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The interplay of formal and informal rule systems in government primary schools

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**THE INTERPLAY OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL RULE
SYSTEMS IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

BY

Raymond Knight B.Ed.

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of
Master of Education
at the Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University**

Date of Submission: 20th February 1996

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the effect of regulation upon the practices and behaviours of teachers within a bureaucratic educational organisation. More specifically, the study has been designed to understand how teachers make sense of the rules and regulations of their organisation and to identify strategies that they apply to make the rules serve these interests. The rule system theory of Swedish sociologists, Burns and Flam, was employed to inform the study.

Thirty teachers, employed at two school sites, were included in this qualitative study. The initial data were collected by questionnaires and a survey of formal rules. From this initial population a stratified sample of fourteen people was selected for interview. Eight subjects were interviewed a second time. The data collected by these means was coded according to its correspondence to the research questions raised for the study.

The most significant finding arising from this study was that teachers' knowledge and level of consciousness of the rules and regulations were minimal. Information that they did have was gained through immersion in their workplace and contained a great deal of informal or cultural lore, based upon approximations of the actual regulations. The teachers tended to rely on the principal of the school for information about what was permissible and what was not, including role reference direction. All of the teachers interviewed reported that they had an obligation to work within the rules and regulations, even though, as indicated above, they were not aware of the specifics of the formal rule system.

A second significant finding related to the responses of the school administrators. Unlike the teachers, their knowledge of the rules was comprehensive but they reported that they often 'interpreted' the regulations, seeking the 'spirit' rather than the 'letter' of the rule. They all reported that they believed the rules to be out-dated and, in many cases, irrelevant. Some of the administrators interviewed reported negative attitudes towards the regulations, bordering on contempt in one case. The principals reported that they disregarded many of the rules when they felt impeded by them. The only exceptions were rules that carried negative sanctions for non-compliance. Therefore, much of the school level regulation was based on approximations of the official rules and regulations developed by the principal, who assured compliance amongst their staff.

It is clear from this study that descriptions of schools as rule governed institutions are oversimplifications of how the formal and informal rule systems, as suggested by Burns and Flam, serve to steer bureaucratic organisations. Senior administrators use the formal rules to establish and bolster their power and authority; at the same time they use considerable discretion in applying or ignoring official rules in order to accomplish what they determine is in the interests of the school.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and to the best of my knowledge does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature...



Date.....20.2.96.....

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Aim of the Study

The pivotal question of this study asks how members of an organisation exhibiting a 'rule culture' make sense of rules and regulations of their organisation. Specifically, the study will determine how primary school teachers within the Education Department of Western Australia make sense of the rules and regulations of their organisation.

The Education Department of Western Australia, as with any large organisation exhibiting a bureaucratic type of management philosophy, has a strong and visible 'rule culture'. As such it has a large body of prescriptive and technically complex rules that are designed to structure and control the actions of its members.

Bureaucratic organisations are characterised by Katz and Kahn (1978) as having strictly formalised sets of rules that determine role and role relationships within the organisation, including clearly defined line management structures. These rules are intended to maintain a standardisation or uniformity of practice across the organisation. Decision making is centralised, members of the organisation are controlled by their immediate line supervisor and there is little freedom for individuality.

Typically, the rules and regulations define domination relations between the various members of the organisation, clearly separating and delineating roles for staff and administration personnel and designating line management structures. Essentially all

facets of the organisation are managed by the existence, creation and maintenance of these rules (Leslie, 1976, Backler & Shimmin, 1984).

The existence of all these rules and regulations is justified by the executive members of the organisation, who are responsible for their creation, on the grounds that rules govern and control behaviour. If they wish to make any changes to their organisation they achieve them through the creation of a new rule or by altering an existing one.

Hence, there exists within organisations with amplified rule cultures a large body of technically complex rules and regulations. The effect of all this regulation on an organisation is somewhat problematic, based as it is on the premise that the creation of a rule to effect changes is enough in itself. However, is this truly the case?

Essentially, this study seeks to isolate some of the specific strategies employed by teachers to make the rules work for them. Do people blindly follow the rules and regulations or do they 'adjust' them to suit their particular situation? Do they rely on others to interpret the rules for them and provide a role reference for them or do they possess a comprehensive knowledge of the rules themselves? How can we account for differences between schools if they all operate within this supposed 'rule culture'? These are some of the questions that the study will address.

The role of informal rule systems in shaping the behaviour of individual members of an organisation will also be examined during the study.

Burns and Flam (1987), define rule systems as being complex sets or collection of rules, both implicit and explicit, that regulate and structure social transactions between

people. These rules determine who may participate in the transaction, their role within the transactional relationship and even whom may transact with whom. This is a simplification of what is a highly complex situation.

Relevance of the Study

Notwithstanding the importance governments attach to rule making, little is known about this important aspect of organisational culture. Few studies have been undertaken in this area, a situation highlighted by the lack of relevant or appropriate material located during the literature review carried out for this dissertation.

This study is, therefore, highly relevant within the current context of the Western Australian government educational system. The Western Australian government education system or 'EDWA', is currently undergoing dramatic change in the area of educational regulation. The most significant of these changes being the re-drafting of the Education Act (1928), the legislation that gives the Western Australian Government the authority and the responsibility for providing a public education system for the citizens of Western Australia (Knot et al., 1977; Birch, 1976; Shorten, 1995).

Before undertaking major overhauls of the official rule system it would be valuable to discover how people interpret and decipher the current rule system. Such an analysis would facilitate the creation of a new rule system that better suits the situation, building on what works and altering what does not. This study goes some way towards informing such a regulatory reform program.

Since commencing this study, it has become evident that there is a popular assumption held by a number of people within the education system in Western Australia that the

entire current regulatory framework is somewhat antiquated, not having kept up with changes to the system as a whole, nor reflecting modern educational or organisational practices (Angus, 1994) .

Attempts have been made from time to time to maintain the currency of the system, mainly through amendments and deletions of many of the official regulations and significant changes to parts of the Education Act itself, but these have tended to be piecemeal and appear to have little impact on the operation of the school system. Changes to the Act and its associated Regulations must be done through parliament, a slow and not always efficient method of change.

In response to this state of affairs, the current Coalition Government has undertaken to re-draft the Education Act (1928) and its associated regulations. The rewritten act has not yet been released. Details of specific changes have also not been forthcoming. However, it has been confirmed in a pamphlet released by the project team undertaking the changes, that the new Act and Regulations will reflect the current trend towards devolution and the decentralisation of many school management functions (Education Department of W.A. 1995).

Industrial action instituted by the State School Teachers' Union against the Government has somewhat delayed the introduction of the new legislation. The Union fears that the new legislation contains specific changes to the working conditions of teachers, not yet agreed to between teachers and the government. In the face of legislative reform in industrial relations, which has already been put into effect the Union's fears are understandable.

Governments and unions are willing to go to war over the contents of legislation and subsidiary regulations because they believe in the power of regulation to control actions. The question addressed in this study is whether their belief in power of official regulation to shape behaviour is soundly based or whether their confidence is misplaced.

The Contents of the Education Act and Parliamentary Regulations.

Currently the regulatory system consists of three distinctive levels. The first level contains parliamentary statutes or acts. The Education Act is the prime statute relating to education in Western Australia, providing the legal basis of schooling in Western Australia (Boer & Gleeson, 1982; Shorten, 1995). The Act itself is very general, covering five broad areas.

The first area relates to the administration of schooling, detailing the use of land for schooling and the process for appointing school officers and teachers, including procedures for disciplining teachers. This portion of the Act contains the contentious Section 7c, which gives the Director General of Education the power to suspend and ultimately dismiss a teacher for misconduct. The notoriety of this provision stems from accusations made by the State School Teachers' Union that this very powerful tool is misused by the Education Department.

The second area is entitled 'Schools and Other Means of Public Education'. Detailed in this section is the power of the Minister of Education to establish and maintain public schools. Also contained in this section are provisions for financial assistance to non-government schools.

The third section of the Act refers to the attendance of children at school. Specifically this section refers to guidelines for the setting of fees at government schools, compulsion for children to attend school, details of the age at which a child may leave school, provisions for the suspension and expulsion of children from school, provisions for truant children, including the powers of the School Welfare Officer, and the education of children with special needs.

The fourth section deals with the establishment of School Decision Making Groups (SDMG) at government schools. The School Decision Making Groups are established at schools for the purposes of enabling parents and members of the local community to participate in the formulation of educational objectives and priorities for the school. In practical terms the SDMG makes policy decisions concerning the operation of the school. The SDMG is composed of an equal number of parents and teachers, with the school principal being the chairperson. The SDMG is not able to exercise authority over staff nor interfere with the control and management of the school.

The next section of the Act deals with the Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&C's) established within school communities. The P&C is a body composed of members of the school community, usually parents of children at the school, whose purpose is to help provide facilities and amenities for children at the school. This is usually accomplished through the raising of funds that are then passed onto the school for a specific purpose. Parent delegates to the School Decision Making Group are elected from within the membership of the P&C.

The second layer or level of the regulatory framework is the Education Act Regulations (1960). The Regulations are an example of subordinate legislation or statutory rules and

regulations as outlined by Shorten (1995). The Education Act (1928) gives the Education Department the authority to construct specific operational regulations to manage the organisation. The Regulations are more specific in nature and content than the Education Act elements (Mitchell, 1978; Birch, 1976).

However, the Regulations themselves are not very specific either. They are stated in very broad details and have limited coverage. For example, the only Regulation that refers to how planning for instruction is to be undertaken is Regulation 177. Regulation 177 states that a teacher shall divide the programme of work for each year level into monthly blocks using the forms provided by the Education Department. There is no mention of the depth of this planning, the elements required in the plan or the source of the curriculum from which the instruction plans are to be derived. Regulation 177 is a broad description of what should occur, but offers little guidance as to how this may occur.

Many of the Regulations are out of date and do not tend to reflect current organisational and educational practice. For example, Regulation 52 refers to the procedure relating to the treatment of costs incurred by a school when holding an interschool sports carnival. This regulation does not take into account the substantial changes to the way schools handle their financial affairs effected by the introduction of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. From time to time amendments are made to incorporate significant changes in EDWA policy, such as the banning of corporal punishment in schools in 1984.

Another example of the extent to which the Regulations are out of date and do not reflect current educational practice is demonstrated by Regulation 177 part 2. This regulation refers to the requirement that teachers have their programme of work signed

by the principal of the school. This requirement was removed with the introduction of the 1991 Memorandum of Agreement negotiated between the Education Department of Western Australia and the State School Teachers Union of Western Australia (S.S.T.U.W.A & E.D.W.A., 1990).

The third level or layer of the regulatory framework is the policy statements and directives. In addition to the Act and Regulations there is a plethora of rules issued by the Education Department in the form of policy statements and administrative instructions. These policy statements represent the third layer of the regulatory framework. Originally many policy statements, outlining operational procedures were outlined in a single volume, entitled 'Administrative Instructions'. The 'Administrative Instructions' are outdated and are generally not used.

On some occasions policy statements are well documented and well publicised, issued in glossy and expensive brochures or come in well organised and presented files, such as the policy dealing with the management of asbestos building products in schools. Other examples include the booklets that outline departmental policy in four key areas: school decision making; school financial planning and management; school accountability and school development planning (Ministry of Education, 1991-1990).

However, this is the exception rather than the rule. Many policy decisions are issued through memoranda to the school principal, which often do not leave the principal's office and are only sighted by them, other policy decisions are published in Education Department circulars and magazines. It is arguable that most of these policy deliberations

are documented somewhere, however, locating them is extremely difficult for school staff.

Policy decisions or statements made at the discretion of the Director General of Education or his delegated subordinates now appear in the *Education Circular* or are posted directly to each school. The *Education Circular*, now known as *School Matters*, is published monthly and contains information about personnel matters, transfers, promotions, positions and the like, as well as changes to administrative procedures. This magazine represents the Education Department's primary method of communication between itself and its teaching staff.

These statements reflect current departmental policy. Policy statements are issued constantly to maintain departmental direction. The organisation of this policy documentation is generally poor and haphazard. These statements are generally not stored in any one central area, but throughout the various editions and versions of the various circulars, it is very difficult to examine the current rules for a particular operational matter for this reason.

This maze of rules has been designed to control the operation of the Education Department. Whether it does so, and under what conditions, are questions that will be examined by the study.

Relevant Background Literature

The literature search conducted for this study revealed that little work has been undertaken in this important area of educational administration. Much of the relevant literature focuses on the formal regulations as the main source of regulatory structure

within an organisation, following the Weberian bureaucratic view of organisations. The issue of informal regulation is usually considered under the heading of 'organisational culture' or workplace socialisation and to some extent has been down played. My personal experience as a classroom teacher, working within the government school system, would indicate to me that the informal regulations of the organisation often have a more important, but less obvious, effect upon the organisation than do the formal rules and regulations. The detailed study that is being undertaken can perhaps provide the answer to this conundrum.

Of the literature examined, the work of Burns and Flam (1987) has been the most comprehensive, especially their work in the area of informal rule construction. Their theories on the creation of informal regulation within an organisation proved particularly helpful.

Burns and Flam (1987), argue that modern organisations are complex, natural social environments controlled by a combination of formal institutional rules imposed by the owners or power figures of the organisation; and multiple informal rule systems produced and implemented by the subordinate members of the organisation. The formal rules, irrespective of how stringently enforced, cannot totally exclude the influence of informal rules. An organisation could not operate on the basis of its formal rule structures alone. The formal rules could not be comprehensive enough to cover every circumstance that may arise in the day to day life of the organisation. The informal rules arise as a consequence of, and in response to, the formal rules. Informal rule structures are a dynamic social construct, almost organic living entities, undergoing constant change as they are reformulated by the members of the organisation to suit the changing

needs and conditions within the organisation. Consequently, it would be difficult to map and identify an organisation's informal rule structures.

One possible theory to explain how teachers make sense of the rules, advanced by Burns and Flam (1987), is that people within bureaucratic organisations develop their own informal rules and regulations in order to make sense of the formal regulations. The formal rules and regulations in themselves are insufficient to provide a regulatory framework within which members of the organisation may function.

Characteristically, formal rules and regulations are written in very broad and generalised terms to enable the rules to provide as much regulatory coverage as possible. This lack of specificity leads to the creation of informal rules by the operational members of the organisation. The generalised rules do not provide enough guidance for members of the organisation to apply rule to specific decisions. Members of the organisation are then forced to construct or interpret their own specific rules to provide this structure.

The formal rule systems are the legitimate or legal means of social control for the organisation, but in part are replaced by informal rule sets or structures which control the day to day, specific operations of the organisation. The lack of specificity of the formal rules and regulations is directly responsible for the creation of the informal or operational rules.

This study takes Burns and Flam's (1987) supposition a step further by examining how individual teachers take account of the formal rule regimes by embedding them in complex informal rule structures that operate in schools.

CHAPTER 2 - A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter addresses the question of why people follow rules. The chapter is written principally according to the sociological perspective of rule following behaviour, though includes elements of organisational psychology.

It is imperative for the study that there is an understanding of rule compliance. The review examines socialisation, the general forces shaping a person's life role and a general view of formal and informal rules and most importantly theories relating to rule interpretation. It will become evident as this chapter is read that there is considerable research available on the sociological perspective of general rule following, but very little relating to how people actually decipher the rules in order to make sense of them.

Socialisation

When individuals enter a workplace organisation they bring with them a basic perception of what life will be like within that particular organisation. This perception is based upon the socialisation experiences that this person has received over their life-time (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1974; Giddens, 1989; Olsen, 1978; Katz and Kahn, 1978).

Robertson (1981, p105), defines socialisation as being "the process of social interaction through which people acquire personality and learn the way of life of their society". Socialisation is a life long process, as individuals constantly encounter new or changing conditions and must learn to adjust or adapt to them (Robertson, 1983; Scott, 1970, Parsons, 1967).

The process of socialisation involves various sources of influences. Four of the most important of these are: the family; the school; the peer group and the mass media. The workplace is another strong, often overlooked, agent of socialisation. All organisations socialise their participants to some extent (Scott, 1970).

Handy (1976), nominates four principal forms of organisational socialisation. The first form is labelled 'schooling' and refers to formal instruction in the history, traditions, language, technology and structures of the organisation. This can take the form of induction or pre-service training. The educational equivalent to this would be pre-service teacher training. This training can be extremely powerful as the individual, who is in the process of becoming a teacher, already has strong understandings or preconceptions of what it is like to be a teacher, through their own experiences gained during their previous education.

A second form is apprenticeship, where an individual is assigned to another individual or small groups of individuals to learn their skills, their values and, if possible, their judgement and expertise. The educational equivalent of this would be the induction of new teachers to a school or the mentoring of new principals to a district.

The third form of organisational socialisation is 'co-option'. With co-option individuals are made members of progressively inner groups in the organisation. The new individual adapts his/her behaviour and attitudes to resemble those of the desired group. When the individual finally becomes a member of the inner group he or she is likely to be fully in tune with the names and customs of the group. Co-option is an important form of workplace socialisation within an educational organisation, only 'schooling' would have a greater influence upon an individual teacher. The inner group would be the individual

school at which the teacher was employed. Through the use of school policies, norms and informal rules, other members of the group ensure that new members of the organisation follow the culture. In some schools this can range from a particular chair in the staffroom to the teaching of certain subjects within the curriculum. Of particular interest to this thesis is the effect and importance of these informal rules within the school culture.

Handy's (1976), fourth form of organisational socialisation is 'mortification'. Under mortification the individual is harassed, deprived of their identity and forced into conformity by punishment or ridicule. The survivors of this socialisation will tend to feel close identity with the norms of the institution. This form of socialisation is best linked to total organisations such as military training institutions.

Most organisations use a mixture of the four methods or forms, but usually one method will predominate. If the preferred method of influence is rules and regulations then schooling will be the most appropriate. If values and standards are to be acquired then apprenticeship must be included. Whatever the initial mode of socialisation, co-option will increasingly be the dominant form of organisational socialisation as the individual rises to the top of the organisation.

Katz & Kahn (1978) see the entry of a new person into an ongoing organisation as a new intersection of two existing systems, the area of intersection characterised by cycles of behaviour, continuing some aspects of the previous system and are unique products of their union. The person entering the organisation encounters a role-set and an array of role expectations that are peculiar to that position. The person taking the job brings with them a set of expectations about jobs in general, this job in particular and a pattern of

motive, beliefs, roles and obligations. Some form of accommodation must be reached to enable this person to reconcile the two role sets and become a member of the new organisation.

Role Determination

Robertson (1983), states that one of the most important effects of socialisation upon the individual is the creation of a sense of role, how the individual believes that he or she should behave. A person's role is determined largely by the status group that a person occupies. Each person in society possesses a socially defined position, called a status. People generally occupy different status groups at the one time, determined by occupation, marital situation or the like. A person's occupational status is perhaps the most important, a master status, determined by the wealth, power and prestige of the person's position.

The way that people of a certain status behave is defined as their role. The particular role a person of a particular status group plays is determined largely by the expectations of other people and society in general. Role expectations are a very powerful control mechanism within an organisation. Society has very strong expectations of how members of certain organisations should behave and the values that they should possess.

Within organisations that are essentially bureaucratic in nature, such as the educational organisation under study in this thesis, role sets and role expectations are extremely important. These types of organisations are said to have a role culture. Within a role culture there are strict procedures for the determination of authority and job descriptions, each is firmly and clearly set. These procedures are coordinated by a narrow band of senior management. Within this culture the position is more important than the person

who holds it. Most importantly rules and procedures are the major methods of influence (Handy, 1976, Salaman, 1979).

Patterns of behaviour within a role are largely determined by norms, values, mores and folkways. Norms are shared rules or guidelines which prescribe the behaviour which is appropriate in a certain given situation. Norms are unwritten and explicit, conformity is often automatic. Within an organisation norms may refer to methods of reward and sanction and mode of address to subordinates (Robertson, 1983; Handy, 1976; Scott, 1970).

