

1-1-2001

## **An evaluation of the orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals**

Samuel G. Fontaine  
*Edith Cowan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Fontaine, S. G. (2001). *An evaluation of the orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals*. Edith Cowan University. Retrieved from <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/1054>

This Thesis is posted at Research Online.  
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/1054>

# Edith Cowan University

## Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study.

The University does not authorize you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following:

- Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.
- A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. Where the reproduction of such material is done without attribution of authorship, with false attribution of authorship or the authorship is treated in a derogatory manner, this may be a breach of the author's moral rights contained in Part IX of the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).
- Courts have the power to impose a wide range of civil and criminal sanctions for infringement of copyright, infringement of moral rights and other offences under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

## USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

**AN EVALUATION OF THE ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR NEWLY  
APPOINTED CATHOLIC PRIMARY PRINCIPALS.**

Samuel G. Fontaine  
Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Education,  
Diploma of Religious Education

A Research Project submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements of the Award of

Master of Education

Faculty Of Education  
Edith Cowan University  
Perth, Western Australia.

April, 2001

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Table of Contents	ii
Appendices	iv
List of Tables	iv
Edith Cowan University Policy	v
Declaration	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Abstract	viii

## CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

Background to the study.	1
Contextual features.	2
CEO of Western Australia – structure	4
CEO of Western Australia – a statistical picture	5
Number of religious vs. lay principals	6
Funding of the Catholic schools in Western Australia	7
Australian Catholic orientation programs	8
New South Wales orientation program	8
Queensland orientation program	9
Victoria orientation program	10
Western Australian orientation program	11
Comparison between the states	15
Overview of the states orientation programs	15
Research questions	16
Definitions of terms used within the research	17
Conclusion	19

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction	20
Newly appointed principals	22
Needs of the newly appointed principal	24
Philosophy of Catholic education	30
Catholic school ethos	31
Symbolic Interactionism perspective	31
Conclusion	33

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction	34
Qualitative research methods	34
Models of evaluation	37
Responsive evaluation	37
Population, survey sample, participant selection	41
Design of the study	43
Questionnaire	44
Interview schedules	46
Data analysis	48
Reliability and validity	50
Ethics	51
Limitations of the study	52
Steps of the process	53
Summary	56

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction	57
Needs and expectations of the newly appointed principal	58
Improvements and limitations to the current induction program	68
Summary	77

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction	79
Conclusions	79
Recommendations	85
Further research	86
Summary	87

REFERENCES	88
------------	----

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Catholic Education Office of Western Australia – principal’s induction program – 1999	91
Appendix 2	An overview comparison of the states of Australia orientation and induction programs	93
Appendix 3	Letter of introduction to the participant about the study	95
Appendix 4	Letter of explanation to the participant about the study	97
Appendix 5	Letter of thanks to the participant for their involvement	99
Appendix 6	Questionnaire administered to participants	101
Appendix 7	Interview questions for the participants	105
Appendix 8	Letter of support from the Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia	109
Appendix 9	Transcripts of the in-depth interviews	111

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Structure of the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia in 1999	4
2	The number of religious vs. lay principals in Catholic schools in Western Australia from 1989 to 1999.	6
3	Sources for funding for Catholic schools	7
4	Overview and comparison of the states of Australia orientation and induction programs	15

## DECLARATION

I certify that this research project does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. Incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
2. Contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
3. Contain any defamatory material.

Signed.

Dated.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- To my supervisor, Dr William Connell, for his suggestions, guidance and constant encouragement.
- To the newly appointed Catholic primary principals, who gave generously of their time to make this research possible.
- To Mrs Therese Temby, Director Of Catholic Education in Western Australia and the staff of the Catholic Education Office Of Western Australia for their assistance in this research.
- To my wife, Teresa and children Andrew and Mia, for their ongoing support and encouragement.

## **ABSTRACT**

The structure and operation of Catholic schools in Western Australia have been in a process of change since the early 1970's. Prior to 1971, most Catholic primary schools were administrated by religious orders and much of the religious character of the school reflected the charisma of the particular religious order that operated the school. In the Year 2000 most Catholic primary schools formed part of a state-wide system in which the Catholic Education Office (CEO) plays a major administrative and co-ordinating role.

The number of religious principals and teaching staff has also decreased over this time and hence there is a need to prepare staff in their vocation as Catholic educators. With this in mind the presentation and development of a structured and systematic principal induction program is imperative. Similar concerns have been expressed throughout Australia. However, no study of the Catholic primary principals' induction program has been conducted so far in Western Australia.

