with the advantages of an administrative team, including understanding the characteristics of administrative teams.

---assess their own functioning as a team.

---set up scheduled administration meeting times to enhance communication and understanding.

---provide for rotation of administrative duties.

#### Implications For Future Assistant Principals

Individuals aspiring to assistant principalships could:

---broaden their experience base by teaching different grades, and accepting a variety of responsibilities.

---assume leadership duties in the school and community.

---extend their educational base by taking administration courses and curriculum courses.

---develop their personal educational philosophy

---consider their potential for making a contribution to education in a broader way.

### Implications For Universities

Universities could:

---ensure that courses are available which will provide educational training for educational leaders.

---offer courses on budgeting, teacher appraisal, effectiveness strategies, administrative teams, and communication skills.

---consult with, and advise school districts, regarding optimum utilization and development of school personnel.

### Implications For Further Research

This study, which focused on six assistant principals, generated findings which could provide the basis for further research in order to determine the degree of generalizability of the study; and to gain broader perspectives of administrative roles, teaching roles, and other occupational roles. Some possible areas of further research are studies to:

---assess the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of teaching assignment combinations with assistant principalships.

---determine the characteristics and experiences which contribute to successful assistant principalships in preparation for principalships.

---assess the advantages and disadvantages experienced by schools which have, or do not have, assistant principals.

---assess the advantages and disadvantages of administrative teams in schools.

---determine the effect of types of teacher evaluation on the communication and relationship between staff and school administrators.

--- relate job enrichment theories to administrative positions.

---determine the extent of gender distinction in application for, and appointment to, administrative positions.

---relate adult development theories to such aspects of the assistant principalship as motivation, training, assignment, development, and promotion.

---determine the feasibility and desirability of an apprenticeship program for assistant principals.

The study could be replicated to:

---determine the degree of generalizability of this study to elementary school assistant principalships.

---assess whether similar perspectives are evident in other administrative positions and in teaching positions.

---assess whether individuals in other second in authority positions in other occupations hold similar perspectives of their role.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
LETTER TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS  
PILOT STUDY

## APPENDIX A. LETTER TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS --- PILOT STUDY

64 Manor Drive  
Sherwood Park, Alberta  
T8A 0S4  
April 30, 1984

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to express my appreciation to you for agreeing to participate in my study on the role of the elementary school assistant principal in selected schools in Alberta.

As we discussed in our telephone conversation, this study will be qualitative in nature with the intention of providing insights into the present role of the elementary assistant principal. Descriptive analysis, based primarily upon in-depth interviews with six assistant principals within three different school jurisdictions will be used to generate categories of perspectives which may lead to further research questions or future hypotheses, studies, and policies.

Your part in this study will be as one of two participants in the pilot study, which will assist me in defining and refining the techniques for the study.

Again, thank you for including the participation in this study in your already full and busy schedule.

Sincerely,

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APPENDIX B  
LETTER TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS  
ACTUAL STUDY

## APPENDIX B. LETTER TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS --- ACTUAL STUDY

64 Manor Drive  
Sherwood Park, Alberta  
T8A 0S4  
April 30, 1984

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to express my appreciation to you for agreeing to participate in my study on the role of the elementary school assistant principal in selected schools in Alberta. This study is the basis for my master's thesis in Educational Administration.

As we discussed in our telephone conversation, the study will be qualitative in nature with the intention of providing insights into the present role of the elementary assistant principal. Descriptive analysis, based primarily upon in-depth interviews with six assistant principals within three different school districts will be used to generate categories of perspectives which may lead to further research questions or future hypotheses, studies, and policies.

I have received written permission from \_\_\_\_\_ School District to conduct the study.

Again, thank you for including the participation in this study in your already full and busy schedule.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX C  
LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

## APPENDIX C. LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

64 Manor Drive  
Sherwood Park, Alberta  
T8A 0S4  
April 30, 1984

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your permission and cooperation in allowing me to work at your school with your assistant principal on my study of the role of the elementary school assistant principal in selected schools in Alberta. This study is the basis for my master's thesis in Educational Administration.

As we discussed in our telephone conversation, the study will be qualitative in nature with the intention of providing insights into the present role of the elementary assistant principals. Descriptive analysis, based primarily upon in-depth interviews with six assistant principals within three different school districts will be used to generate categories of perspectives which may lead to further research questions or future hypotheses, studies and policies.

I have received written permission from the \_\_\_\_\_ School District to conduct the study.