Katz and Kahn (1978) assert that system norms, those which we would expect to find within an organisation, refer to the expected behaviour sanctioned by the system and have a specific quality, they make explicit the forms of behaviour for the members of the system.

Group sanctions, imposed upon individuals who deviate from the accepted norms of the group or organisation are extremely powerful tools in ensuring compliance. Membership of a group is extremely important in developing and maintaining an individual's sense of identity and esteem.

Values are socially shared ideas of what is right and wrong. Values are abstract concepts, where norms are behavioural rules and guidelines. Mores are stronger norms, morally significant, often having sanctions attached for non-compliance. Folkways refer to ordinary usages and conventions of everyday life, literally the way of folk (Robertson, 1981, Giddens, 1989).

Role reference is no doubt a very powerful control mechanism for determining the behaviour of teachers. Teachers, even before they begin their teaching career have experienced a lengthy socialisation concerning the way teachers should or should not behave; primarily as students themselves and then during their pre-service training. Everybody in society, those who have attended school, whether they are teachers or not also have this specific knowledge and experience.

This position is a simplification of what is an extremely complicated process, but serves to illustrate some of the more important controls that impact upon individuals within an organisation and society in general. This point is supported by Scott (1970) who believes that the behaviour of individual members of the organisation is not completely determined by the rules and expectations governing their behaviour. Systems of formal rules and regulations overlap the informal rule systems. The purpose of this study is to understand their considerable effect on the operation of schools.

Rules and Regulations

In the Weberian scheme of things, rules within an organisation define officially the roles and role relationship of individual members within that organisation. Rules are a form of communication to those who are seen as wishing to evade responsibilities, avoid commitments or withhold full performance of obligations. Rules draw the worker's attention to managerial expectations. The rules explicate the worker's task whilst they shape and specify his/her relationship to their superior (Scott, 1970; Collett, 1977). The documentation and formalisation of rules also provide a substitute for the personal repetition of orders from the supervisor.

A somewhat less antagonistic view of rule and regulations is expressed by Handy (1976), who states that rules protect liberty as well as restricting it. Rules also sanction behaviour as well as prohibiting it. Wilson (1971, p87) expresses this point eloquently:

Rules are embedded in our culture. There are complicated sound-making rules that allow us to communicate with one another. There are rules that say what we must do to feed, clothe and shelter ourselves. Others tell us how to resolve conflicts and make decisions. These and a thousand rules represent our common understandings about what is and what ought to be. They constitute the core of culture.

Burns and Flam (1987, p17), see rules as a social construct, embedded within social interaction between individuals:

[The rules] determine who participates, who does not; who does what, where, when and how and in relation to whom. In particular, rules define the rights and obligations, including possible rules of command and obedience governing specific categories of roles. All established or institutionalised social relationships between individuals and groups are structured and regulated by social rule systems which are shared by those who participate in these relationships and which orient them to one another.

These rules specify who participates in a social relationship, how the participants should act. They organise and regulate transactions among participating agents. The concept of a social rule structure determining relationships between different people, as advanced by Burns and Flam (1987), is more definite than the traditional sociological view that all

social relationships are determined by the existence of vague and ethereal norms, values, mores and folkways.

As Giddens (1984), points out rule systems should not simply be conceived as just social constraints or limitations on action possibilities. They can be seen as templates for strategic guidelines. They reduce social uncertainty and provide possibilities for people to behave in ways that would have not otherwise been possible. The rules give stability and continuity to social activity.

Communication, as a form of social interaction is also determined by social rules, ensuring clear communication between individuals. This can be as simple as turn taking in conversation or as abstract as to whom they may talk with and under what circumstances this may occur.

Burns and Flam (1987), define rules as belonging to one of three types: constitutive, socially strategic and actor specific. Constitutive rules determine rules of social conduct and social grammars that constitute and determine social relationships and organisational structures, including the role than an individual may play. Socially strategic rules refer to rules that are shared and largely determine actions that an individual may undertake in certain situations, essentially action rules. The third level of rules are those which are specific to a certain individual, also known as personal rule structures and roles.

Formal Rules

According to Scott (1970), explicit formal rules are often created to substitute for implicit informal rules. These numerous values, beliefs and understandings are somewhat codified and organised so as to form a more or less consistent form of formal and informal

expectations that orient and are expected to govern the behaviour of all participants. Scott is saying that in many cases formal rules are derived from pre-existing informal ones. An informal folk law or custom may exist already, it has strong popular support and is eventually formalised into a statute law.

In bureaucracies formal rules are formulated by authorities and power holders to control the means of production. These rules are codified in administrative codes and handbooks, often having, in the case of governmental instrumentalities, the force of law (Burns and Flam, 1987).

In recent times there has been a sheer growth in the number of rules and regulations created within educational organisations. This activity is based a belief that the introduction of formal rules is sufficient to control behaviour and more importantly within the context of modern educational organisations, control and regulate change and reform (Kirp & Jensen, 1986).

Informal rules

Within the boundaries of every formal organisation, informal rules will arise. The members of the organisation develop their own practices, values, norms and social relations as they interact with one another. Official rules must be general enough to have sufficient scope to cover the multitude of situations that arise. Application of the general rules often causes problems of judgement, informal practices arise to provide solutions for the problems created by this generality. Decisions not anticipated by official regulations must frequently be made. In highly bureaucratic organisations there is a plethora of rules. Some activities are too complex to be circumscribed by highly explicit rules. Under these circumstances rule-makers are obliged to construct rules that are

general in nature so as to cover every contingency or situation that may conceivably occur within that organisation. Typically they do not cover every contingency and members of the organisation are forced to construct their own sub rules to cover these situations and therefore ensure the continued functioning of that organisation (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1986; Burns and Flam 1983). In these circumstances informal rule systems develop.

Rule systems structure and regulate social transactions as well as define the institutional framework of the organisation. Social rule systems are composed of a mixture of formal and informal rule structures. Burns and Flam's (1987), suggest that the informal rules, those created by the participants in the organisation, are of equal or perhaps greater importance in shaping the particular organisation and controlling the activities of the personnel within the organisation.

These formal and informal rule systems, according to Burns and Flam (1987), are constantly implemented, reformulated and interpreted by the participants within the organisation. The 'actors' or 'social agents' as Burns and Flam (1987), refer to the human elements within the organisation, change the system of rules to adapt to a new situation, new rules are created, others disregarded and some re-interpreted to fit the particular situation. The actors are also the carriers, perhaps even custodians of social rule systems, active often creative forces, shaping and reshaping social structures and institutions through the reconstruction of social norms and the organisation and formulation of internal rules.

Activity to make changes to the rule systems is often accidental and a result of people's interaction with and use of the rules, but these changes can also be undertaken for other

reasons. For example, one member of the organisation, or more likely a group of individuals, may undertake to effect changes to the rules in order to gain power or within the organisation or to deny other members of the organisation power and influence. Organisations external to the main organisation, such as trade unions may also wish to alter the structure of the organisation to benefit their membership to the detriment of other members of the organisation not of this group.

Any organisation, even those with well defined rules and regulations, will experience changes, as they are not and cannot ever be fixed, due to the effect of changes instituted by the human elements of their organisation and the effects of inevitable social change or movement itself.

Burns and Flam (1987), also believe that within a single organisation there may be a number of different, even contradictory rule systems. This situation can lead to conflict between the different members of the organisation, operating with different rule systems. However, one rule system may be dominant within the organisation. Burns and Flam do not elaborate on this point, but this researcher believes that the dominant rule system within most organisations would be the published, shared and formal rules and regulations of that organisation.

As distinct from many other writers in this field of organisational sociology, Burns and Flam (1987), acknowledge the relative importance of informal rules within the organisation, not merely aggregate them under the heading of norms. Informal rules play a much greater and less obvious role in determining the behaviour of people within an organisation. They see prescribed and operative rules as falling into four groups: moral codes, akin to norms in the traditional sense; constitutions, referring to laws and

administrative regulations both in theory and practice, encompassing both the written, theoretical formal rules and the informal operational rules; administrative organising principles, rules which determine role and communication and rules; and institutional structures, the actual rules, including both formal and informal that relate to authority, power and access to resources.

Rule systems, as envisaged and designed by the rule originators, are never precisely implemented in the settings for which they were designed. Neither are they implemented with strict adherence to the letter or the spirit. Those people who are charged with the implementation or enactment of the rules all too often do not share the same vision as those who created the rules, and differences in implementation will occur (Burns and Flam, 1987).

The importance of Burns and Flam's theory to this thesis lies in its ability to examine a number of key facets of organisational life. Specifically, why do human actors create and maintain social rules and why do they follow social rules? Do certain members or types of members of the organisation reinterpret the rules more than others? Through what social processes are social rules produced, institutionalised, maintained and changed? Under what conditions do actors and groups of actors try to change or transform social conditions and under what conditions do they succeed or fail?

It must be noted that whilst the formal regulations are mediated or changed at a local level to produce a culture of informal rules and regulations, the formal, written regulations officially remain as the main legal, organising principles of the organisation. The subordinate members of the organisation, who are usually responsible for the

creation of informal rule structures have little control over changes to the formal rule structures (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991).

Of major interest to this study is the finding by Burns and Flam (1987) that the official formal rule systems are often not the ones that are found to operate in practice. In many instances informal, unofficial and even perhaps illegal rule structures are discovered to be governing the day to day operations of the organisation.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Research Questions

As outlined in Chapter 1, the aim of this study is to understand how primary school teachers employed by the Education Department of Western Australia make sense of the rules and regulations in their organisation. In Chapter 2 the theoretical perspective for the study was explained.

The thesis will adopt the rule system theory of Burns and Flam (1987), to examine how teachers interpret and apply formal and informal rules. Their work suggests that it would be impossible to understand the way in which the formal rule systems functioned without reference to the informal rule systems. Indeed, they predict that under some circumstances it may well be the informal rule systems that govern the actions of the members of the organisation.

This study will address three research questions in order to understand how rule systems function in Western Australian schools.

First, the study will explore the extent to which formal rules and regulations are known and understood by teachers in the government school system. The study will examine whether the knowledge of the formal rule system is shared equally among administrative staff and classroom teachers.

Second, the study will seek to identify key elements in the informal rule systems and illustrate how these shape the actions of teachers and school administrators.

Third, the study will examine how teachers and administrators seek to manage the formal and informal rule systems, noticing where they coalesce, where they conflict, and where there is an absence of rule guidance, formal or informal.

Conceptual Framework

As discussed in Chapter 2, social organisations are organic structures, constantly changing and reforming. Formal regulations, imposed by people in authority, will never truly control human behaviour. Often the formulators of the rules are not entirely cognisant of the concrete situation or conditions into which these rules will be implemented. These formal rules, cannot be implemented into the organisation as they are written, to the letter; they must undergo a degree of reformulation or revision, either at the hand of those who are responsible for setting the rules or by those who must apply the rules in order to accomplish the work of the organisation. Thus, all rules may be subject to interpretation and mediation as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1 : Processes of Rule Interpretation and Mediation

Acceptance -	The new rule is adopted without change and is added to the body of operating regulation
Replacement -	The new rule is adopted without change and replaces an existing rule.
Literal -	The new rule is adopted to the letter, but not in spirit. Changes effected by the rule are superficial and only for appearance.

- Disregarded - The new rule is not adopted. This is likely to occur when the rule does not have visible sanctions attached to it and where the rule making body does not monitor its adoption.
- Lapsed - The new rule is adopted initially. Implementation of the rule has discontinued due to gradually decreasing effort, probably not a deliberate act.
- Subversion - Creation of the belief that the rule is accepted, whilst efforts are made to ensure that the rule does not become part of the body of operating regulation.
- Re-interpretation - The new rule is adopted after changes to intent. Changed by members of the organisation to suit local conditions. This is probably the most common form of mediation within organisations.

It is clearly fallacious to construe rule systems as archives that are either emptied or augmented. Rule systems are dynamic as Burns and Flam (1987, p.25) emphasise:

Any rule system in its practice, as distinct from the formal or ideal, will contain reformulations (rewritten rules), unwritten or informal rules, ad hoc rules and procedures, which are known by those who practice the system.

Once people are involved, changes to the original letter and intent of the formal rules and regulations will occur.

The informal rule system is also dynamic. Informal rules are developed as a direct consequence or response to the formal rules. For example, formal rules are usually of a general, abstract nature so that they have sufficient scope to cover the multitude of situations that may occur or arise within the organisation. In response to the abstract nature of the formal rules, members of the organisation, usually subordinate members, construct a number of informal rules to compensate for the lack of direction provided by the formal rules (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991).

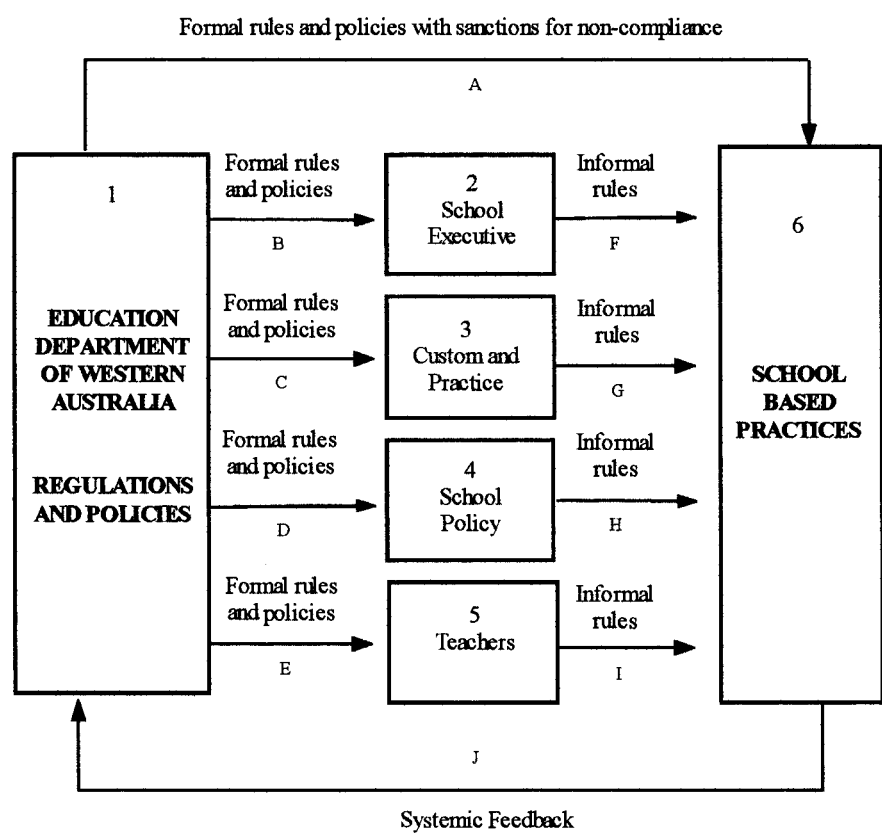
There are many reasons why members of an organisation construct their own informal rule structures within the context of the formal rule structure. However, the scant literature in this area would indicate that informal rule systems mainly arise out of the attempts by organisational members to make sense of the formal rules and regulations of the organisation (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991; Herbert 1981).

Drawing on the work of Burns and Flam (1987), and to a lesser extent that of Mills and Murgatroyd (1991); Blau and Scott, (1965); Salaman, (1983); Scott, (1970), Albrow, (1970); Olsen, (1978) and Collet, (1977); it is possible to develop a general model suggesting how rules and regulations may be interpreted in school settings, in such a way that Education Department regulations and policies appear to shape school practice. The model is described in Figure 1. on the following page.

The model has two versions, pre-study and post study. The pre-study model, labelled as Figure 1., is somewhat simplistic, describing a linear relationship between the various elements of the model, rather than the more complex and inter-related relationship that was found to exist. It is important to view both models as they illustrate the broad shift

in the relationship between the various elements of the equation. This relationship will be discussed in depth in Chapter 9, the Conclusion of the study.

Figure 1. General Model of Rule Interpretation.



The model has six basic elements: (1) the Education Department Regulations, Acts and Policies; (2) school executive, custom and practice, (4) school level policy, (5) teachers and (6) school based practices. This model suggests different ways in which the formal rules and regulations may influence school practices.

The box, labelled 1, represents the Education Department, the regulatory body for this school system, which generates most of the formal regulation for schools. This formal regulation may be in the form of Parliamentary Acts, Legislative Regulations or policy determinations.

The box on the far right, labelled 6, represents school level reality, the actual conglomerate of rules and regulations which determine how the school operates. This element is thought to contain a large range of informal operational rules; plus a number of formal rules and regulations, which are followed by the members of the organisation, largely because deviance from them carries visible and employable sanctions. It would be almost impossible to map the rule structures contained within this element due to its organic nature. The rules and regulations contained within it constantly change; are reinterpreted by a new individual or the collective as a whole or, some are forgotten and others are added to provide structure to a new situation that occurs and is not covered by a formal regulation or rule.

School culture, the sum of all of the unofficial practices and understandings that exist within a school would also feature largely within the School Based Practices element of the model.

Boxes, 2 through to 5, in the centre of the diagram, represent the agents of mediation or change, the elements through which rule interpretation occurs. The formal rules impact upon each of the elements of the model, each element changes the rule to make it workable or suit their particular needs. The literature would suggest that the process is often not deliberate, but occurs as part of the natural process of implementation.

The top arrow, labelled as A, represents all formal rules or policies that do not undergo any mediation and are followed without question by the members of the organisation. The literature would indicate that these rules and regulations will be monitored by the issuing authority and carry some penalty for non-compliance (Burns and Flam, 1987).

The arrows labelled as B, C, D and E represent the formal rules and regulations emanating from the Education Department that undergo some form or reinterpretation, by teachers and administrators individually or collectively through the development of school policy and through the process of peer group pressure in the form of custom and practice. Typically these formal rules would not attract sanctions for non compliance and implementation would not be monitored by the rule issuing body.

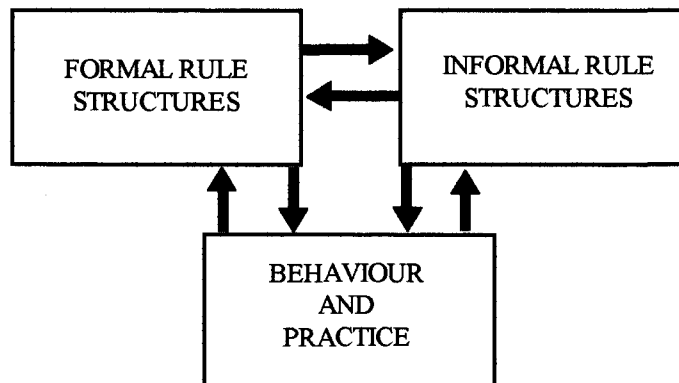
The arrows labelled as F, G, H, and I represent the rules and regulations that impact upon school based practices, after they have undergone some degree of reinterpretation by the various human elements of the model. These rule re-interpretations would have varying degrees of influence upon school based practices, as will be demonstrated in the discussions of results later in this document.

The arrow, labelled J, 'Systemic Feedback', completes the model and demonstrates the relationship between behaviour and practice and the formal rule structures themselves.

The feedback arrow shows that what happens at a practical level can influence the formal organisational rules. The rule makers receive feedback about what is happening at school level via such things as District Superintendents' reports, Department initiated investigations and professional organisations such as the State School Teachers' Union or the W.A Primary Principals' Association who lobby the Department on behalf of their membership.

Figure 2 represents a simplified abstracted version of Figure 1 and, as such, serves as the over arching conceptual model which will inform the empirical part of this study.

Figure 2. Possible Relationship Between
Elements of the General Model of Rule Interpretation



CHAPTER 4 - METHOD OF INQUIRY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Methodological Approach

The selection of a research methodology should be determined by the nature of the inquiry and the character of the data to be collected (McNeill, 1990). To this end a qualitative case study methodology was selected for this investigation.