In light of the background to the study, contextual factors, and Catholic induction programs throughout Australia, this study evaluated the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals, as developed by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. The following questions, are secondary to the main aim of the study, but nevertheless guided the study: What are the needs and expectations of newly appointed principals of Catholic primary schools? What improvements can be made to the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals? The intention of the study was for the researcher to construct answers to these questions based on the participant's responses and perspectives.

The study comprised of 10 principals from the years 1998 and 1999. In the study data was collected by the use of a questionnaire. In-depth interviews were conducted with all participants who volunteered to continue further in the study. These interviews clarified responses from the questionnaires. All of the data gathering devices were trialled by an experienced principal from the 1997 intake of newly appointed Catholic primary principals to check for validity. Of the ten principals who were sent questionnaires, seven responded. This represents 70% of the total available sample population for the years 1998 and 1999. Twenty eight percent of the participants volunteered to be involved in the interviews.

The results correlated with research reported in the literature, namely, that an induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals was considered as essential. All of the principals who participated in the study, indicated that the current induction program should be extended to include systematic, structured support over the whole first year of appointment. Principals reported little if any pre-requisite requirements to participate in the induction program, and inadequate training in the area of financial management and administration. The majority of principals perceived the need for:

- a formal structured hand-over between the outgoing and in coming principals;
- regular networking and mentor programs in place;
- a variety of information delivery techniques during workshop sessions;
- the segregation of secondary and primary principals during selected sections of the program.

# **CHAPTER ONE: Introduction**

## **Background to the Study**

For over 150 years, Catholic primary schools have been operating and serving the Western Australian Catholic community. From this early beginning until the present, these schools have made a positive contribution into all facets of Catholic education.

Initially, religious congregations administered these schools. However, as time progressed and the Catholic school system grew, fewer religious staff were available to continue at this level of involvement. Primarily, lay teachers were employed to fill these vacancies but now we see many lay principals being appointed to administer these schools. With the religious congregations not directly involved with many schools, there is a necessity to maintain the Catholic character of the school and the unique religious charisma brought by the founding congregation of the school. Lay principals are now being called upon to maintain this religious character of the school.

The Religious principals and teachers have had many years of formation, working in this Catholic character. However, the newly appointed lay principal has had no formal formation in this area. Therefore, the appointment of lay people to the role of Principal demanded that an orientation process be developed. This orientation process was established to meet the professional needs and personal challenges of these future leaders in Catholic education.

In the literature examined, 'orientation' is generally understood to mean "An introduction to the position, general information, locations, relevant personnel and a welcome" (Shields, 1997, p.20).

On the other hand ‘induction’ is generally understood to have a longer time frame, at least throughout the first year and also focuses on the professional development of all relevant aspects of principalship. Many principals supplement induction with academic study. However, many studies make no distinction between the terms and use orientation and induction interchangeably. For the purpose of this study only the orientation program will be studied. The main reason for this is that the orientation program is the only compulsory section of the induction program for Western Australian Catholic principals. All other aspects of the induction program are completed on a needs or voluntary basis. This problem has been identified and will be analysed more comprehensively within the study. It should be noted that all of the induction programs studied throughout selected states of Australia contain a section on the orientation program within the process.

### **Contextual Factors**

The structure and operation of Catholic schools in Western Australia have been in a process of change since the early 1970’s. Prior to 1971, most Catholic primary schools were administrated by religious orders and the religious character of the school reflected the charisma of the particular religious order that operated the school. In the Year 2000 most Catholic Primary schools form a part of a state-wide system in which the Catholic Education Office (CEO) plays a major administrative and co-ordinating role.

The number of religious principals and teaching staff has also decreased over this time and hence the Catholic Education office has assumed greater responsibility for maintaining the religious character within the school. (See Table 2, p.6.)

The Catholic Education Office is the executive arm and provides the secretariat for the Catholic Education Commission. It gives advice and service to all Catholic schools and implements the policy decisions of the Commission. Another function is that it negotiates arrangements with governments and other agencies and administers government funded programs.

The Catholic Education Office is under the leadership of the Director of Catholic Education. The Director is assisted by the Deputy Director and the Director of Religious Education, who is accountable to the Bishops of the four dioceses for religious education content. The office is structured into five sections, each managed by a head of section. This group comprises of the executive management team.