Again, thank you for your cooperation and consequent contribution to research in education.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D  
BEGINNING INTERVIEW GUIDE

## APPENDIX D. BEGINNING INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What has been your educational and professional background?
2. Describe your present situation: school size, student population, staff size, special programs, administrative time....
3. Tell me about the elementary assistant principalship; what is it like being an assistant principal?
4. How did you get this position?
5. What were your feelings upon receiving this position?
6. What are your current feelings regarding your position?
7. What are your duties as an assistant principal?
8. What contributes to the fulfillment or rewards of your position?
9. Can you think of something in the last month or two that made you feel that this position was worthwhile?
10. What are the frustrations associated with the position?
11. Can you think of something which has occurred within the last month or two that made you feel that this position is not worthwhile?
12. To what extent do you perceive this position to be transitory, leading to a principalship?
13. To what extent do you perceive this position to be a training ground?
14. What do you perceive to be the future of the position in your school district?
15. What do you consider the potential of the role to be?
16. What suggestions would you have for achieving the potential of the assistant principal?

APPENDIX E

EXPANDED INTERVIEW GUIDE AND INITIAL CATEGORIES

## APPENDIX E. EXPANDED INTERVIEW GUIDE AND INITIAL CATEGORIES

At the start of the interview, the researcher will:

Provide background for the study

Describe methodology

Assure confidentiality

Ask for questions

## Interview Questions:

1. What has been your educational and professional background?
2. Describe your present situation: school size, student population, staff size, special programs, administrative time....
3. Tell me about the elementary assistant principalship; what is it like being an assistant principal?
4. How did you get this position?
5. What were your feelings upon receiving this position?
6. Have your feelings changed since you first got your position?
7. What are your current feelings regarding your position?
8. What are your duties as an assistant principal?
9. Who prescribes your duties?
10. What is a typical day like? What is a typical week like?
11. What are your hours of work?
12. To what extent are your duties disciplinary or clerical/custodial in nature?
13. What contributes to the fulfillment or rewards of your position?



14. Can you think of something in the last month or two that made you feel that this position was worthwhile?

15. What are the frustrations associated with the position?

16. Can you think of something which has occurred within the last month or two that made you feel that this position is not worthwhile?

17. To what extent do you perceive this position to be transitory, leading to a principalship?

18. What if this position was not transitory, how would you feel?

19. To what extent do you perceive this position to be a training ground?

20. What constitutes your training?

21. What do you perceive to be the future of the position in your school district?

22. How essential do you consider assistant principals to be to the running of the school?

23. What do you consider the potential of the role to be?

24. What would you advise someone wanting to become an assistant principal?

25. What suggestions would you have for achieving the potential of the assistant principal?

26. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?

APPENDIX F

EXPANDED CATEGORIES FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

## APPENDIX F. EXPANDED CATEGORIES FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Why they applied for the job.

How they got the job.

Feelings about getting the job.

Improvements envisioned.

Feelings about the position now.

Improvements achieved.

Training.

A training ground.

Dependency on principal.

Transitory.

What if not transitory.

Promotion opportunities.

Duties.

Discipline.

Clerical duties.

Supervision of staff.

Description of the role.

How duties decided.

Relationship with teachers.

Middle person.

Relationship with students.

Relationship with principal.

Affect on teaching.

Hours of work.

Critical incident --- worthwhile.

Major rewards.

Critical incident --- not worthwhile.

Major frustrations.

Suggestions for the role: training, duties, evaluation.

Role essential.

Future of the role.

Advice to others.

Gender distinction.

Administrative team.

Potential of the role.

Affect on personal life.

Areas in need of further training, experience.

Self evaluation.

Future aspirations.

APPENDIX G

FINAL CATEGORIES WITHIN THEMES

## APPENDIX G. FINAL CATEGORIES WITHIN THEMES

## I. VISION FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Why They Applied
2. How They Felt When They Got The Job
3. Types of Visions
4. Visions That Have Been Realized

## II. THINGS CHANGE WHEN YOU BECOME AN ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

5. First Feelings
6. Teaching Changed
7. Relationship With Students
8. Relationship With Teachers
9. Relationship With Principal
10. Other Changes

## III. A TRAINING GROUND

11. A Training Ground --- Transitory
12. Outlooks on Promotion
13. Assistant Principalship As A Career
14. Dependency On The Principal
15. Aspects of Training
16. Responsibility For Their Own Success
17. Self-evaluation of Readiness For Promotion

## IV. A JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

18. What The Job Is Like
19. Hours Of Work
20. Disciplinarian
21. Clerical/Custodial
22. Supervision
23. Rewards
24. Frustrations
25. Characteristics

## V. POTENTIAL OF THE ROLE

26. Essential Role
27. Predicted Future Of The Role
28. Administrative Team (Suggestions)
29. Assignment (Suggestions)
30. Training (Suggestions)
31. Evaluation (Suggestions)

## MISCELLANEOUS CATEGORIES

32. Gender
33. Personal Future