Yin (1989, p10), defines a case study as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries are not clearly evident”. According to Yin (1989), case studies are an appropriate strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being asked and when the investigator has little control over events. Yin (1989), further claims that case studies are particularly valuable as they allow the investigator to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life situations such as organisational and management processes.

In the present study it is imperative that the use of regulations is examined in natural settings, namely schools. Taken out of context regulations may have quite different meanings from their actual school settings. Teachers may have opinions about regulations, for example, and their own implicit theories of how regulations do or do not govern their actions. However, the purpose of the study was to find out how teachers actually use the rules, as well, the aim of this study is to examine rule-following behaviour in general rather than study the effect of a particular regulation in isolation. Individuals are part of a larger system of rules. Hence, the study examined the interplay of formal and informal rule systems in natural school settings.

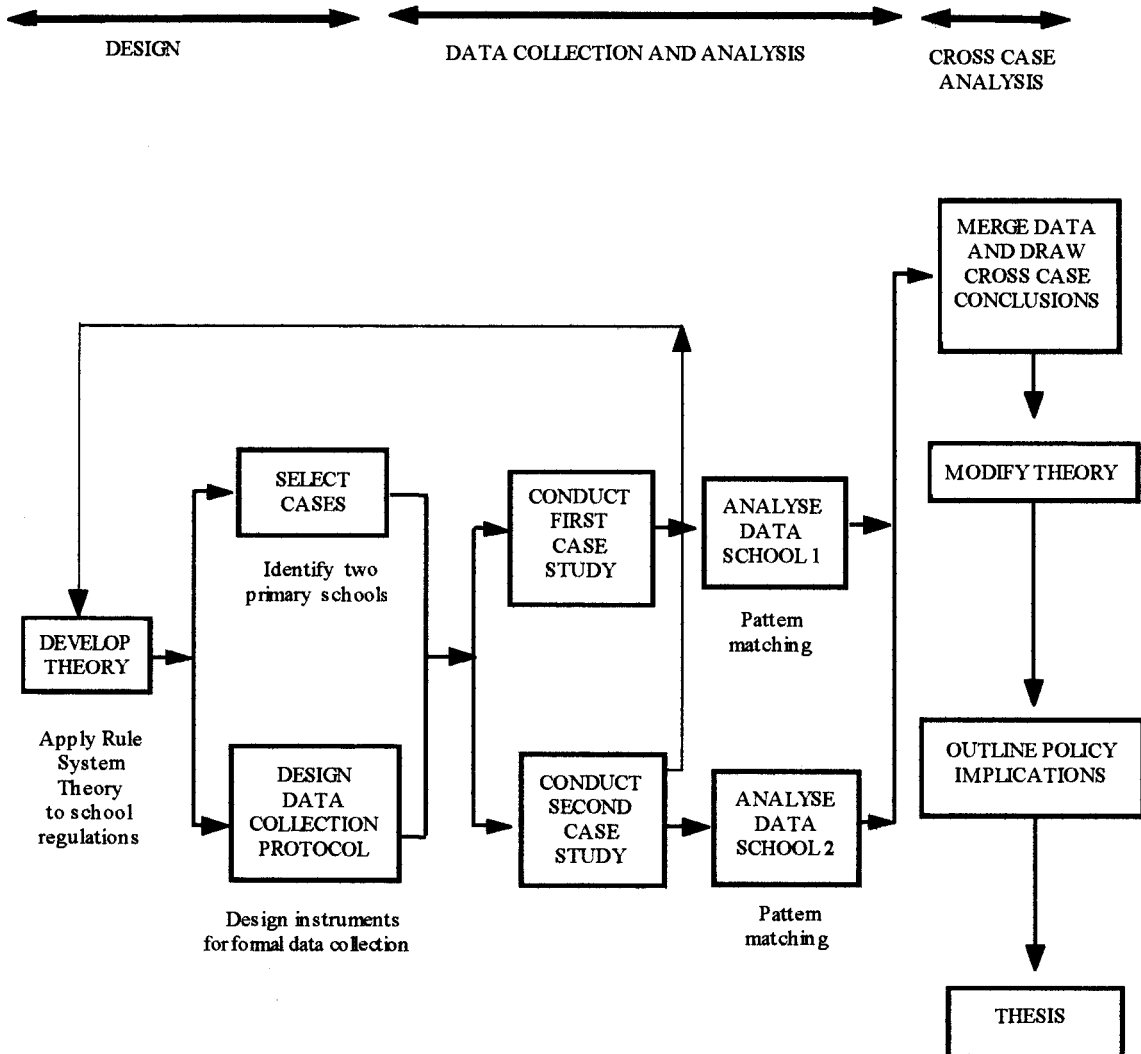
Although the study will be conducted in a restricted number of sites there is only secondary interest in the particular sites. As such the case studies were instrumental case studies, to use Stake's (1994) term. The conclusions drawn from the study of the cases are used to refine theory and evolve provisional generalisations to similar cases in comparable contexts.

Study Design

The design of the study was adapted from the Case Study Method Model (Figure 2), devised by Yin (1994). Yin's (1994) model is divided into three distinct stages. The first stage, design, begins with the development of a theory for the study, selection of cases to be examined and the design of a data collection methodology. Development of a theory would also include the development of specific research questions to guide and structure the study. These have been described in Chapters 2 and 3.

The second stage of the model involves the collection and analysis of the data. Each case study is conducted separately from the others. When each of the case studies has been concluded the data for each case is analysed.

**Figure 2. : Design of the Study,
Adapted From Yin (1994)**



The third and final stage involves cross case analysis. The cases are compared and contrasted in order to develop an understanding of the particular phenomenon under investigation. The conclusions gathered from this comparison are used to modify the original theory developed at the beginning of the study.

Selection of the Research Sites

The selection of the research sites was perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of the project. As far as possible, the sites selected for any study must be representational of the general population to ensure that the results of the study are generalisable to a degree of certainty (Stake, 1994; Delamont, 1992).

It was decided that at least two sites would be required to conduct a cross case analysis type study (Yin, 1994). Multiple-case sampling adds confidence, stability and validity of the findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Again the researcher was cognisant of the fact that data quality must be ensured to support generalisations from the study.

For practical reasons it was decided to focus on primary school sites, recognising that the rule systems in other types of schools might be quite different. The schools chosen were deemed by this researcher to be 'typical' of state primary school across the Perth metropolitan area, in terms of organisational structure and culture.

One of the schools selected for the study was the school at which the researcher was employed as a classroom teacher. This was seen to be an advantage. The researcher believed that he would be better able to gather quality data if he went to school where he

was known: the subjects might be more open to answering questions about their rule following behaviour when posed by a fellow staff member. On the other hand it is also possible that the researcher interpreted too much of his own understandings into their responses and saw himself as a person with a vested interest in the outcome of the study.

The decision to use the school at which the researcher was employed was also taken because the researcher was engaged as a full-time teacher as well as a part-time researcher and it would have been almost impossible to conduct the data collection if he had to travel to a number of different school sites on a regular basis. There was also a belief that due to the nature of the project being undertaking the quality of the data would not be adversely affected by the researcher being known to the research subjects. As far as could be detected it appeared that participants in both schools responded openly to the questions.

The Research Sites

The two schools selected for the study are located in a northern suburb of Perth, situated some 20 kilometres from the centre of the city. The schools are closely situated, being some two kilometres apart, they are of similar size, catering for a very similar clientele. One of the schools is somewhat more established than the other, being built approximately five years later.

The selection of both case sites schools within the same area was undertaken to reduce the effect of location on the data collection. It is conceivable that schools may have distinctly different informal rule system depending upon the characteristics of the

community in which they are located. Hence, generalisations from these case studies will necessarily be restricted to schools of similar type located in similar communities.

School A, is designated as 'Newbury Park' for the purpose of this study. The suburb, in which the school is located is approximately three kilometres west of the Indian Ocean coast would be described as 'middle working class'. Residents in the area report that home-ownership in this area is pre-dominantly owner-occupier with a smaller proportion of rental and government owned housing. The buildings and grounds of these dwellings are generally neat and well maintained.

The school, built approximately eight years ago, caters for a population of around 410 children, ranging in age from five years, Pre-Primary level, up to 12 years of age, Year Seven. The school enrolment numbers have decreased over the last three years. The enrolment at that time was around 450. Pre-primary enrolment numbers and statistics supplied by the Bureau of Census would indicate that this trend will continue.

At the time of the data gathering, the school employed twenty full time teachers, including the administration staff, across fifteen classes. As with all Level Five schools, the administration team consists of a non-teaching principal and two deputy principals, one male and one female, who are each released from their classrooms for two days a week to assist with the administration of the school. The staff at the school are predominantly female and in the latter stages of their careers, most being over the age of thirty five. 'Newbury Park' is a preferred location for teachers, situated as it is, within close proximity to the more affluent coastal suburbs where many of these teachers reside. A number of the staff, including the principal, have been located at 'Newbury Park' since

its establishment, highlighting the strength of the staffing stability to be found at this school.

In terms of resources the school is fairly well equipped. An extensive computer laboratory was being established at the time of data collection. The library has an adequate stock of well maintained books, covering a range of topics.

‘Newbury Park’ is very similar to other schools of its age and designation in terms of its organisation, resourcing and facilities.

School B, designated as ‘Glen Hill’ for the purposes of this study, is located in the same suburb as ‘Newbury Park’; the two schools are within less than two kilometres of each other. ‘Glen Hill’ is located on top of one of the hills that forms the valley for the site of ‘Newbury Park’.

‘Glen Hill’ has a population of around three hundred and sixty children, catering for pre-primary children aged five, to year seven children aged twelve. ‘Glen Hill’ has similar administration staffing designation to ‘Newbury Park’; a non-teaching principal and two deputies, one male and one female. ‘Glen Hill’ has fewer classroom teachers due to its smaller enrolment numbers. ‘Glen Hill’, as with ‘Newbury Park’, has a declining population as the suburb, which forms their enrolment catchment area.

The nature of the teaching staff at ‘Glen Hill’ is very similar to that of ‘Newbury Park’. Many of the teachers have been at ‘Glen Hill’ for five years or more. The staff are

predominantly female, and in the latter stages of their careers. 'Glen Hill' is also a 'preferred location', due to its close proximity to the suburbs that tend to be favoured by teachers and those people in professional employment.

'Glen Hill' is also 'typical' of schools of its size, locality and type.

Commencement of the Study.

In order to initiate the study, the principal of 'Newbury Park School' was contacted and an appointment was made with him to discuss the use of his school as a research site. During the appointment the researcher explained in detail the nature of the task, including: the purpose of the thesis, the nature of the information being sought, how the information was to be obtained and ultimately how the project would affect the school. The principal was supportive of the endeavour and suggested that the researcher discuss the proposal with the members of staff at the next general staff meeting.

The reaction of the staff at the meeting was also positive. After listening to the researcher's explanation and asking a few pertinent questions all members of the staff agreed to participate in the project. At this time a copy of the informed consent letter and the initial questionnaire package was distributed. Within two weeks all but two of the teachers had returned their completed questionnaire.

The belief that the researcher would enjoy greater cooperation from staff at the school where he taught, than from the staff at the neighbouring school where he was less well

known, was confirmed when he visited that school to seek their participation in the project.

Before visiting the neighbouring school the researcher again contacted the principal and arranged an interview. During the thirty minute appointment the researcher discussed specific aspects of the study with the principal, following a similar procedure and covering similar topics as with the principal of the previous school. The principal of the second school also appeared very positive and supportive of the study. During the course of the interview the researcher and the school principal discussed various aspects of educational regulation, a subject on which the principal appeared to be very knowledgeable. The researcher noted at the time that the principal could be an excellent interview subject when the study entered the second level of data collection.

This principal also asked the researcher to present his case at the next general staff meeting. The staff meeting occurred approximately one week after the initial interview. The same procedure for the dissemination of information used at the first meeting was used at this one.

The reception that the researcher received at this school was less positive than the one received at the school at which he was employed. People appeared to be less interested and less keen to be involved. Active support from the school principal encouraged the more reluctant members of staff to participate. At this time the letters of informed consent and the initial questionnaire package were distributed. The response rate from

this school was lower than that of the other. It took four visits to the school and several reminder letters before the questionnaires were returned.

The Subjects

In order to identify staff for intensive interviews a two stage process was adopted. All staff would be invited to complete a questionnaire and on the basis of their responses a smaller number would be chosen for follow up meetings and interviews. Ideally, it would have been desirable to involve all staff during all stages of the project. However, limited resources necessitated the selection of a sub-sample.

Thus, from within these two schools, interview subjects were chosen according to their responses to two preliminary questionnaires given to each of the teachers and administrators at both of the schools. The response rate for both of the questionnaires was eighty percent. Those subjects who responded to the first questionnaire also responded to the second.

On the basis of the information collected from the initial questionnaires it was possible to select, via rudimentary stratified random sampling methodology, the subjects that would be selected for more intensive data collection. A total of sixteen people from the original group of thirty seven was selected for the interview stage of the project in the two schools.

A number of criteria were used to select the subjects for the interview stage. First, it seemed important to have subjects who ranged in their knowledge of the Education Act Regulations (1960). Therefore a stratified sample was selected on the basis of regulation knowledge. Those people who scored well on the regulation test, demonstrating a high level of knowledge about the regulations, were placed in the first stratum. Those subjects who scored poorly on the test, demonstrating a low level of knowledge about the regulations were placed in the second stratum. The third stratum was comprised of people who scored within the middle range on the test.

A second criterion was the degree to which subjects considered the informal rule system to be important. Of particular interest were those people who listed custom and practice as their major rule reference source and those subjects whose rule reference sources differed markedly from other respondents. Using the initial questionnaire the sample was structured to contain representatives from each identified group.

The third criterion was the way in which staff members reported their response to uncertainty and lack of guidance from the rules. It seemed important to ensure that staff who reported markedly different ways of dealing with such situations were included in the sample.

The Instruments

The majority of data for the study was collected by interviewing selected research subjects. Other data, collected from almost every teacher and administrator at both of the schools were obtained through the use of the questionnaires.

The first questionnaire asked respondents to provide answers to fourteen questions based on specific regulations taken from the Education Act(1928) and The Education Act Regulations(1960) documents. The purpose of this was to assess respondents' knowledge of the Education Act(1928) and The Education Act Regulations (1960), seen as the basis of the Education Department of Western Australia. A copy is shown in Appendix 1.

Items were selected from within the Act and Regulations according to their perceived importance and relevance to classroom teachers, that is, those rules dealing with basic operational matters that teachers would have direct contact with, albeit unknowingly, almost everyday. An example of this would be the regulation dealing with the setting of discipline of children. It is a reasonable expectation of teachers that they should be familiar with the legislative parameters for discipline, something which is so inherent in teaching a classroom of children.

The second questionnaire was more detailed and asked respondents to outline some of their school level practices in relation to the regulations, as contained in the Regulations(1960) document. For example, the questionnaire asked respondents to determine if they believed that everything that they do as a teacher is within the rules as defined by the Education Act (1928) and the Regulations(1960). Another question asked if the respondent had actually ever read the regulations for themselves. This question was designed to discover if teachers had a first or second hand knowledge of the regulations. Other questions related to how respondents solved uncertainties related to incomplete knowledge of the formal rules and regulations of the Education Department. An example

of this was the item which asked the respondents to list the personal reference sources that they used in determining what they may or may not do as a teacher. A copy of the of this instrument is contained in Appendix 2.

A basic interview schedule was compiled to gather data from the subjects. The interview was essentially of a semi-structured type, with scope to allow discussion from points raised on the initial questionnaire. This methodology was favoured by the researcher as it facilitated the collection of more reliable data from across the two case sites.

The initial interview had two main purposes. The first was to allow respondents to expand upon answers given in response to the questionnaire. The second purpose was to collect more in-depth data on a number of different issues raised in the first interview. The respondents were encouraged to provide anecdotes to substantiate or illustrate their initial responses. Other questions were substituted or included where necessary to pursue other lines of inquiry.

A second interview was undertaken with those respondents whose first interview raised a number of unanswered questions, or where their responses to the first interview were noticeably informed and could possibly contribute more to the study than other respondents. These instruments, as used, are contained in Appendix 3 and 4.

A separate interview schedule was used to conduct an interview with the principals from both schools. The schedule contained a number of questions from the first and second

teacher interview schedule, plus a number of other questions, devised especially for the principal subjects. This schedule is contained in Appendix 6.

Interviews with deputy principal administrators were initially conducted using the teacher interview schedules. However, it became apparent during the course of the interviews that these subjects had a great deal more to contribute than previously anticipated and were subsequently asked many questions from the principal's interview schedule.

The district superintendent for the two schools included in the study was interviewed. The interview schedule for this interview was somewhat different from the other two used, attempting to gather a more generalised or system wide perspective, as opposed to a micro view from a school level. The schedule is contained in Appendix 5.

All of the interviews conducted for this study were of the semi-structured type. This approach was selected as the structured method achieves greater uniformity of measurement, enables comparison of constructs and therefore greater data (Cohen and Manion, 1980; MaxWell, 1992). However, where a response was unclear, the interview departed from the schedule in order to clarify the response.

Triangulation, defined by Stake (1994) as "the process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or an interpretation" was used extensively in this project. The purpose of triangulation is to improve the quality of the data collected by observing a single phenomenon from a variety of different perspectives. A fairly limited number of data collection methodologies were used in the

study, much of the triangulation centred on the verification of data, rather than a verification of the different methodologies used. Data triangulation was achieved in this study by asking the same question in different ways. For example, the first research question, which this researcher deemed to be the most important within the context of this work, was repeated three times, in various guises, within the first interview. In each case the question was phrased slightly differently, but asked the same question to obtain the same data. This process was also repeated between interviews, some questions from the first interview, deemed to be critical to the study were repeated in the second interview. The strategy appeared to be effective, the data gathered from each of the different questions relating to a single research question remained constant.

Interviews with teachers and school administrators were conducted after school, usually commencing around 3.30 p.m. The interviews typically took about an hour and a quarter to complete. The site for the interview was usually the classroom if the subject was a teacher, or in the case of administrators in their office. All of the interviews were tape recorded and the discussion transcribed later.

The interview with the district superintendent was conducted at the district office at 4.00 p.m. This interview was somewhat longer and took about two hours. This interview was also recorded and transcribed later.

The Data.

The data for the present study therefore consisted of:

- 1) Official documents, including the Education Act and Regulations as well as school documents produced locally;
- 2) The responses of twenty nine teachers and administrators from two schools to a general questionnaire on their regulatory practices and role reference sources;
- 3) The responses of twenty nine teachers and administrators to a test of knowledge of official regulations;
- 4) An initial interview with twelve teachers and administrators;
- 5) A follow up interview with eight teachers and administrators; and
- 6) An interview with the district superintendent.

The relevant response rates and sample sizes for each source of data are shown in Table

2.

Table 2 : Representativeness of Data Sample

	School A 'Newbury Park'	School B. 'Glen Hill'	Combined total
Total number of school teachers and administrators	20	18	37
Number completing Knowledge Questionnaire	16 (80%)	14 (80%)	30
Number completing General Questionnaire	16 (80%)	14 (80%)	30
Number completing initial interview	8 (40%)	6 (30%)	14
Number completing second interview	4 (20%)	4 (22%)	8

Percentages related to total population

No obvious source of bias arising from the return rates and selection individuals for interview appeared in the data. The investigator is of the view that had more subjects been included in the interviewing phases, the additional data would not have significantly altered the overall trends that emerged.

Data Aggregation

An interesting and powerful phenomenon began to emerge as the data analysis was undertaken. Excluding a few minor differences, attributable to the personalities of the people within the sample, the data collected from the two different case sites was very similar. It was almost impossible to attribute any particular subject to a particular case site on the basis of the data that they provided. The responses of the principals, deputy principals and the teachers exhibited a distinct commonality. For example, the principals

of both of the schools reported that the regulations were outdated and generally not relevant to the current situation in which primary schools within Western Australia found themselves. They both had a highly comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the rules and regulations, as would be expected of persons in executive control of the school. They both also reported that they regularly departed from the written letter of the law, taking a course of action that they believed to be more beneficial to their school, perhaps within the spirit of the rule, but that wasn't really all that important.

Another fundamental point of convergence lay in their response to the question relating to their approach to rules and regulations that carried a visible and exercised sanction for non-compliance. Both of the principals indicated that they would follow the rule, fearing the negative sanction involved with non-compliance and subsequent discovery.

These four points outline the most significant findings of this study, in relation to how principals deal with the rules and regulations of their organisation. It is important to note that the two principals, very dissimilar in terms of personality and management style, exhibit similar views towards the rules and regulations and exercise similar methods in dealing with them.

The deputy principals interviewed for this study also demonstrate a definite congruence in thought and action. They also presented similar data on important areas of the study. For example, all of the deputies displayed a comprehensive knowledge of the regulations, but were more reluctant to disregard them than are their principals. The deputies were more fearful of transgressing the rules and are more aware of the 'dire consequences that befall those who are reckless enough to break the rules'. They outlined anecdotes of people

they knew or had heard of who digressed from the rules, were caught and suffered the ultimate penalty, were dismissed.

Another critical area of similarity relates to the deputies' reliance on the principal for determination of what is permissible and what is not. All of the deputies reported that they consult with the principal before undertaking any important decision, even within areas of operation delegated to their responsibility. This is understandable considering that the principal is their line manager and as such is directly responsible for their undertakings.

The data gathered from classroom teachers also exhibited a great deal of commonality in key areas of the study when comparisons between sites were made. For example, both sets of teachers exhibited a low level of awareness of the rules and regulations of the Education Department.

Another major area of similarity between data collected at both case sites related to the teachers' role reference source. Both sites indicated the major role reference source for teachers was the principal. If they were unsure as to a course that they were about to undertake they would consult the principal first. The second most important role reference source was their own experience, essentially a culture that they have internalised through workplace socialisation.

A third major area of similarity relates to teachers' basic rule following motivation. All of the teachers interviewed at both sites, felt obligated, due to a 'moral' belief that following the rules was the correct course of action.

Due to the similarity of data in many of the key features of the study, the decision was taken by the researcher to report the aggregation of the data. It became apparent little would be gained by the rigid separation of data and the production of two case study reports. Hence, with reference to Figure 3: The Design of the Study, the major component of data analysis followed the merging of the two data sets. The cross case conclusions, in this instance based on the aggregation of the cases, were developed in Chapter 9, the chapter dealing with the study conclusions.

Data Analysis.

The first stage of data analysis was the transcription of interview data from audio tape to interview transcripts. After the transcription was completed each documented interview was compared to the original audio taped interview to verify the accuracy and therefore reliability of the data. As it transpired this was a necessary precaution, many of the first transcriptions contained a number of inaccuracies caused by mis-comprehension on the part of the transcriber. Whilst not strictly speaking a facet of data analysis this activity served to assist with the qualification of data.

The first stage of analysis was the coding of the data. The data was coded very simply using a number and letter code, or a combination of both to mark overlaps. 'A', for data corresponding to the first main research question and 'B', for data corresponding to the

second main research question. Numerical coding of 1 to 4 were allocated to data supporting each of the four subsidiary questions. The fourth subsidiary question was not used for the study due to the volume of material already collected by the other questions. It was felt that expanding the research to include the fourth question would lead to a dilution of the study.

Much of the data reduction was effected at this point. A screening process was used to exclude the data, which even at this juncture appeared to be irrelevant to the study. Preference was given to the exclusion of irrelevant data rather than the reduction of data that was to be used. This was due to the researcher's preference for using direct quotes within the body of the report, rather than an over interpretation of the raw data. This was another strategy employed to ensure the consistency and quality of the data (Strauss, 1987)

The interview transcripts were examined to ensure that the respondent's answer corresponded to the original intent of the question posed during the interview. On a number of occasions the data collected from a respondent did not match the original intent of the question. In these situations the response was recorded to correspond to another research question or assigned to another data group as 'interesting and worth further investigation' or if the data was dramatically off target it was disregarded. This simple coding also assisted with data reduction.

Coding of the data was simplified by the precoding of the questions used in the data collection instruments. A question bank of approximately sixty items was constructed. All

of the questions used in the interviews and questionnaires were drawn from this bank. As each question was selected for inclusion in a data gathering instrument it was coded according to whichever research question it was designed to gather data for. It was assumed that answers to these questions would provide information about the research question upon which they are based. A study of the data collected demonstrated that this method of assumption was accurate.

Yin's (1994) model calls for the use of pattern matching strategies to code data. This strategy was used in conjunction with codes drawn from the list of research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The data, irrespective of which research question it covered, seemed to fall into three patterns or categories. The first category was teachers' knowledge of the rules. The second category centred on teachers' rule following behaviours and the third category concentrated on strategies employed by teachers to interpret the rules and make them work for them. These categories were not anticipated but came as a direct response of the themes or patterns running through the data. In fact these three categories were so strong and distinct that they became the basis for the three main chapters discussing the results of the study in the final report.

Answers to questions that did not appear on the interview schedule also were analysed using pattern matching strategies and were included in one of the three main data themes.

This simple precoding also allowed the researcher to ensure that a balance of data was collected, from a range of questions, as opposed to many questions on one element of the study. A tally for each of the coding designations was completed to quantify the

collected data. This was done to ensure that a sufficient volume of data had been collected to satisfy each of the research questions. The quality of the data would be ascertained through careful study and constant vigilance to ensure that correct collection methodologies were adhered to.

The data was then organised according to three distinct and homogenous groups. This grouping was natural and to large extent determined by the data itself. These groups were; teachers' understanding of the rules, teachers' rule following behaviours and strategies employed by teachers to fill in the gaps created by a lack of formal direction. These groupings were so distinct that they became the chapter headings for the discussion of results section of the study.

CHAPTER 5 - TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE USE AND UNDERSTANDING OF

THE FORMAL RULES

Teacher's Knowledge of the Rules.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some aspects of the teachers knowledge of the rules and regulations, as indicated by their responses to the Regulation Questionnaire (Appendix 1).

Items for the questionnaire were taken directly from the Education Act (1928) and the Education Act Regulations (1960) documentation. Most of the questions were developed from elements within the Education Act Regulation (1960) documentation. Where possible the questions were based upon regulatory elements that related directly to operational matters, based on the supposition that teachers' knowledge of the regulations would be strongest where it related directly to the execution of their job. Examples of operational matters would be matters such as, the disciplining of the children and the sources of documentation which a teacher must use to develop their programme of instruction.

The questions were phrased in similar terms to the actual regulations to ensure that the intent of the regulation was not lost. The answers were judged to be correct if they closely paraphrased the regulation or contained key elements of the actual regulations. For example, one question related to the setting of school discipline. The key elements were that school discipline should not involve punishments that degraded or injured the students. Any answer that contained those key elements, whether or not expressed in similar terms was deemed to be correct. Care was taken wherever possible to not over interpret the answers that were given, but discover the intent of the respondent.

As discussed in previous chapters of this thesis, the rule knowledge of teachers was not generally very comprehensive, at either of the case sites. The lowest score for a single participant, a teacher, was four out of a possible fourteen. The highest score for a teacher was nine out of a possible fourteen, with most in the range between six and eight. The highest score of fourteen out of a possible fourteen was achieved by the principal of School B, 'Glen Hill'. The principal of School A, 'Newbury Park', scored thirteen out of a possible fourteen. The Deputy principals at 'Newbury Park' scored 12 out of fourteen and 11 out of fourteen. This confirms the suggestion made in a previous chapter that the administrators from both of the schools had a very comprehensive knowledge of the regulations.

Table 3 on the following page summarises the questions and the responses of the subjects to them. The most obvious observation from the table is that the responses from both of the case sites are very similar. A pattern emerged, revealing that areas of knowledge strength and weakness were reflected in both sites.

Some areas where knowledge is uniformly less, is noticeable in questions relating to the circumstances under which a principal may close his or her school. All but two respondents, the principals of both schools, answered this question incorrectly. Considering that this aspect of administration only directly impacts upon the principal this situation is probably not surprising.

The responses to questions relating to the disciplining of children demonstrated that teachers' knowledge in this area is somewhat lower than perhaps would be expected, considering this is a major aspect of teaching. On average, less than half of the teachers

Table 3 - Teacher's and Administrator's Rule Knowledge

KNOWLEDGE	School A Newbury Park	School B Glen Hill	Total incorrect responses
1) How long before the commencement of school should a teacher be in attendance?	7 of 16 *	6 of 14	13 of 30
2) The programme of instruction in a school should be in accordance with what Department documentation?	8 of 16	7 of 14	15 of 30
3) What are the grounds on which a teacher may detain a child after school?	11 of 16	9 of 14	20 of 30
4) For how long after school may a teacher detain a child?	5 of 16	7 of 14	12 of 30
5) Under what circumstances may this period be exceeded?	7 of 16	6 of 14	13 of 30
6) May a teacher detain a child during a recess or lunch break?	11 of 16	10 of 14	21 of 30
7) Under what circumstances may a teacher restrain a child?	2 of 16	2 of 14	4 of 30
8) What are the specific guide-lines for the setting of school discipline?	12 of 16	13 of 14	25 of 30
9) In the terms of the Education Act, what constitutes teacher misconduct?	2 of 16	4 of 14	6 of 30
10) What action may be taken against a teacher who is found guilty of misconduct?	9 of 16	8 of 14	17 of 30
11) What action may be taken against a teacher who is found to be inefficient?	9 of 16	7 of 14	16 of 30
12) Under what circumstances may a child be excluded from school?	2 of 16	1 of 14	3 of 30
13) May a child be given religious instruction without the prior permission of the parent?	3 of 16	4 of 14	7 of 30
14) Under what circumstances may the principal of a school effect its closure?	15 of 16	13 of 14	28 of 30

* These numbers relate to the total number of incorrect responses to a particular question achieved by all of the participants at a particular site. For question 1, seven respondents, out of a total population of

surveyed knew the guidelines relating to the detention of children. It is interesting to note that most of the teachers did not realise that they were not permitted to detain children during the lunch-time breaks, a strategy observed by this researcher to be used by most teachers.

The question relating to the restraining of children was one that most subjects responded to correctly. From personal observation by this researcher, restraining of children and its legal ramifications are an aspect of discipline uppermost in teacher's minds.

The questions relating to the disciplining to teachers revealed an interesting picture. Well over half of the teachers surveyed were aware of the ramifications or penalties for teacher mis-conduct but were unsure as to what types of activities were defined as constituting misconduct by the Education Department. Teachers were very aware of the consequences, but less sure of the situation that would lead them to the consequences.

Examples of where the official, written rules have not remained current with the system as a whole, can be found in Question 1 of the questionnaire. The question asks respondents what the requirements are for teachers attendance at school before the start of the academic day. The correct answer from the Regulations is fifteen minutes prior to the commencement of the school day. However, there is some confusion, created by the introduction of the 1991 Memorandum of Agreement (1991). The Agreement removes the time stipulation from this situation. However, the Regulation has not been officially changed and as such is legally still in force. Irrespective of this, half of the respondents who incorrectly answered did so because they responded with an incorrect time.

Teachers' Use and Understanding of the Official Rules and Regulations.

This section of the chapter will be devoted to discussion of teachers' general understanding and use of the formal rules and regulations. The data are not as structured as that from the regulation test and will be discussed within the body of the text. As with the previous instrument there was very little difference between the two case sites in terms of the responses to the questions.

Question 1. Do you believe that everything you do is within the rules, as defined by the Education Act Regulations and written policy statements?

Approximately forty five per cent of 'Newbury Park', and fifty five per cent of 'Glen Hill' respondents reported that they believed that everything they did was within the boundary defined by the official rules. This statement is interesting when compared with the data that indicated that the rule knowledge of this group of subjects is somewhat minimal. If you do not know the rules, how do you know if you are operating within them?

Question 2. Do you feel that you know and understand all of the official rules and regulation that pertain to you as a teacher?

Not a single subject from either case study site, including the administrators, believed that they knew all of the rules that pertained to them. Some of the subjects indicated that they knew most of them, especially the 'important ones'.

Question 3. Have you ever had cause to read the Education Act Regulations?

Question 4. What prompted you to read them?

Three people from 'Newbury Park' and two people from 'Glen Hill' had actually read the Regulations, all of them administrative staff. Two of those who had read the regulations did it as part of their higher education, whilst the others did so to resolve an uncertainty generated by their job.

Question 5. Would you see the Education Act Regulations as having a direct influence upon you?

Four respondents from 'Newbury Park' and four 'Glen Hill' indicated they felt that the regulations had a direct influence upon them. Of these, most of the respondents believed that they only impact upon them when they have breached them. One respondent, an administrator of some experience, indicated the regulations determine what and how they teach within their class.

Question 6. This is a triangulation question relating to Question 1. All of the responses were congruent with those given for Question 1.

Question 7. Have you ever undertaken a course of action that you knew to be in contravention of the regulations?

Question 8. Do you try to stay within the rules as much as possible?

Approximately fifteen per cent of 'Newbury Park' respondents and ten per cent of 'Glen Hill' respondents indicated they had knowingly undertaken a course of action that they knew to be in contravention of the regulations. This small percentage is made up entirely of school administrators. Even though some of the teacher subjects believed that some of their operation may be outside the boundary of rules, it was not an intentional breach. All of the respondents, even the administrators, indicated they tried to stay within the rules as much as possible.

Question 9. Are there times when you are unsure of what the rules are?

Question 10. What prompts this uncertainty?

All of the respondents, from both sites, indicated that at times they are uncertain as to what the rules are. They did not indicate if there is a particular stimulus or situation that generates this uncertainty, but felt that the uncertainty was due to an ignorance of what the rules are.

Question 11. What do you do to resolve this difficulty?

Question 12. Is a data triangulation question for Question 11 and 17. The responses to this question supported the responses given for Question 11 and 17.

A number of different strategies are used to resolve this difficulty. All of the respondents indicated that they use all of the strategies. This question does not allow for a prioritising of the strategies used by the respondents, but allows them to indicate some of the strategies used. Some of the more favoured were: Principal direction, own experience,

colleague and own experience and knowledge. The principals of both of the schools indicated that if they had a situation they needed to resolve they would consult with their administrative team, then consult a colleague and then if they were still unsure they would consult the education officer at their district office.

Question 13 to 16. The data from these questions were not used to any degree in the study and will not be discussed. The data that was generated by this questions was not relevant to the research questions that were the focus of the final stage of the study.

Question 17. Number from 1, most important, to 6 least important, the impact of the following in determining what you may or may not do within your role as a teacher.

Of the six choices given, the least important role reference source for both schools was the Education Act Regulations. The most important role reference source for 'Newbury Park' respondents was individual custom and practice, 'the way I have always done things'; followed by principal direction and informal school culture, 'the way we do things at this school'. The most important role reference source for 'Glen Hill' respondents was Principal direction, followed closely by individual custom, 'the way I have always done things' and informal school culture, 'the way we do things at this school'.

The data gathered from this initial survey, provided a broad outline of the data that would be collected by the interviews, which were the main data gathering source utilised by this study. Many of the issues raised by the answers to the questions from the survey

are explored more thoroughly in the chapters dealing with the discussion of the data collected from the interviews. Indeed, the issues raised during this exercise helped to direct and shape the study as a whole.

CHAPTER 6 - FOLLOWING THE RULES

Sociological Theories of Rule Following

Structural-functional sociology argues that people develop rule following behaviours due to a complex process of lifelong socialisation, started in the home with the parents, continued through schooling and into the workplace. Society is a set of expectations for social interaction, whether it be the law of the land, societal values and mores or rules and regulations in the workplace. People generally follow rules according to several motivating factors including, fear of getting caught and retribution or on moral grounds according to their sense of right and wrong (Robertson , 1983; Olsen, 1978; McGee, 1977 Herbert, 1981 and Giddens, 1987).

There are various regulative mechanisms and forms of social control that promote adherence to rule systems. Laws are enforced through the coercive power of the state which uses positive incentives and moral persuasion and enlists the use of intermediary organisations and the use of sanctions such as imprisonment. Norms and rule systems are enforced through organisational and network sanctions, such as those found within business and governmental organisations, who have the ultimate backing of the state in terms of the judiciary system. Private social coercion, such as that found in street gangs can also control or adapt behaviour. Public opinion can also be a sanctioning force, especially in public life or within a small or closed community. Individuals monitor their behaviour, or conceal it, to avoid negative pressure from other members of their community (Leslie et al, 1973; Herbert, 1981; Handy, 1976 and Robertson, 1983).

Weinstein and Weinstein (1974) believe that people follow rules for seven different reasons. The first is because of socialisation. People obey the rules because they believe that the rules are morally right. People feel guilty when they break the rules.

The second reason that people follow the rules, is coercion. People follow the rules because they are afraid of being physically harmed if they step out of line. This could also be extended to include people who are afraid of other sanctions, not just those that threaten their physical well being. This compliance could also be a product of childhood socialisation, if you step out of line you will be chastised, often with physical punishment as a sanction.

The third reason why people follow the rules is termed inducement. People are offered material benefits in return for following the rules. This can also be traced to childhood, the Premac Principle or 'Grandma's rule', if you are a good girl or boy you will get some 'lollies'.

A fourth reason as to why people follow the rules is termed approval. People follow the rules because they are praised by others when they stay in line and are ridiculed when they do not.

The fifth reason is associated with the concept of fraud. People obey the rules because they have been deceived about the actual nature of the situation. This may also include the situation where the individual is informed partly about the situation or condition, thus they are not fully able to make an informed judgement. This may or may not have affected their judgement as to whether or not they would conform.

The sixth suggestion, quite relevant to the study, is what Weinstein and Weinstein (1974) refer to as 'stacked procedure'. That is, people obey the rules because they do not understand the procedure for challenging them. This suggestion is quite interesting in light of the work of Burns and Flam (1987), who suggest that this is not an important factor. Members of an organisation are more likely to ignore the formal rules and regulations if they are frustrating their efforts and substitute them with their own informal, operating rules.

The seventh and final suggestion of Weinstein and Weinstein (1974) is reasoned argument. People obey the rules because they have been persuaded by rational argument to follow them and because it is in their best interest to do so.

Perhaps the most powerful of controls is adherence to norms and rule systems internalised through socialisation. Burns and Flam (1987) contend that norms such as these would relate to democratic practice, fairness and justice as moral principles. Members who disregard such norms would be alienated or estranged from society by other members, this is of course assuming there is a strong potential network of social control to deal with deviant behaviour.

Rule Systems

Participants in social organisations conform to the governing rule systems to varying degrees, according to the status participants have within the group or community, as well as the sanctions enforcing them (Burns and Flam, 1987). Rules are selectively invoked, broken and or ignored to suit the defined purpose of personnel in their concrete professional work and the politics around them.

In some circumstances the members of the organisation show a great deal of loyalty and commitment to the rule structures and will go to great lengths to ensure that the rules are implemented in both the spirit and letter of the law. In other instances the rules are only accepted by virtue of the visible sanctions attached to them. In these circumstances, the members of the organisation will feel impeded or constrained by these rules and seek to effect changes to restore the flexibility that they feel has been lost (Giddens, 1987).

The organisational system under review, as part of this study, is still largely bureaucratic in nature, according to Salaman's (1979) definition. He defines bureaucratic or legal rational authority structures as being organisations that are based on rules; abstract rules that are applied by the official or local authority to organise and control the subordinate worker. Within this rule regime, rules may be either technical or normative.

Much of the literature dealing with organisational theory details the impact that formal rules and regulations might have on an organisation, especially one that is largely bureaucratic in nature, such as the Western Australian Education Department.

Human activity is organised and governed largely by socially determined rules and rule systems. Rules rather than being a set of statements intended to determine the appropriateness of an action, can be seen as the explanation which an individual uses to cover the actions of themselves and others in the workplace. That is, rules are structures which allow an individual to make sense of their situation or role within an organisation (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991).

Motivation For Rule Following

All of the teachers involved in the study reported that they always tried to stay within the boundary of rules as much as possible. Their main motivation for this position appeared to be a strong moral view that it was expected of them as part of their role as a teacher. One teacher interviewed summarised these feelings quite succinctly in one of her statements: “When I became a teacher, I sort of understood that I had to work by certain rules and standards and, that’s just my philosophy that I work within those rules”.

This teacher not only alludes to exercising her own moral reasoning, as part of her philosophy, she also indicates that she had some pre-service conceptions that her role as a teacher, includes the responsibility of following the rules.

This persons response provides some support for the assertion generated by the literature that role determines to a large extent how human beings will act in certain situations and under particular conditions. (Giddens,1987). People follow the rules because it is expected of them in the execution of their accepted role.

It is useful to contrast the responses of administrative staff to the same question of why they follow the formal or expressed organisational rules. Many reported that they followed the rules, out of fear of getting caught and suffering some sort of negative consequence. An example of this was revealed by an administrator, when asked the question of what ensured that people remained inside the rule boundary, replied:

Do you want a job? I mean really, that’s the bottom line . If you really want to get outside the boundaries, you can get outside the boundaries

sufficiently enough, but it's basically going to cost you your job. So people do have the power to get rid of you.

Another administrator expressed a similar view, but also stated that her motivation for following the rules, was to some degree, based on more moral principles, such as loyalty and duty:

The Regulations are my employer's guidelines for how we should act and conduct ourselves as educators, so to go out side of them is going against what our employer has set down and I think that we have a loyalty to our employer because they do employ us, so I feel that because they are set down then we should act within them as far as possible.

It is highly probable that these moral principles are the product of socialisation that has occurred both pre-service and pre-school.

Motivation for Rule Deviance and Substitution

Even the administrator who reported that they followed the rules out of a moral sense of purpose could relate with 'gory detail', anecdotes of the dire consequences meted out on a teacher who broke the rules and was caught. Obviously this event was clearly remembered by the administrator and served to remain as an object lesson. In response to the question of what happened to people who overstepped the boundary, the answer was a laconic, ... "got the sack".

This response is not surprising if you take into account the fact that all of the administrators admitted that they knowingly breached the regulations on a number of occasions.

We break the regulations everyday here. Most schools do with our disciplining of children and most people aren't aware when you can hold a child in or not. Most schools do that. Most parents accept that.

In this statement the respondent is admitting that at their school the regulations are breached with regularity. They are also providing legitimacy for their actions by stating that most schools do it, therefore the practice of keeping children in class becomes custom and practice and therefore is permissible. Further legitimacy comes from the assumption that most parents accept the practice, which, in all probability, will continue until the parents complain. This is also another example of where an informal rule, that is, 'we can keep children in whenever we wish', is being created in response to the situation that a formal regulation states when and for how long a child may be detained in class by a teacher.

Administrators who admit breaking formal regulations, report that in many cases they are very selective in which rules they break and those that they do not. One administrator when asked about an ultimate rule boundary answered quite frankly:

Well the law of the land certainly is. I'd follow the law of the land in that way. Probably the regulations that I am most contemptuous of, or don't worry too much about, have to do with times of instruction or anything to do with paperwork. But if it's about how kids are treated,

how parents are treated, how teachers are treated then I'd be more likely to follow the rules. And secondly, if I thought I was going to get into trouble and that's sort of a 'cornered rat syndrome', I would follow the rules. Unless it was something that I really should do, I would think I would take a stand on it.

This response is fairly typical of the rule breaking by administrators, they break the rules according to their own moral code, but will always follow those rules that they feel that will get into trouble for not complying with.

Another justification for not following the Regulations is that parts of them are not relevant to the system, as expressed by this administrator:

We operate on a lot of informal stuff in this school. I suppose we operate within the spirit of the Regulations don't we? ... We operate within the spirit of what is in the best interest of students and we develop informal rules for that, which are much more effective and efficient than if we follow the rules and Regulations, because they are so bloody inefficient. They are written for a different era. We've moved beyond that. I don't think they've (Regulations) hardly changed since I've been teaching.

This administrator also said the current Regulations are an impediment to him. When asked whether the regulations reflected current operations he actually stated that they didn't, and as such impeded him in his role of principal because they prohibited operational flexibility. This situation indicates, to some degree, that EDWA's regulatory framework is somewhat in a period of transition. The current policy is

towards devolution of responsibility, but the Regulations, a product from the age of centralisation, are impeding progress towards decentralisation and ultimately a devolved system.

This principal's last comment on the subject was particularly notable:

There are some things in the regulations that need to be prescriptive from the point of view that they apply to all, for example, duty of care. There's no ifs and buts or anything like that but we all need to work in with it, but for the rest of them I don't think we really need to follow the regulations at all.

This statement confirms the earlier suggestion that the administrators had a tendency to break regulations they feel were perhaps not as important as others and those that do not carry an obvious sanction if the deviance was discovered.

The district superintendent in his reaction to the question of whether the current regulations reflect what happens at school level supports the comments of the previous administrator who felt that the regulations were somewhat dated and anachronistic.

Probably not entirely because again it gets back to the fact that the system has changed faster than the regulations have changed with it and so custom and practice have come into play. I can give you an example of that one probably. There is a regulation. What number is it? It's about 174 from memory, about what the length of the school day will be

in a primary school and a secondary school. Primary school is No. 174 and very, very few primary schools that go to that regulation. It does say, 'or with the approval of the Superintendent' but I mean, that was written in the day where they thought everybody was going to be exactly the same. Now I mean, a lot of our primary schools have a much longer morning than afternoon sessions and I think in our climate and for all sorts of reasons, it should be the case. The regulation maybe should just say, how many hours of instruction there should be and not necessarily saying what it is; that there will be three hours in the morning and that recess and that will be of this long. It says that it will be a one hour lunch-time but not many primary schools now run a one hour lunch-time. I mean, most of them are forty minutes to forty-five minutes.

Particularly pertinent is the superintendent's comment that "the regulations have now changed and custom and practice come into play". He is alluding to the existence of an informal rule structure, 'custom and practice', arising in response to perceived inadequacies in the formal regulatory framework.

Another administrator expressed a similar view when asked what her reaction would be if a superordinate member of her particular school advised her that something she was doing was in breach of the Regulations.

It depends on what it is. If it was something where action could be taken against me then yes, I'd certainly go within the regulations. If it was something fairly minor that was a school decision, I'd discuss it with someone and say, 'do you realise that we shouldn't be doing

this', and the school would decide that's the way that we go or whatever. But it depends on what it was. I mean in some cases I think because of the age of some parts of the regulations that haven't been amended, you'd think; Oh okay that's been in a while; that's - although it's a regulation and we're still supposed to work within it, for one thing nobody does that. This is being silly. However, you are still going against the regulations. It depends upon the ramifications.

In this statement the respondent describes one of the processes by which rule deviance occurs. The regulation is deemed to be minor and the decision is made, supposedly by the administration, that this situation is probably within the realms of school level responsibility. A decision is then made, again supposedly by the administration, in consultation with some or all of the staff as to the best course of action regarding the situation. The school may decide to move that part of their operation back within the boundary of the regulations, or decide to construct an official school rule or policy to cover that contingency. Thus an informal rule, outside of the official Regulations is developed by the school.

In the second part of the quotation the administrator is responding to the question of whether she makes a conscious decision to follow some rules and disregard others. Whilst she finds it difficult to give a definitive answer to the question, she does give two conditions under which she would be encouraged to disregard some specific rules. Firstly the rule must appear to be outmoded and secondly, there should be a precedent for changing the rules, such as, 'nobody does it'. However, the specific situation in which the administrator finds herself, largely determines whether or not rule deviance occurs.

The extent of this rule deviance and informal rule substitution in schools is quite widespread, according to one principal interviewed. He was asked if the practice of rule deviance and substitution was limited to just his school or more widespread, he answered that it was common to the entire system, he had personally witnessed it at half a dozen schools in which he had previously worked .

The most common reason given by administrators as to why rule substitution occurs is that because the rules do not reflect common and current practices at school level. When asked to relate some of the ways in which teachers find out about the regulations, one principal said;

I really don't think they need to, honestly. You're going to think that a lot of them are outmoded and none of them applicable and they actually stopped the good functioning of the school. If we were to follow some of those regulations, the school could not operate properly. It would be the most inefficient place around if I was to follow the regulations.

For example, the whole system would break down if all the schools in the state dealt with the regulation dealing with complaints. There's a particular process you are supposed to go through for complaints and they are supposed to go to Central Office, which is a ridiculous way of doing it, and then they re-write it out and get it signed whereas we deal with it here. If they don't get dealt with here, they get dealt with at District Office, but technically you are supposed to do it another way according to the Regulations. There would be such a back log Central Office wouldn't know what to do. They couldn't handle it and the best place for anything to be dealt with is the local level, right here.

In this statement the respondent supports the view that the Regulations are anachronistic and cumbersome and have not changed over time to support current work place practices and the system as a whole. Due to their anachronism the relevance of the Regulations to the educational system is questionable.

The respondent is also saying that the heirachy of the Education Department, certainly at District Office level is helping to develop an informal rule system by dealing with these complaints at a District level, as opposed to forwarding them to Central Office as he believes the formal rules dictate. As to whether dealing with these complaints at Central Office level would create logistical problems, as stated by the respondent, is irrelevant; the fact that the respondent believes this to be the case is not. An informal rule, that of dealing with complaints at a local or district level, is developed in response to the perception that a problem could exist, not in response to a proven or demonstrated problem. This is perhaps an example of how informal rules are created by individuals or groups of individuals in order to improve or stream-line the operations as a whole.

Another administrator supported this position in her response to the question of whether she follows the spirit of the regulation rather than the letter.

The spirit probably. Going back to the last one - the letter is you are doing everything by the book and I think that - I mean, although you try and work within it, sometimes the book doesn't cover everything and nobody does it who hasn't done it since the regulations were originally written, whereas the idea behind the regulations I think is perhaps the better one to follow. Yes more the spirit... Some rules

reflect what we have done and always have done. Others need looking at and updating. Especially with changes in schools, the changes in what schools do, community expectations, legal responsibility, commonsense. I think some of them are perhaps a bit outdated, like the Act.

What is interesting, is that in all the cases of rule deviance or rule avoidance, the motivation for the action is based on somewhat altruistic or high moral grounds. The respondents report the action of rule substitution is always taken to improve the efficiency of the system or to solve a problem caused by the lack of coverage of the rules, or the fact that they are out of date. On no occasion was it reported that the rules were changed to advantage the person or to make life easier.

Where changes have occurred it is generally only in the letter, never in the spirit. The members of the organisation still try to maintain what they see as the vision established by their employer, the originator or custodian of the regulations. Radical change is not on the agenda, instead just enough change to enable them to undertake their duties.

Even though the principal motivation for changing the rules is a positive desire to improve the system, all of the administrators interviewed are keenly aware of which rules are safe to change and those which are to some extent inviolate, mainly due to the sanctions that they carry. They are very aware of the fate that can befall any who dare to change the rules... and is caught.

A common observation, reported by all of the people interviewed, is that the current rule system is highly inefficient in terms of coverage and currency. All of the interviewees felt that the rules did not reflect current good practice and, in fact, hampered attempts to introduce good practice.

CHAPTER 7 - BRIDGING THE GAP

This chapter will examine, in detail, some of the broad strategies that educators employ to make decisions about situations that are not covered or regulated by a clear or prescriptive formal rule.

Teacher Role Reference Sources.

Perhaps the most interesting discovery, in terms of this part of the study, is the realisation that teachers are generally not conscious of the formal rules and regulations when they actually plan a course of action in respect to their role as a teacher. Data from a short survey indicates that most classroom teachers operate from their own experience, that is individual custom 'the way I have always done things', to make decisions about their role. It is highly probable that much of this individual custom is based on some aspects of formal rules and regulations, personal approximations of the formal rules, informal rule structures, school level custom and practice and written policy.

However, it is important to highlight the fact that even though teachers are generally not conscious of the rules and regulations when they plan courses of action they do not consciously break the rules and regulations of the organisation. Teachers are fearful, to some extent, of the rules and regulations of their organisation and as a result are careful to stay within the boundaries. Teachers also report that they feel they have a moral duty to stay within the rules and regulations.

Administrative staff, who are more knowledgeable and aware of the rules and regulations are not as fearful of them and are much more likely to disregard them in favour of a course of action that they believe to be more beneficial to the school. The informal rule

structures that they create are most often developed from their own sense of purpose. In many situations, informal rule structures are not developed in opposition to the established formal rules, but are developed to augment them and provide guidance in areas where specific rules and regulations do not currently exist.

This finding is to some extent not surprising if you consider the current climate of change within the public education system of Western Australia. Devolution reforms are underpinned by the belief that localised decision making is superior to centralised decision making. This is evidenced by schools being given greater responsibility over financial, curriculum and to a lesser extent personnel management functions. Principals report that they are now taking responsibility for a greater number of management functions at school level, some in response to Departmental directives, but more often as response to a vacuum created by gaps in the rules and regulations themselves.

Data from the short survey also indicated that custom and practice, 'the way that most teachers operate', was the second most important reference teachers have in determining their rule boundary, or what they may do within their role as a teacher. Custom and practice, in addition to individual custom is no doubt the product of work place socialisation, beginning as the formal or informal induction of a novitiate teacher and continued through subtle peer pressure throughout the remainder of their career.

Confirmation of the view that teachers determine their own role through observance of their colleagues behaviour, so called 'custom and practice' was gained from some of the teachers interviewed:

I don't know if there's a lot of it, but it is certainly around. I think with time people like changing but there's still a lot around who do it, because they have always done it or that's the way they were taught and they think it is good and are not readily accepting different things.

I don't know if it's prevalent but it's certainly around.

The third most important reference teachers indicate that they use to help define their role is principal direction, gained through consultation with the principal or from being given instructions by them. Differing styles of leadership exhibited by the school principal tended to have a great bearing on this point. Teachers who reported having an authoritarian principal referred more often to them and relied less on their own judgement, than teachers who reported that their principal demonstrated a more laissez-faire style of leadership. Principals who were less rigid in their management style encouraged teachers to make their own decisions concerning a course of action, after pointing out the legal aspects pertaining to the situation; whereas principals who exercised a less humanistic form of management directed the teacher to follow a certain course of action.

In an interview situation some of the teachers confirmed the earlier data, stating that they would try to solve a problem from their own experiences or by asking a colleague. If this proved unhelpful they would then consult the principal, or if they were not available, another member of the administrative team. It is not surprising then that the administrative team members are knowledgeable about the regulations, given as they are constantly being called on to provide answers to difficult operational matters. Few teachers indicated that they would consult the written regulation to determine whether they were operating within the 'rules'. This was mainly due to the fact that they were

unsure about where to locate the information or felt that they didn't have the time to look, it was easier to ask an administrator for the answer. Answers gained from the administrators were usually always taken on face value and unquestionably followed.

It is important to note that the two teachers who indicated that their primary source of role reference was Education Department Regulation and policy documents, scored poorly in the short answer test on the Regulations and also indicated that they had not even read the Regulations. When asked to comment on this phenomenon during an interview at a later date, they were at a loss to explain why they had indicated that they used the written documentation as a primary reference source. On the basis of this rudimentary triangulation their data was disregarded to some extent.

Administrator's Role Reference Source

Administrative staff differed greatly from classroom teachers in the use of role reference material. The majority of administrative staff surveyed indicated that their primary source of role reference material was Education Department Regulations and policy documents, followed closely by formal school policy documents such as school policy. Individual custom and general custom and practice were scored as the least important role reference. All of these administrators reported that they had read the regulations and scored highly on the short answer regulation test, which tended to support their claim.

One administrator, who displayed obvious disregard, bordering on contempt, for the regulations reported that he used all of the different role references, including: individual custom, custom and practice, formal and informal school culture, principal direction and Education Department regulations and policy documentation, at different times, according to the situation. He also felt that school culture, informal and formal was

particularly important in determining his role, especially if he was instrumental in formulating the culture, it became more relevant to him.

Information gained from administrators in a second interview would indicate that the creation of informal rules is not as conscious and deliberate as we were led to believe from the first interview. When asked the question as to what they might do to resolve a situation where the rule that covered it was unclear, most claimed that they would either contact a peer and if their peer was not sure, then they would contact their district officer who would find out what the official rule was from the superintendent or other executive officers within the Education Department.

In many cases the administrative team at a particular school would try to solve problems concerning rules and regulations 'in house', that is amongst themselves, before consulting outside agencies or peers. However, the practice of contacting a peer was widespread amongst all of the administrators interviewed.

Development of Informal Regulation.

In previous chapters we have examined some of the reasons that lead to the creation of informal rule structures. Much of the data collected would indicate that informal rules are most often created in response to lack of coverage or specificity in the formal rules and regulations, not as a direct response of deviant behaviour on the part of teachers or administrators.

The data gathered would indicate that the development of an informal rule by an administrator characteristically follows a basic procedure. The administrator consults the available documentary resources to find a solution to a problem or to clarify a proposed

course of action. Typically the answer to the problem cannot be found as the documents deal with vast generalisations and the administrator is looking for a specific solution to a specific problem. The administrator will often then consult with other members of their administrative team. If the problem still cannot be solved then the administrator will typically consult a colleague at another school site. If a solution still cannot be solved the administrator will contact either the school development officer or the superintendent at District Office. If the problem still cannot be solved the superintendent will consult their superior at Central Office and so on up the line of management until a decision can be made.

The development of informal rules can occur at each stage of the procedure. The administrator reads the documentation, interprets it and then decides on a course of action that they believe is within the spirit of the rule. The rule that they create is to all sense and purpose an informal rule.

When the chief administrator of a school consults with their administrative team, they are inviting their staff to also make an approximation of the formal rule. Between them they will develop an informal rule to suit their particular situation. It is quite probable that in a group situation the approximation arrived at would be a closer match to the situation originally intended by system level administrators and policy makers, than if the informal rule approximation was developed by an individual.

When asked about the use of a school's executive team to solve a problem for which clear direction does not exist, one administrator answered thus:

Well I'm building up faith in ... [female deputy] she seems to know the rules and if she is definitive about it then we would take it as read and if there is any doubt then we would go elsewhere and ... [principal] would phone up one of his cronies.

The particular deputy principal referred to in the previous quote is well versed in the various rules and regulations, having worked as a school development officer in district office, dealing with a number of issues which were not rule specific. This respondent was the first line of contact for many school principals who contacted the District Office for advice. She reported that she was usually able to provide an answer by referring to the available documentation or asking for an official interpretation from the district superintendent or the executive officers within the Department of Education. Most often the schools made their own determination. If the matter was serious or had the potential to be controversial advised the superintendent, via the respondent as district officer of their course of action.

On the basis of her previous experience as a district education officer and her current experience as a deputy principal of a primary school this administrator was asked if administrators frequently used their own judgement or experience to solve a problem where the answer could not be found within documented formal regulations.

Yes, particularly say for an experienced principal and experienced deputy, experienced Superintendent. Yes it does. Particularly a principal because a deputy can go and discuss things with the principal and they can pool their experience. The principal in the school is the person the 'buck' stops with and therefore they can have a lot more experience with outside forces

than a deputy. A deputy can go to the principal or a teacher can go to the deputy. The decision's not always the right decision.

The respondent was asked to elaborate on her previous comment as to the quality of decisions made in this instance:

Sometimes, it depends upon the principal. Some principals may have been a principal for a long time but don't have a lot of experience. They've never gone to anything, any course! They've never looked at different ways of doing things and there are a lot of people like that around, deputies as well who have had five years experience in the last twenty five. You know the teacher that has taught one year but has taught that year for fifteen years..... There are plenty of those people around, therefore they look back on their limited experience even though they have been a Principal or a deputy for a long time. So therefore they can make decisions which are really with their eyes 'slightly closed' and they are the people who should go to outside forces [external reference source] but tend not to.

The respondent was also asked if teachers often use their own experience to make decisions for themselves with respect to which courses of action are within the rules and those which are not.

Not as much. As I said, deputies ask the principal and teachers ask the deputies. As you go up the line it gets more frequent. Teachers tend to

rely on deputies and deputies on the principal. Teachers especially primary teachers only tend to focus on what happens in their room.

This last sentence is most important in terms of the study. It tends to support the previous argument which claimed that the majority of primary school teachers are not cognisant of the rules and regulations. The fact that most teachers performed poorly in the short answer test based on the regulations gives further credence to the statements given by the previous respondents. The point that this particular administrator is making is that teachers do not need to have a comprehensive knowledge of the rules and regulations to operate within the organisation, they can rely on other people as a source of rule knowledge. From the data gathered, we can assume, with a great deal of reliability, that teachers seek direction from their line management, principals and deputy principals, in situations where there is some confusion as to the formal rules of their organisation.

Administrative staff use a number of different strategies to solve a problem or situation for which a clearly defined formal rule or regulation does not exist. Some of these strategies are similar in nature to those used by general teaching staff.

One principal was asked what course of action he would take if he could not solve a particular problem within his school. He answered "If I was in doubt I would contact my network of aging white males." He was alluding to a collegiate network, consisting of his peers, with whom he could consult to find information. He also said that he would be unlikely to consult with members of the District Office or the District Superintendent to seek help. He believed that this was due to

previous experiences with Superintendents, when they visited him in a supervisory or inspectorial role, as was the custom ten or fifteen years ago.

Another administrator, who was asked what strategies he used to solve a problem for which a formal rule or regulation does not exist, responded:

What do you do? You do the best you can. Rely on your own judgement. I mean, I spoke to a few people. That was not covered by anything so I tried to get in contact with higher authority. I spoke to other people as to what they suggested but ultimately, I suppose, you put your head on the line.

The quote is of particular significance, not only does it describe the use of peers to gather information about a situation that is not rule specific but it also describes the use of informal rules, in the guise of the person's own judgement. The respondent detailed a situation in which he was forced to create his own rule or ruling about a health situation at his school, for which a formal rule did not exist. In response to the situation and his decision a rule now exists to cover such contingencies. It also provides an example of how informal rules can have an impact upon the official rules.

I can give you a perfect example. I was in the bush a few years ago and I wanted to know what to do with children who contracted Hepatitis A. Now, the Education Department didn't want to know about it; the Health Department didn't want to know about it; the doctor didn't want to know about it; the hospital didn't want to know about it; the local council didn't want to know about it and I had to decide, 'what am I going to do about this particular child'? The doctor

said he's excluded but then do you notify parents if there's Hepatitis A in the school? Do you not notify them? What do you do? And, that's sort of a good instance of 'not everything's covered'. It is covered now. There's been a policy put out but at that point in time I had to make a decision to notify all of the parents but there was no 'formal rule' to cover it.

They hadn't thought of it before. That was the first time they'd ever encountered a problem like that. Even the Superintendent didn't know what to do.

So now as a reaction to that particular example, the Superintendent took that question to the executive who then liaised with all the appropriate Departments and now there's a policy on what is supposed to happen with students like that...What do you do? You do the best you can. Rely on your own judgement. I mean, I spoke to a few people. That was not covered by anything so I tried to get in contact with higher authority. I spoke to other people as to what they suggested but ultimately I suppose you put your head on the line...I put my head on the line, took a decision and tried to back it up the best I could, but I made sure there was no formal policies first of all that I could be cut down with.

This illustration is pertinent as it serves as an excellent summary of the different strategies employed by administrators to solve a problem or contingencies where the rules that cover it are not specific or do not provide any sort of coverage.

This administrator searched the available documentation, including Regulation, Act and policy documents to decide what course of action to adopt in respect to notifying the parent body of his school, that one of the students had been diagnosed with hepatitis. The answer was not to be found within these documents. The next course of action was to consult colleagues to confirm that there was not a written policy and to seek their advice. At this stage he was still unable to provide a solution to the problem from available feed back and so he contacted the District Superintendent and a number of outside agencies, including the Health and Safety Branch of the Department. As it was late Friday afternoon he was unable to contact any one who could authorise a particular course of action.

As a result of his inability to find an well documented and rule defined solution to the problem, the administrator made his own decision and informed the parent body of the hepatitis case. In retrospect the administrator made the correct decision as the course of action he adopted is now accepted Departmental policy. This is an example of how an informal rule, or ruling in this case, can be become formalised.

Another notable point raised by the quote was in respect to the rule for the disclosure of infectious diseases that was created in response to this situation. Why was a policy developed to effect regulation of the situation and not a Regulation, being as the Regulations are the legislative rules of the Education Department?

One possible answer to this question, provided by another senior school administrator, was that a change to the Regulations requires an act of parliament. However, this is not quite accurate as the Education Act (1928) gives the Minister of Education the right to make regulations for a wide range of purposes, including the one described by the

previous subject. It is quite possible that many of the school level problems do not reach the minister and policies are developed by his/her delegated executive officers and do not receive his/her attention. This conclusion is purely conjecture, the actual reason for this phenomenon is not known nor suggested by the available data. The question of how policy fits into the regulatory framework will be dealt with in greater depth in a following chapter.

One respondent who had earlier worked as a School Development Officer at a District Office explained her role in answering the questions put to her by school principals when they were unsure of the official regulations. This is also an example of how school level problems for which a solution cannot be found at school level were referred to Departmental level.

If I can't find it in the Regulations I can look at the Act and I look at that the Memorandum of Agreement. When I was working at District Office I would find out by contacting someone at head office or my Superintendent and say where is it because he would often know, otherwise I would go to my executive officer's, education officer and he had everything at hand. That was ... Yes, So I'd contact He didn't know on some things and I had to contact the Independent Schools Commission which I did.

The respondent also indicated that even at this level it was not always possible to find a solution to a particular problem. In these situations the problems were referred to the operations executives. According to this respondent the directors of operations would

then make policy decisions on the problem that had been referred to them. Unfortunately the respondent could not recall any specific events of this nature but detailed the procedure as outlined.

Another Administrator who was interviewed for this study could also relate an incident where a situation occurred for which the formal regulations provided little guidance. The situation concerned the donation of some playground equipment by a parent. One of the teachers on staff believed that due to questions about the safety of such equipment in these situations the donation was illegal. The principal was responding to a question asking him to outline strategies that he employed to assist him to make decisions where the formal rules were not specific.

Normally you ring a colleague, one of the principals within your collegiate group. I've done that this year. I can give you an example because I know what the answer was. A parent decided to donate some playground equipment from their house, swings and all that stuff to the pre-primary and they wanted an answer on it and I didn't know whether we were able to accept it. One of the pre-primary teachers said to me that she thought that we weren't allowed to accept that sort of equipment because it was dangerous. I didn't know. I had no idea so I rang a colleague who's principal of a Junior Primary school and she said that she would check with her teachers. They said it was okay and that they would accept it over there. I don't think that it is a bound down area. I think you can accept things but you must make sure that it won't hurt or injure a child or cause damage...It is within the regulations somewhere that

the duty of care is there so it is formalised, but you have to use your common sense and work through it. I was thinking at the time that perhaps there was something specific, perhaps there is an administrative instruction that specifically says you can't do this and I can't put my finger on it.

Some of the points raised in this quote are most thought provoking. It wasn't until after this particular principal had made a decision concerning the donated equipment that he began to consider whether there was a specific rule or regulation to cover this contingency and where he might find out. His first response to the situation was to ring a colleague, interestingly the principal of a junior primary school. Perhaps this principal saw her as an expert in this regard, relating to junior primary matters, or on the off chance that she had encountered a problem like this before. Even more interesting to note, is the fact that the final decision on whether or not to accept the equipment was based on the input of a teacher at this junior primary school who said that they would accept such equipment if it was offered to them.

The principal at the primary school finally justified his decision through an interpretation of the Duty of Care legislation, believing that he made every effort to check the equipment carefully to ensure that it did not present a danger to the children of the pre-primary center who may use it.

This principal also believes that 'common sense' is an integral part of decision making in areas where the rules or regulations are less than comprehensive. However, in this case the principal has justified his decision making or judgement with the broad concept of

Duty of Care. This is a strategy that has not been encountered previously in discussion with other respondents and is of particular interest.

The Formalisation of Informal Regulation

Schools can also develop specific policies to provide a regulatory framework within which to operate through the creation of school policies which are particular to that worksite. Some schools have well documented and detailed policy statements while others have broadly stated and non-specific policy statements. This is largely dictated by the principal of each school.

A district superintendent interview was asked whether or not all contingencies within a school are covered by a formal and published rule. His answer to this question was of great interest as it seemed to give system wide approval to administrators who make decisions, basically creating an informal rule to provide a solution for a problem that is not rule specific.

I don't think they are. No. I think society has changed and as I said, I don't think it's [official regulation] has kept up with a lot of it so there's some changes out there. I think probably over regulation is worse than under regulation, especially in a devolved sense and I think common sense should prevail, and there are school policies that follow common sense in a school situation.

The respondent also believes that future regulations should be less specific, providing only a basic framework or policy and that schools determine how best to solve the actual detail of implementation within the loosely defined policy. He labelled this determination as 'school level commonsense'.

Many of the administrative personnel interviewed for this study stated that the concept of 'commonsense' as a method of determining action in a specific situation where the formal rules were unclear. One principal summed it quite well in this statement:

One principal I had, called it 'the way your water felt' and I thought that was as good as any, because often that's what works, what you feel comfortable with.

Another principal detailed the process by which the development of school policy occurs at his school. The question asked him to detail the process he follows in determining a solution to a problem that does not have a clear rule indicating the appropriate action.

I talk about it at an executive level with the assistant principal and myself and the registrar and try and gather a history of it. Sometimes you can make a decision there but if it's going to impact on the work and the professionalism of the rest of the staff, they need to be involved so you take it then to the staff and look at it there, if it's something that's just within the school system. If it's going to impact wider than that, on to students and the parents and perhaps prospective students in the future then you need to take it on and discuss it with the school decision making group. Can you see what's happening here. It's starting to become a formalisation. I think there is anyway. You start to document down as to what it has to be or what it should be, what they want, what is required, or what the expected outcome is. That's why we've been through this process this year, putting together some documents because my whole school community has been unclear as to what happened, so

we're asking them what they see as important, what they would like to do. It's their school. I'm the custodian.

The principal's account demonstrates how schools, in response to a situation or perceived rule gap construct their own formal rules, in the form of school policy. As the study progressed it became increasingly clear that policy or policy developments played a much more important role in providing a regulatory framework than is usually perceived.

Another administrator responding to the question on whether or not every contingency within a school is covered by a formal rule or regulation developed a somewhat different view. She detailed a situation in which informal regulation can become a vital part of the organisation.

There are no formal rules on performance management. There are set procedures for P. On P. [Permanent on Probation, a year of probationary service prior to a temporarily contracted teacher being given permanent tenure] for teachers and temporary teachers but it's not for teaching staff. So that's not formalised. So we have informal rules or structures or procedures to deal with those. I think some of it is because it's still at the negotiation stage. It's not in their Agreement of Work so that's why it's not formalised. It's informal. In the teaching profession, you work on a lot of goodwill I suppose and that's one of the dangers of formalising things. If you formalise things too much and have too many rules, you can have people use those rules to restrict flexibility, improvement, accountability or whatever very much so because people would say, I'm working to the rule. I'm only going to

abide by the rules and regulations and education is much more than that.

I've seen teachers do it. You've probably done it. I've done it.

This is an interesting argument that the respondent has put forward. She is suggesting that informal regulation has a legitimate place in her school. Informal regulation allows a certain amount of flexibility to exist within the organisation that would otherwise not exist if the rules and regulations were tightly prescriptive. If the rules and regulations are tightly prescriptive it is possible to develop a prescriptive role description for teachers, which would, in this person's view, be detrimental to the education system, as teachers would then only do exactly what is required of them. She believes much of the 'goodwill' and extra duties that teachers currently perform would no longer occur.

The informant is also describing how informal regulation can be used in a circumspect manner to make people conform to a particular situation, in this case, performance management. Performance management of established or permanent teachers is not a current feature of EDWA. This administrator is suggesting that by using informal rule structures a system of performance management may be implemented ahead of the current negotiations.

Some of the respondents in this study drew a distinct line between what they saw as informal or formal regulation. Once the rule is documented, whether it is departmental policy or school level policy, it then becomes formal. According to one of the interview subjects as schools become more self-determining, in line with devolution initiatives, the more that informal school-based practices will become formalised as schools attempt to develop their particular organisational culture.

All of the administrators interviewed experienced some difficulty with the broad distinction between informal and formal regulation. Most believed that whatever the source of the rule once it has been documented it then becomes formal. This is particularly true of school policy determinations at a school level. It then follows that informal rules are verbal and communicated to other members of the organisation by word of mouth.

The distinction between what is formal and informal can become a little blurred at a school level according to one respondent:

To me it's a fine line between formal and informal when you are looking at school based things. Some schools have a policy on everything, for health etc. and others have a small number of policies and that's it. If they don't have them it's just an agreed thing in the school, but other schools have a file full of school policies for everything and therefore if its set policy it's formal.

Two schools may have the same school based rule, one school has documented the particular rule, the other hasn't. What is the difference? Does documenting the rule formalise it, or does the formalisation lie in the monitoring of the rule? Even though the rule may be documented at the first school, it is not regulated, it lapses and nobody complies; whereas at the second school the rule is followed up and everybody complies with it, but it is not documented. Which is truly formal?

Another administrator clarified the argument to some extent with her response to the question of whether a rule is formal must be written or documented to make it formal.

Formal rules are written, yes I think they have to be written, because if they are not written they're too open to interpretations by anybody. Like if its not written, who enforces it if its not written down? Yes, I think they have to be written down so that it can be enforced and that becomes a rule or a law or whatever you want to call it.

The following quotation, from the same administrator is quite significant. She suggests that school policy, which is a formalisation of informal school policy, has its legitimacy in the Regulations themselves. She believes that the Regulations give the principal of a school the authority to develop or impose policy upon the members of that particular branch of the organisation, namely the school. An examination of the Regulations reveals that this is not the case, no such Regulation exists, but in many cases the principal of a school will regularly exercise such authority:

When you start talking about rules as part of school policy that is, then it's almost binding upon the teachers to follow school policy as such. There is a lot of power delegated down through the system to the principals and if teachers don't abide by the policies that are set down by the principals then they are almost inefficient for not following the regulations, as the power is distributed down to the principal in order to make a school run efficiently, so there are a lot of these informal rules that are sort of formal.

CHAPTER 8 - MYTHOLOGY OF RULES.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, much of the current literature dealing with organisations expounds the theory that subordinate members are controlled by superordinate members of an organisation through the use of official, enforceable rules and regulations. This chapter is entitled the mythology of rules because such a representation of the power of rules to control behaviour is a substantial simplification. The formal rule system, though overloaded with rules is often found to be incomprehensible. This state of affairs has led to the growth of an informal subculture of rules, which promotes a selective non-compliance or ignorance of the rules on the part of the members of the organisation itself. Hence, employees of EDWA are directed by official Regulations, Department - generated policy statements and approximations of both of these by teaching practitioners, in addition to informal rules generated by teachers to regulate areas of operation that do not have a specific rule to cover them. There exists a culture of custom and practice produced by teachers themselves, including rituals such as assemblies and sports carnivals which are passed onto newly initiated members of the organisation through induction and socialisation. The complete body of rules would be almost impossible to document due to the extent of the differing rules and the fact that it is an organic structure, always changing, albeit slowly.

Teachers' Knowledge of the Regulations

At the commencement of this study much effort was concentrated into a detailed analysis of the Education Act (1928) and its associated Regulations (1960) in the belief that these, being the legislative rules and regulations, were the keystone of the regulatory framework of EDWA. The Regulations were found to be ponderous and outdated.

EDWA appears to use short and medium term policy statements to manage its operations.

At the commencement of the study a simple regulation test was given to all of the subjects. The purpose of this instrument was to gain an overall impression of the depth of teachers' and administrators' knowledge of the rules and regulations. Analysis of these tests revealed that most of the teacher subjects were unfamiliar with the Act and Regulations. Few of the teachers surveyed had ever read the regulations themselves and nearly all were unfamiliar with their contents and coverage. These findings have been discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

It is clear from this data that teachers do not operate within a regulatory framework derived directly from the Education Act (1928) or the Education Act Regulations (1960). How is it then that they are able to function within the organisation?

One possible explanation for this phenomenon, suggested by the work of Burns and Flam(1987) and confirmed by data gathered by the short survey and interviews, was the existence of an informal network where teachers were provided with information about what are acceptable or unacceptable practices within the organisation from their colleagues or their principal. Teachers surveyed indicated that this learning occurred through direct contact with a close colleague or more often understandings and knowledge gained from socialisation, learnt indirectly from working alongside their colleagues. It is also of great relevance to note that of the teachers surveyed, none had ever checked the reliability of the information that they had been given and took it on face value. In these circumstances it is highly probable that a great deal of misinformation, as well as information, was exchanged via this informal network.

One of the administrative staff interviewed expressed similar concerns in her response to a question related to teacher knowledge of the Regulations:

What concerns me, is asking a colleague because they often ask a colleague who is as ignorant as they are and they have heard something and often what people hear is wrong. A rumour, it moves around and is quite wrong, so I would react negatively to asking someone. I would react more positively that you went out and discovered the truth. They won't, most of them, because it's too much effort to go and find out and often they don't know where to find it .

This statement not only adds strength to the argument that an informal rule culture exists but also provides us two explanations for its existence, namely the acceptance of information based on the faith that a colleague actually does know the Regulations and a reluctance for teachers to seek out the information for themselves, including a lack of knowledge as to where the information they seek might actually be found.

Evidence that an informal rule network exists within the EDWA system view was provided to some degree by the response of various teachers interviewed during the course of the study. One individual, when asked how they found out about the Regulations, if it wasn't through reading them said that she learnt through, "an indirect process of the school culture, talking with other colleagues and the principal". Many other teachers surveyed and interviewed provided similar answers to the question of the source of their information about the regulations. Not one teacher indicated that he or she had ever actually read the Regulations for themselves. The information that they received was taken to be accurate and never questioned.

Administrator's Informal Rule Systems

Administrators also receive information from a third party, without checking the reliability or accuracy of the information received. One administrator, who was responding to the question of how he found out that a course of action that he was undertaking was in contravention of the Regulations, answered thus: "We found out from..., the District Guidance Officer... We took it as read. It's his bread and butter. I'm sure he knows. It just came up in passing"

When asked if he checked the accuracy of the information, the administrator answered thus:

I wouldn't know where to look. No I wouldn't, but if I wasn't sure I'd phone up one of my cronies who would know. It suits me to follow that because I believe in it. It sort of upsets my sense of right and wrong to see a kid stare at a wall for two hours.

It would seem that the administrator accepts the information on face value for two reasons. Primarily he accepts that the person giving the information is an expert in this field and therefore the information given is perceived as being unimpeachable and secondly it suits his purposes to accept the information, as he agrees with it. It would be interesting to see if the administrator was as accommodating about information that he did not agree with.

Principal as Keeper of the Regulations

Many teachers indicated that the principal was highly instrumental in providing them with information about the rules, mainly through direct consultation. Again, the information that the teachers received was not verified by checking the documentation and was taken

on face value. For example a teacher responded to the question of how she knew the Regulations impacted upon her if she did not know what they were:

I guess the administrative team of the school would be familiar with them and be directing the staff to fall into line with the Regulations, so in this way, an indirect way, I should be in line with the Regulations even though I am not as familiar with them as I should be.

The school administrators were divided on the question of whether the school principal should be responsible for ensuring that the operations of the staff and school itself is within the boundaries set by the regulations. A principal commented:

Not in this day and age. No, I think that it's up to whoever has a vested interest in that particular subject. That's why we have Health and Safety officers and those sorts of people. People go off to do special courses in First Steps and all that sort of thing and they become the keepers of the rules or the theories involved in how we're going to change. I don't think that the principal has to.

Another senior administrator voiced a different opinion when asked the same question:

Ultimately yes. It's my butt that will get kicked. I don't think I can pass that down to other people. I don't think that they should be put in that situation anyway. It is my responsibility to see that we all operate within some sort of parameters. Yes. Agreed practice.

A third administrator took a somewhat less firm stand on the same issue:

I don't know if the principal would see themselves in that role. It's sort of being like the 'police person' isn't it? In guiding policy and things, that's part of his/her job, so I guess if the principal sees people who are totally going against what the principal should know about the regulations, then it is up to him to say: 'You can't do that. We cannot keep that child in all night and lock them in the cupboard', so that is part of the principal's job, it's also part of the teacher's job, if they know it.

The District Superintendent voiced a similar opinion about the responsibilities of the principal in ensuring that teachers remain on the right side of the regulatory boundaries.

I think he/she [the principal] needs to be knowledgeable about the regulations but I don't know if 'keeper' is the right word. I look at it something along the line of an engineer building a bridge: that an engineer building a bridge may need to know what the stress factors of the concrete being used or the steel or the girder size or the rope tension or whatever, but he/she doesn't need to know that from the top of his head. What he/she needs to know is where to find it and so that over time people build up and I think you need to give them a base. I think that gives them a good base and then from that base you then, through experience, build up, but you had direct links to people, either a buddy relationship, you know, in another school of a higher level like a Class 3 school up to a Class 5 where they've

been maybe a Principal for 15 to 20 years or the Education Officer in the District Office, or the Superintendent. I mean all of those people can help and I think that that's the way. I mean, you only need it once or twice and you will become familiar with it. If you had to do some sort of a test that reminded you of all these Acts and regulations, I mean, some of them you would never use if you stayed your entire lifetime in Education, you know, from day one to the day they put the screws in the box, so, what's the use of knowing all the things that perhaps are not going to be needed, but you need to know the crucial ones.

Administrators' Knowledge of the Regulations

As indicated in previous chapters, the school administrators, especially the principal have very comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the official rules and regulations. School administrators reported, via the use of a questionnaire, that often they learnt the rules through necessity, that is they were presented with a situation that they were unsure of how to deal with and were forced to find a solution. The administrators claimed that the first step they usually took was to search available documentation to ascertain if the answer lay there. The second stage of discovery in this situation is somewhat more diverse, with different people undertaking different steps to solve a problem.

One administrator reported that he consulted a colleague, a member of his "network of aging white males", as he expressed it. Another reported that they consulted their district superintendent, their next stage of line management, akin to the classroom teacher referring to the principal of their school. Another said that they contacted the school

development officer at their District Office, who often knew the answer because they had dealt with a similar situation at a previous time.

Several administrators reported that their knowledge of the rules and regulations came about as a result of formal courses of instruction conducted pre-service or through further post-service study.

Members of the two schools administration teams, surveyed using the same instrument, reported that they made decisions about what they were, or were not, allowed to do primarily by examining the Regulation and Policy documentation and secondly consulting a colleague.

One exception to this was an administrator of considerable experience who reported that he relied on his own ideas of what was right and wrong, just or unjust, moral or immoral and as a consequence was somewhat unsure of the regulations. This did not worry him. However, he still indicated on the survey sheet that he referred to Department documentation of Regulations and Policies to help define the rule boundaries for his position. His knowledge of the Regulations was not as comprehensive as many of his colleagues in similar positions.

It may be of some importance to note at this point that many of the same administrators who answered the questionnaire, reporting that they consulted the Education Act Regulations to solve uncertainties generated by a particular course of action, stated in an interview situation that they often chose to ignore parts or all of a published regulation as they saw the need. This aspect was fully explored in Chapter Seven of this study.

The district superintendent interviewed for this study displayed a sound knowledge of the rules and regulations. When asked how he resolved uncertainties related to a particular situation, he reported that he contacted his superior at EDWA Central Office, the next person in the line management chain, the director of operations in this case. He also indicated that he occasionally used his own judgement to resolve a problem if he was dealing with a situation that he had encountered before or was particularly straightforward. This would indicate that rule interpretation, resulting in the creation of an informal rule occurs at every level of management. If the rule was straightforward, the superintendent would be able to deal with it himself, without the need to consult his particular line manager.

From general observational data and information from various surveys and interviews it appears that the knowledge of the regulations is directly related to the position held, that is, the further up the line of management the greater the person's knowledge of the rules appears to be. Teachers who were interviewed and surveyed for this study had the least knowledge of the specific Departmental regulations; members of school administrations had varying degrees of knowledge and the District Superintendent had the greatest knowledge.

Impact of the Regulations on Teaching Staff

Bearing in mind that there are three distinct levels of rules within the EDWA system, which of these has the greatest impact upon the members of the organisation at the school level? Individual teachers reported that they were aware of the Act and Regulations, and believed that they have a general indirect influence upon them. One teacher, when asked how she believed the Regulations affected her as a teacher replied; "I think they do. Definitely. It governs the way that we teach, relate to the children, to

staff, to the community. So yes, it does". However, this person could not indicate how the Regulations affected her, but held a firm belief that they did in some way. This individual also scored quite poorly on the short answer test on the Regulations.

Another teacher interviewed, who observably had greater understanding of the Regulations, saw them as a legal boundary, but was more consciously aware of the school principal's role in defining acceptable practice. She commented:

Well, at individual primary schools I would see the ultimate boundary as being the principal's direction and correction and shaping of the staff and what each staff member is doing in the school direction rather than the regulations. I assume he knows them and what we do is in line with them.

This statement supports the position the existing practice is a better reference for acceptable practice than the Regulations documentation. This teacher assumes that what happens at her school is within the parameters of the Regulations but does not seem to be terribly concerned if they are not. The operational culture of her school is more important to her than the Regulations themselves.

The administrative staff at the schools targeted in the study had stronger and possibly more informed views on the effect of the Education Act and its associated Regulations on the Education system than classroom teachers. One administrator replying to the question whether the Regulations had a direct influence on teachers stated that:

They certainly do because they set the parameters which define what you can and cannot do... I suppose I was fairly lucky when I went through college, people said these are the rules and regulations and if you go outside of them you'd get yourself into major strife...

Its a boundary.

Another, fairly junior administrator, in terms of experience, expressed a similar understanding:

It [Education Act Regulations(1960)] enables me to understand the boundaries within which I perform as a teacher and administrator. For example, if I want to keep a child in for two hours after school without informing the parent, then I've gone against what the regulations say, so knowing this, if I ever decided to do such a thing, I would have to inform the parents and have their permission.

This respondent also believes that the Regulations play a vital part in the organisational system by defining acceptable limits within which to operate.

Informal Rule Creation

In the first part of the chapter we examined at length the position that the Regulations do not provide a tight regulatory framework within which the organisation operates, merely an outer shell or ethereal legislative boundary. So, what does provide the organisation with its operating framework? It was suggested that the informal rule system, consisting of informal rules arising out of approximations of the formal rules, informal rules generated by the creation of solutions to situations that are not rule specific and informal

rules related to custom and practice, shaped school level practices. What then exists is a mythology of rules, not entirely understood by all members of the organisation, but well enough to enable the organisation to function. This position is really the crux of the dissertation, the formally written and expressed rules and regulations of EDWA are not sufficient in themselves to provide an operating culture or rule base for the organisation as a whole. What we intend to do in this part of the chapter is to clearly identify the elements of the informal rule culture and isolate the processes or conditions which have led to its creation.

This chapter has demonstrated that the administrative staff members of the schools used in this study, were more aware of the existence of the informal rule culture than the teachers. It was at this point of the study that the importance of centrally determined policy and guidelines over the Regulations was noticed. A principal, when asked the question about what was the most important mechanism of control or regulation in a primary school, initially replied that it was the Education Act and the associated rules that went with it. He thought about the question a little more and added the following:

It's that and then there's the informal or unwritten rules and regulations within the school itself developed by, in today's school, developed by staff and SDMG to some extent but going on from that we are actually now bound more by the Four Squiggles.[EDWA policy documents].

He was asked to elaborate on what he meant by the term the 'four squiggles'. He explained that they were four policy documents released, by the then Ministry of Education, between 1989 and 1991. The four books are School Decision Making,

School Financial Planning and Management, School Accountability, and School Development Plans. School Decision Making outlines the introduction of participative decision making into EDWA schools, allowing staff and community members to have input into the decision making process at school level. The second document, School Financial Planning and Management laid the foundations for the devolution of certain financial planning matters to individual schools, giving them greater control over the financial resources allocated to them. The third policy, School Accountability, set out the changes to the way in which schools could demonstrate accountability for the children's learning. This had lead to the recent introduction of student outcome statements and performance indicators for student learning. The final document, School Development Planning, outlined the way in which schools planned for the following year. The ideal plan contained a mission statement, performance indicators, treatment of Ministry priorities and how resources are allocated to meet each of these elements. The importance of policy statements to the organisational or regulatory culture will be dealt with in more depth in another section of this thesis.

The same respondent, answering a question about the use of informal rules at his school, stated that:

We operate on a lot of informal stuff in this school. I suppose we operate within the spirit of the Regulations don't we? ... We operate within the spirit of that in the best interest of students and we develop informal rules for that, which are much more effective and efficient than if we follow the rules and Regulations, because they are so bloody inefficient. They are written for a different era.

We've moved beyond that. I don't think they've hardly changed since I've been teaching.

Another school principal interviewed and asked the same question relating to informal rules responded in a similar manner to the first:

One principal I had used to call it 'the way your water felt' and I thought that it was as good as any, because often that's what works, what you feel comfortable with.

These statements clearly identify the role played by informal rules in the regulation of the particular school under the control of this particular principal. This particular principal also believes that the arrangement of informal regulation is the norm across the entire organisation, a view confirmed by other administrators interviewed.

CHAPTER 9 - FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Drawing on the discussions in Chapters 5 to 8, it is possible to summarise the major findings of this study into nine main points. These points will be discussed in more depth during the latter sections of this chapter.

1) Teachers report that they do not knowingly or purposefully break the rules. They believe that they should follow the rules as part of their duties as a teacher. Tied in with this moral stance, is an acute awareness of the dire consequences of rule breaking.

2) Teachers have only a limited knowledge of the formal rules and regulations of their organisation. In many cases they would not even know where to begin looking for the official versions of the rules and regulations. Their knowledge of the rules tends to be second-hand; they rely on colleagues or the principal to help them determine what is permissible and what is not.

3) Teachers use a number of rule and role reference sources when unsure of what to do in a particular situation or in the planning of a proposed course of action. These include the school principal, colleague, custom and practice and school policy. Teachers reported that the most important of these rule references are the school principal, and custom and practice. Custom and practice can be defined as a body of internalised understandings learned through work place socialisation. These understandings help a teacher to determine what is correct or incorrect behaviour.

4) Administrative staff, that is principals and deputy principals, demonstrated that they have a very comprehensive knowledge of the rules and regulations of their organisation.

They can identify the official sources of the rules and regulations and will refer to the official regulation when they are unsure as to a particular course of action.

5) Administrative staff, especially principals, knowingly and purposefully break the rules. They are aware of the dire consequences of rule breaking, but do it anyway.

6) Principals report that they break the rules for altruistic reasons. They alter or break rules to overcome constraints imposed upon them by an anachronistic official rule system, rather than to make things easier or to advantage themselves.

7) Rule breaking is selective. Rule breaking principals do not usually break rules that carry a serious sanction or those that are consistent with their basic view point or philosophy.

8) An informal rule culture or social rule system was evident in the schools involved in the study. This informal rule system is developed and enforced largely by the principal. Such informal rule systems are developed for two main reasons: the lack of coverage of a situation by formal rules, and where the formal rules are seen by the principal as impeding effective management.

9) Informal rule systems seem to be accepted by the official rule custodians. This is evidenced by the response of the district superintendent interviewed for the study. When informed that principals interviewed admitted to regularly altering and interpreting the official rules and regulations, he did not seem overly concerned. He intimated that this was quite permissible in view of the fact that the current official regulatory framework was somewhat antiquated and the current management trend being espoused by the

Education Department was towards a more decentralised and devolved decision making model, with greater local control.

Study Findings Related to Social Rule System Theory.

Social Rule System Theory, as a concept for rule interpretation and mediation, was described in Chapter 2. Social Rule System Theory, developed by Burns and Flam (1987), two Swedish Sociologists, is a framework that can be used to explore and describe the formation and reformation of major types of organisations in contemporary society. The theory, more importantly for the purposes of this study, is a vehicle to describe and map social control within an organisation such as a school.

Social Rule System Theory (SRST) specifies that an organisation possesses a large body of formal rules and regulations. These formal rules do not provide sufficient direction for the members of the organisation. The subordinate members of the organisation formulate their own, informal rule system to ensure that the organisation can function. Within the realm of SRST, informal rules are seen to be as legitimate mechanisms of social control as are the formal rules. Without both informal and formal rule systems the organisation could not hope to function. Also, according to SRST, an organisation may possess a number of different, often conflicting informal rule systems. With SRST, and most other sociological theories dealing with social control and deviance, rules learned through socialisation are powerful agents of social control and obedience.

SRST was important to the study, due in part to its usefulness in shaping and directing the inquiry. It also provided the study with a number of provisional hypotheses. The first of these is the supposition that organisations possess a regulatory framework comprising of informal as well as formal rules. Secondly, that these rule systems are often

contradictory. Thirdly, and most importantly, members of an organisation make sense of the formal rules of their organisation by interpreting and mediating them into a workable form, that is, they create a body of informal, operational rules .

The study found that the regulatory frameworks of the two schools that were examined did indeed comprise a mixture of informal as well as formal rules. These were largely created by the executive or administrative members of the schools, with some input from the general teaching staff through the vehicle of participatory decision-making. The administrative staff, mainly principals, not only interpreted the formal rules, thereby developing informal operational rule systems, but they also ensured compliance to these rule systems, not through persuasion or coercion, but because the subordinate members of the organisation, the teachers, used the administrators as a source of role reference as well as rule reference.

Burns and Flam (1987) indicate that changes to the formal rule system in many cases may be accidental rather than deliberate. Data gathered from the subjects in this study would indicate otherwise. The administrators who were largely responsible for most of the rule re-interpretation, reported that changes they made to the rules were deliberate and somewhat calculated, only altering official rules and regulations that did not carry obvious sanctions for non-compliance. Teachers interviewed during the course of the study indicated that they followed the rules as closely as they could and did not depart from the rules and regulations at all. It is, of course, possible that the teachers may have unwittingly departed from the rules, but the study did not find any evidence to either support or refute this claim.

As suggested by SRST, the informal rule systems were created by principals in an attempt to provide coverage for situations where the formal rules are seen to be less than comprehensive. In the case of the study the informal rule systems were created mainly because the present formal rule system is seen to be less than effective, due to its lack of currency.

The study did not find evidence to either support or refute the view that a number of differing informal rule systems were in operation at either study site. It was apparent that the principal's rule system at each school was dominant and there did not appear to be other rule systems in competition against it. Teachers interviewed from both of the schools reported that they were happy to maintain the status quo *vis a vis* the rule system. They were happy to follow the principal's directions, they believed that this was their moral duty. The two principals of the schools used in the study would appear to rigorously exercise their power over the school that they manage. At other school sites where the power of the principal is not so evident the situation could be somewhat different. Subordinate members of the teaching staff may sense the power vacuum and advance their own rule systems in competition with those of the principal who they sense to be weaker than their own.

SRST explores in some depth the reasons or motivations of people for rule deviance and rule compliance. To some extent this has already been covered, but due to the fact that this element is so important to SRST it is important to re-iterate the findings. The teachers, as subordinate members of the organisation had a healthy respect for the official regulations, in so far as the ones that they were familiar with. They made a conscious effort to follow the rules and regulations. The motivation for this was based on a moral belief that this was what was expected of them and it was their duty to follow all

of the rules, to the letter. The teachers, with minor exceptions, reported that they had always followed the rules, could not remember a time when they hadn't and could not think of any circumstances that would prompt them to do so. The teachers conceded that they may have broken some of the rules during their career, but that would have only been through ignorance of the rules, not intentionally.

The principals' and administrators' view was somewhat different. As a group they were not in awe of the regulations, but exhibited a degree of respect towards them and felt that they should follow them, as far as was possible. One administrator, a deputy of considerable experience, was openly contemptuous of the regulations and felt no obligation to follow them, but his was a minority view.

The administrators only changed or reinterpreted the regulations that they felt impeded the development of effective or efficient practice, they did not change them for the sake of changing them. They did not change the rules to make things easier, as a means of cutting corners. The only exception was for rules that carried a visible sanction, these they left alone, even if they felt the rules impeded good practice.

General Model of Rule Interpretation - Post Study.

A model, entitled "The General Model of Rule Interpretation" (Figure 1) was developed at the commencement of the study. This model shows how people within an organisation interpret the formal rule systems of their organisation. The model was based on information gathered during the literature search undertaken for this study. The principal source of this material was from the work of Burns and Flam (1987) and to a lesser degree the works of Mills and Murgatroyd (1991); Blau and Scott (1965);

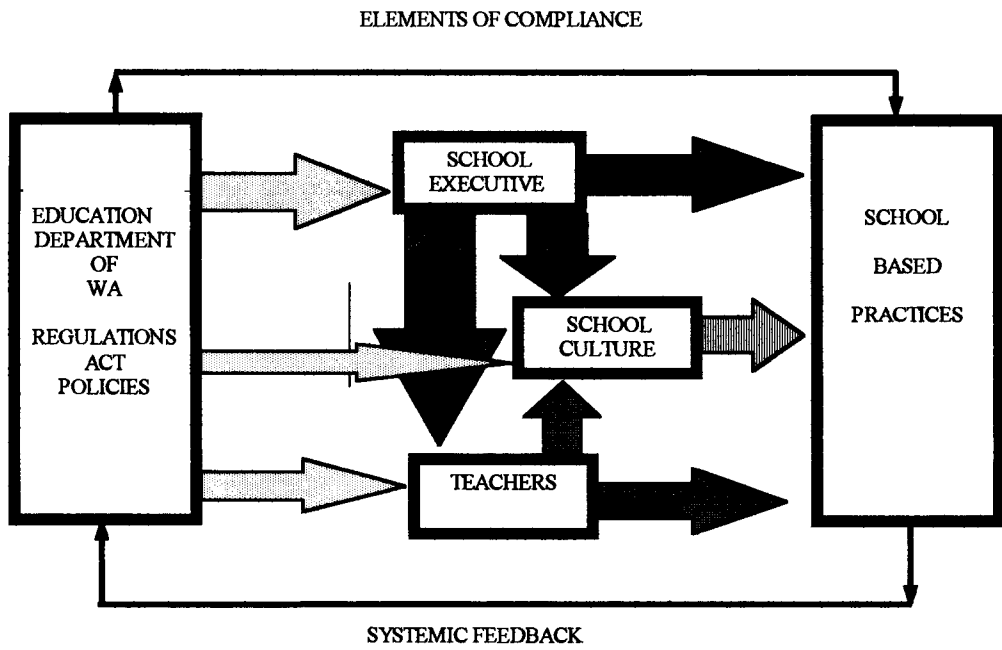
Perrow (1979); Salaman (1983); Scott (1981); Albrow (1970); Olsen (1978) and Collet (1977). The model is described in detail in Chapter 2 of the study.

At the conclusion of the study it became apparent that this model did not accurately or fully describe how people within the organisation under investigation actually interpreted the formal rule systems of their organisation. A second model entitled “The General Model of Rule Interpretation - Post Study Model” has been developed to reflect more accurately the situation in the two case study schools. The new model is still based on the original theories and concepts of the first, but is able to illustrate the interplay between the various elements of the model a little more accurately.

The post study model, contained on the next page and listed as Figure 4, consists of five basic elements: formal rules and regulations; school administration; school culture; teachers and school based practices. The relationship between the various elements of the new model are somewhat similar to those of the original model. A noticeable change is evident in the amalgamation of the school policy, and custom and practice elements into a single entity, school culture. School Culture now encompasses both informal and formalised rule systems at a school level. This modification reflected the fact that the informants for the study did not seem to draw a distinction between the two elements. Often when discussing custom and practice, and school policy with the study subjects it became difficult to differentiate between the two elements.

The new model is somewhat more sophisticated or informed than the first, due mainly to its reflection of the strength of the relationships between the various elements.

Figure 4.
General Model of Rule Interpretation - Post Study.



For example, it suggests that the formal rules and regulations have a greater impact upon school administrators than they do on teachers. This relationship is consistent with the evidence produced from the schools involved in the study.

The power of the administrative staff in determining what occurs at school level is also reflected in the model. The formal rules are interpreted by the administrative staff, their interpretations of the rules are formalised into school policy or as principal directives to staff. These executive determinations largely determine school culture and the actions of teachers, both individual and corporate, thereby ultimately determining what the school-based practices will be.

A further new feature of the model is the notion of 'elements of compliance'. Elements of compliance include all the rules and regulations of the organisation that are strictly enforced and invigilated by the central education authorities. The model illustrates that these rules do not undergo any form of mediation or interpretation. The principals interviewed indicated that this was indeed the case, there were some rules that were inviolate. This would include the true reporting of enrolment numbers and strict compliance with the rules for any matters relating to finance. The principals were aware of the fate that befell those who were reckless enough to transgress in these areas.

It would also appear that there are elements of systemic feedback. The existence of this element was confirmed by the district superintendent interviewed. He stated that feedback occurred through the chain of line management. The teachers reported to their principals, the principals reported to their superintendent, the superintendent reported to his director of operations and the director of operations reported to the Director General of Education.

Teachers also have a significant influence on school culture and school based practices, but considerably less than the executive members of the school, due to the power and authority invested in their positions. As indicated by Burns and Flam (1987), Mills and Murgatroyd (1991) and Salaman (1983) the subordinate members of the organisation will often place their own interpretation on these 'interpreted rules', they will resist the ones that they disagree with and perhaps even substitute their own informal rules to cater for lack of coverage in these interpreted rules. The study did not collect enough specific data to conclusively support or refute these suppositions. However, the evidence that was collected would tend to indicate that this is possibly not the case, teachers interviewed for this study reported that they generally followed the directions of their principal, in the main, without question and did not consciously re-interpret the principal's rules.

Limitations of the Study.

A major limitation of this study arises from the selection of the two case sites. The two schools, no matter how similar they appear to be to one another, or how similar they appear to be to other schools of their type and nature within the system as a whole, cannot be defined as being 'typical'. It is arguable that no single school within a system of many could ever be defined as typical. There are too many factors, both large and small, tangible and intangible that make each school unique within its own right and which could influence how rules are made interpreted and acted upon.

Some of these factors would include such things as the management style and personality of the principal. If the principal were particularly rule conscious and did not waver from the rules at all, the picture would be somewhat different. The nature of the school staff is also particularly important. They may be particularly rule conscious or ambivalent

towards the rules and regulations, either extreme would produce a markedly differing regulatory climate. For example, it is conceivable that teachers and administrators in high schools, arguably more complex organisations, with different norms of compliance would respond differently.

The narrowness of the scope of research undertaken for this study can also lead to limitations. The area of educational regulation is very complex and very broad. This study focussed on one small part of the whole, the Education Act Regulations (1960) and to a lesser degree, the Education Act(1928) itself. In reality there are a large number of laws and regulations that relate to education, both directly such as the Government School Teachers Award 1991 and less directly in the case of the Occupational Health and Safety legislation. No school is concerned with just one small section of the rule system as described in this study.

Implications of the Study.

The findings of this study have several important implications for officials responsible for establishing and reviewing the formal rule systems in state education departments similar to the Education Department of Western Australia.

First, the findings of the study suggest that the makers of formal rule systems are inclined to underestimate the power of informal rule systems. It is clear from the study that unless the rules that are issued are precisely framed and carry powerful sanctions that are invigilated thoroughly, it is unlikely that there will be a one to one correspondence with the intention of rule makers and the action of staff in schools. Even under these conditions there is no guarantee that the rule will be interpreted similarly by every employee. In any event, it is not possible to install such a system of invigilation for

practical and political reasons. A massive inspection system would need to be put in place during a period when politicians and educators are promoting stronger local control.

Second, the study draws attention to the regulatory problems that arise because the formal rule system must be able to cope with the rapid change that seems to have been the hall-mark of education over the past decade or so. Educators who mediate the rules, do so because the rule system of their organisation has not been able to keep pace with the rapid changes; the formal rule system may actually impede their efforts to modify school practices that are expected by the policy makers within the system. This presents a dilemma for the rule makers. The rules that they make can soon become obsolete or inadequate unless stated in very general terms. However, the more generally stated the rules the more scope for school administrators and teachers to interpret the rules and call into play the informal rules systems that shape the way the school operates.

Third, the findings of the study suggest that in primary schools, at least, the principal is the key guardian and interpreter of the rules. Education department officials who seek to introduce regulatory changes into schools will need to take account of the positions of school principals, the gatekeepers of regulatory reform.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1**REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 1) How long before the commencement of school should a teacher be in attendance? (Reg 31).

- 2) The programme of instruction in a school should be in accordance with what Ministry documentation? (Reg 36,2)

- 3) What are the grounds on which a teacher may detain a child after school? (Reg 28).

- 4) For how long may a child be detained after school by a teacher? (Reg 29, 2(a) (iii).

- 5) Under what circumstances may this period be exceeded? (Reg 29, 2b).

- 6) May a teacher detain a child during a recess or lunch break? (Reg 2a).

- 7) Under what circumstances may a teacher restrain a child? (Reg 33).

- 8) What are the specific guidelines for the setting of school discipline? (Reg 32).

- 9) In the terms of the Education Act, what constitutes teacher misconduct? (Sec 7c).

10) What action may be taken against a teacher who is found guilty of misconduct?
(Sec 7c, 12).

11) What action may be taken against a teacher who is found to be inefficient?
(Reg 86a).

12) Under what circumstances may a child be excluded from school? (Reg 22).

13) May a child be given religious instruction without the prior permission of the
parent? (Reg 42).

14) Under what circumstances may the principal of a school affect its closure?
(Reg 37).

APPENDIX 2**REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

For the purpose of this questionnaire we define the official rules as being the collective of all the written regulations and policies of the Education Department of Western Australia.

1) Do you believe that everything you do as a teacher is within the 'rules' as defined by the Education Act Regulations and written policy statements? YES \ NO

2) Do you feel that you know and understand all of the official rules and regulations that pertain to you as a teacher? YES \ NO

3) Have you ever had cause to read the Education Act Regulations? YES \ NO

4) What prompted you to read them? _____

5) Would you see the Education Act Regulations as having a direct influence upon you as a classroom teacher _____

6) Do you suspect that some facets of your operation may be outside the official rules and regulations? YES \ NO

If yes, please provide details. _____

7) Have you ever undertaken a course of action that you knew to be in contravention of the regulations? YES \ NO

If yes, please provide details. _____

8) Do you try to stay within the rules as much as possible? YES \ NO

9) Are there times when you are unsure as to what the official Department rules are? YES \ NO

10) What prompts this uncertainty? _____

11) What do you do to resolve this uncertainty?

- Do you make a decision based on your own knowledge and experience? _____
- Consult a colleague? _____
- Consult the principal? _____
- Other strategies? _____

12) Do you have a guide or base that helps you make decisions or plan courses of action in your role as a teacher? YES \ NO

Please specify. (For example: previous experience, colleague, school policy, principal, custom and practice or written policies and regulations). _____

13) How do you learn of changes to the official rules? _____

14) Do you accept changes to the rules readily? _____

15) Do you think there are too many official rules and regulations? Please elaborate on your answer. _____

16) Do you think there is too little official rule and regulation? Please elaborate on your answer. _____

17) Number from 1, most important, to 6 least important, the impact of the following in determining what you may or may not do within your role as a teacher.

Individual custom. (The way I have always done things). ()

Custom and practice. (The way we have always done it) . ()

Formal school culture. (School policy documents). ()

Informal school culture. (The way we do it at this school). ()

Principal direction. ()

Education Department Regulations and Policy documents. ()

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1.

Initial Ice Breakers.

- 1) For how long have you been a teacher?
- 2) Do you enjoy being a teacher?
- 3) What do you feel is the best aspect of being a teacher?
- 4) What do you feel is the worst aspect?
- 5) If you could change one thing about your teaching role what would it be?

Main Body of Investigation.

- 1) Do you feel that the Education Act Regulations have a direct influence upon you as a teacher?
- 2) Do you try to stay within the rules as much as possible? Why?
- 3) If you discovered that you were operating outside the rules, would you take steps to ensure that you complied? Why or why not?
- 4) Do you feel that there is an ultimate rule boundary that must not be crossed?
- 5) What is this boundary?
- 6) Who sets this boundary?
- 7) What steps are taken to ensure that this boundary is not breached?
- 8) Who polices this boundary?
- 9) Are you consciously aware of the official rules when making decisions or planning courses of action?
- 10) With whom or what might you consult if you are uncertain as to the legality of a proposed course of action?
- 11) If the school principal directs you to follow a certain course of action do you ever question the legality of the direction?
- 12) Do you think that you teach in a similar manner to the majority of your colleagues at your present school? Why do you think this is the case?
- 13) Does your present school operate in a similar manner to other schools that you have taught at? Why do you think this is the case?
- 14) Do you think that your school has a strong culture or identity?
- 15) How does this manifest itself?
- 16) Do you feel that there is pressure on you to conform to this particular culture or identity or even teaching style? If yes, who brings this pressure to bear?
- 17) What happens if you do something that is not in step with the accepted school practice or culture?

Responses based on answers to questionnaire.

Question 2 - Yes - What is source of your knowledge about the rules?
 No - How would you find out the rules that pertain to you as a teacher?

Question 3 - Either - What sorts of information do you believe to be contained in the Regulations?

Question 6 - Either - Before completing the Regulation Questionnaire would you have

questioned the legality of your actions?

- Question 7 - Yes - Was the rule deviance discovered?
- Was there any penalty or risk attached to the rule breach if you were discovered?
 - What would have discouraged you from breaching the rules?
- No - Are there any circumstances that may prompt you to break the rules in future?

- Question 8 - Yes - Why do you try to stay within the rules?
- No - What would prompt you to remain within the rules?
 - Do you disregard all the rules or only certain types?
 -

- Question 9 - Yes - Are you concerned by your apparent lack of knowledge about the official rules?

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2 - INFORMAL REGULATION

Last time we met, we discussed at length the formal regulations that exist within the state education system. In this interview we will be focussing on the relationship between informal and formal rules systems.

1. What is meant by the term formal rules ?
2. Can you suggest some examples of formal rule systems?
 Prompt - I cited the Education Act Regulations as one example of a formal rule system, can you think of some others? others - Memorandum of agreement Teachers Award 1993, Education Act, F.A.A.A
3. Are formal rules always written?
4. Can you suggest some examples of informal rule systems? For example, custom and practice
5. Can you suggest some specific examples of informal rules?
6. Can you easily distinguish between a situation that is controlled by informal rules and one that is controlled or regulated by formal rules?
7. What do you think the term “ custom and practise” means in an educational sense?
8. Can you think of any current school practices that could be described in this way?
9. Are all contingencies or situations within a primary school covered by a formal rule or regulation?
 If no, why do you think this is the case?
 If no, what controls or regulates these grey areas ?
 If no, what happens in a situation where there is no clear formal rule to cover a particular situation and a decision has to be made?
 If no, can you think of any situations where this has happened to you?

 If yes, is the coverage literal or general and open to interpretation?
 If yes, what is the source of these rules?
10. Proportionally, how much of the regulation within a school is based directly on published, formal rules and regulation and how much is based on informal regulation, where the authorship of the rules is unknown?
11. Conversely, how much of the regulation within a school is based on unpublished, but well known formal rules and regulation and how much is based on informal; regulation, where the authorship of the rules is unknown?

12. Can you provide examples of these unpublished, but well known formal rules and regulations?
13. I will suggest some examples of school based practices and I will ask you to identify the rule source that covers this contingency. For example; formal or informal regulation, department policy, school policy or custom and practice, Principal or Superintendent directive, where would you find the rule if you can, and what would happen if you did not undertake to complete the practice.

yard duty
 end of semester reports
 attendance rolls,
 programmes
 daily work pad
 conduct an assembly
 pay your tea money
 attend the monthly staff meeting
 attend the interim staff meeting
 complete your First Steps continua
 use the First Steps teaching methodology
 turn up for school before the first morning siren
 attend parents' evenings
 assessment of children

What are the rules governing what you may or may not do in certain situations.
 Is the rule clearly identifiable, written or unwritten, informal or formal and will it be enforced by someone.

For example;
 detaining a child after school.
 disregarding a clear direction from the principal.
 refusing to take a class of thirty five children.
 coming to school barefoot and in your gardening clothes.
 teaching material not in the syllabus.
 leaving the school grounds at lunchtime to go to the shop.
 leaving the school at lunchtime and not returning at all.
 dismissing the children before the final siren.
 taking a child in your private car to go on an excursion.
 hitting a child.
 restraining a child.
 refusing to teach a child due to their behaviour.
 refusing to participate in consultative decision making.
 refusing to conduct a parent interview.
 refusal to participate in M.S.E. Testing
 refusal to provide information for M.I.S initiatives at school level.

APPENDIX 5

SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEW

- Q1. What do you see as the single most important mechanism of control or regulation in a primary school?
- Q2. Do you see the Education Act Regulations as having a great impact upon classroom teachers in primary schools?
- Q3. Would you expect primary teachers to be familiar with the Education Act Regulations?
- Q4. A questionnaire completed by teachers for this dissertation revealed that many teachers are largely unaware of official rules and regulations that pertain to them. Do you see this as significant?
- Q5. Do you see this rule ignorance as a major area of concern?
- Q6. Do you think that it is acceptable to see the principal as the keeper of official rule and regulation?
- Q7. Do you feel that the rules and policies of the Education Department are sufficiently documented?
- Q8. Are all situations and contingencies in primary schools covered by a formal and published rule?
If no - Why do you think this is the case?
 - What controls or regulates these grey areas?
 - What happens in a situation where there is no clear formal rule to cover a particular situation and a decision has to be made?
 - Can you think of situations where this has happened to you?
- Q9. As District Superintendent with whom might you consult with if you are unsure of the official rules in a specific situation?
- Q10. Do you feel that the public education system is over regulated?
- Q11. Do you feel that there should be increased regulation in the public school system?
- Q12. Do you feel that educational regulation should be prescriptive, to ensure consistency between individual schools or open ended to allow schools to develop idiosyncratic systems?
- Q13. Do you think that current regulation and policy reflect current school level practices?
- Q14. Do you believe that the rule originators or rule custodians within the central authority are cognisant of what actually happens within schools? (Prompt - For example how effectively or widely changes that they have instituted have been adopted within the school.
- Q15. What role would you see the school principal playing in the dissemination of knowledge about rules and regulations?

Q16. If a teacher was unsure of the policy on a certain aspect of school operations, such as programming, what course of action do you recommend they should follow to solve this uncertainty?

Q17. What documentation is available to help teachers find this information for themselves?

Q18. What are the specific rules, as you understand them, for determining how a teacher prepares their programme of work?

Q19. Are these rules documented?

Q20. Would you expect all teachers to follow the same planning process?

Q21. I will suggest some examples of school based practices and I will ask you to identify the rule source that covers this contingency. For example; formal or informal regulation, department policy, school policy, custom or practice, or principal or superintendent directive.

Yard duty

End of semester reports

Attendance rolls

Programmes

Attendance at monthly staff meetings

Attendance at interim staff meetings

Attendance at parent evenings

Using First Steps teaching strategies

Q22. What are the rules governing what you may or may not do in certain situations? Are the specific rules clearly identifiable, written or unwritten, formalised or informal and what action can be taken against you if you flout it.

Detaining a child after school

Disregarding a clear direction from the principal

Refusing to take a class of 35 children

Teaching material not contained in the syllabus

Dismissing the children before the final home siren

Taking a child in a personal motor vehicle

Restraining a child

Refusing to participate in consultative decision making

Refusing to teach a child due to their behaviour

Refusal to participate in M.S.E testing

Hitting a child.

Q23. What do you see as the future trend in educational regulation in Western Australian schools? (Prompt; less, more).

APPENDIX 6

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

- Q1. What do you see as the single most important mechanism of control or regulation in a primary school?
- Q2. Would you expect primary teachers to be familiar with the Education Act Regulations?
- Q3. Do you see the Education Act Regulations as having a great impact upon classroom teachers in primary schools?
- Q4. A questionnaire completed by teachers for this dissertation revealed that many teachers are largely unaware of official rules and regulations that pertain to them. Do you see this as significant?
- Q5. Do you see this rule ignorance as a major area of concern?
- Q6. How would you define school culture?
- Q7. Do you think that your school has a particularly strong culture? How do you know this?

The majority of teachers surveyed for this study, report that they are largely ignorant of the official Regulation and policies and rely on informal rule structures to make decisions within their role as a teacher.. (Define what is meant by informal rule structures; colleague, school policy and custom and practice).

- Q8. Would you agree with this statement?
- Q9. Do you see informal or cultural rule structures as being legitimate substitutes for general formal rule structures?
- Q10. Do you believe that most teachers operate within the framework of the regulations but don't realise because they do not know what the regulations are?
- Q11. Do you think that it is acceptable to see the principal as the keeper of official rule and regulation?
- Q12. What is the difference between regulation and policy?
- Q13. Which has greater influence upon the school?
- Q14. Which has greater influence upon individual teachers
- Q15. Do you feel that the rules and policies of the Education Department are sufficiently documented?
- Q16. Do you feel that the public education system is over regulated?
- Q17. Do you feel that there should be increased regulation in the public school system?
- Q18. Do you feel that educational regulation should be prescriptive, to ensure consistency between individual schools or open ended to allow schools to develop idiosyncratic

systems?

- Q19. Do you think that current regulation and policy reflect current school level practices?
- Q20. Do you believe that the rule originators or rule custodians within the central authority are cognisant of what actually happens within schools? (Prompt - For example how effectively or widely changes that they have instituted have been adopted within the school.
- Q21. What role would you see the school principal playing in the dissemination of knowledge about rules and regulations?
- Q22. If a teacher was unsure of the policy on a certain aspect of school operations, such as programming, what course of action do you recommend they should follow to solve this uncertainty?
- Q23. What documentation is available to help teachers find this information for themselves?
- Q24. What are the specific rules, as you understand them, for determining how a teacher prepares their programme of work?
- Q25. Are these rules documented?
- Q26. Would you expect all teachers to follow the same planning process?
- Q27. What do you see as the future trend in educational regulation in Western Australian schools? (Prompt; less, more).