(See Table 1)

# CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CHAIRMAN - BISHOP R. HEALY

### DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION MRS T. TEMBY

#### DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FR G. HOLOHAN

#### DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION MR R. DULLARD

#### Secretariat Mrs D. Marshall (Acting Coordinator)

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM SECTION

##### Mr B. Bous

**Faith  
Integration  
& Formation**  
Mr J. de Groot  
(Coordinator)

**Primary  
Curriculum  
& Teaching**  
Mrs C. Edwards  
(Coordinator)

**Primary  
Religious  
Education**  
Mr D. Doyle  
(Acting Coordinator)

**Secondary  
Curriculum  
& Teaching**  
Ms D. Grzenda  
(Coordinator)

**Secondary  
Religious  
Education**  
Ms D. Alieri  
(Coordinator)

#### STUDENT SUPPORT SECTION

##### Mr M. King

**Aboriginal  
Student Support**  
Mr N. Brahim  
(Coordinator)

**Schools Psychology**  
Mr W. MacNeil  
(Coordinator)

**Special Learning  
Needs**  
Mrs M. Thomson  
(Coordinator)

**Liaison:  
Social Work  
Performing Arts  
Library Team**

#### SCHOOL PERSONNEL SECTION

##### Mr T. Wilson

**Employee &  
Community  
Relations**  
Mr P. Andrew  
(Coordinator)

**Leadership**  
Ms C. Garstin  
(Acting Coordinator)

**Payroll &  
Personnel**  
Mr G. Hendriks  
(Coordinator)

#### PLANNING AND RESOURCES SECTION

##### Mr A. Giglia

**Planning &  
Development**  
Mrs E. Lawrance  
(Coordinator)

**School  
Resources**  
Mr R. Walsh  
(Coordinator)

#### ADMINISTRATION SECTION

##### Mr N. Anderton

**Computer  
& Information**  
Mr J. Durkin  
(Coordinator)

**Finance  
& Property**  
Mr B. O'Shea  
(Coordinator)

**Library**  
Ms D. Hallion  
(Coordinator)

**Superannuation**  
Mrs K. Witcombe  
(Coordinator)

**ARCHDIOCESAN  
CATECHIST SERVICE**  
Sr M.A. Beech - Coordinator

**BUNBURY DIOCESE**  
Mr J. Borserio - Regional Officer

**GERALDTON DIOCESE**  
Sr L. Mayne - Regional Officer

**BROOME DIOCESE**  
Mrs S. Brogden - Regional Officer

Table 1

The Structure of the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia  
(ref: CEC of WA 1999 Annual Report, 1999, p.15)

## **The Catholic Education System of Western Australia: A Statistical Picture.**

The number of schools administered in recent years by the Catholic education system in Western Australia has continued to increase.

In 1999, the most recent data available at the time of publication, there were 156 Catholic Schools in Western Australia. Specifically, 108 were primary schools, 29 secondary and 19 combined primary / secondary under the administration of the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

Catholic schools are located throughout Western Australia. Statistically 96 primary and secondary schools are classified metropolitan (Perth metropolitan area), 22 outer urban (Albany, Boulder, Bunbury, Busselton, Carnarvon, Collie, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Mandurah, Northam, Port Hedland), and 38 are classified as rural. It should also be noted that the largest numbers of schools in the Western Australian Catholic system are primary schools.

Catholic primary and secondary schools are also identified in terms of whether they are operated by religious teaching orders (order owned) or systemic (system owned).

In 1999, eight of the 156 schools were order owned and the remaining 148 were systemic.

The trend towards declining numbers of religious staff in schools is not only evident at general teaching positions but also in principalship. Table 2, which sets out principalship of Catholic Schools for the period 1989 – 1999, displays a decline in the number of religious principals from 75 to 22. This is also having a significant effect in the number of order owned schools in Western Australia.



**Table 2**

The Number of Religious Principals vs. Lay Principals in all Catholic Schools in Western Australia from 1989 – 1999. (Includes Primary and Secondary)  
(ref: CEC of WA 1999 Annual Report, 1999, p.40)

Number of Primary and Secondary Catholic School Principals 1989 – 1999					
YEAR	RELIGIOUS MALES	RELIGIOUS FEMALES	LAY MALES	LAY FEMALES	TOTAL
1989	17	58	54	22	151
1990	15	51	59	26	151
1991	15	49	62	26	152
1992	11	40	69	31	151
1993	12	42	69	32	155
1994	10	36	69	39	154
1995	10	32	72	38	152
1996	9	26	77	42	154
1997	9	22	81	43	155
1998	7	19	85	44	155
1999	9	13	86	48	156
PRINCIPALS – 1999					
	RELIGIOUS MALES	RELIGIOUS FEMALES	LAY MALES	LAY FEMALES	TOTAL
Primary	0	10	62	37	109
Secondary	6	1	17	5	29
Composite	3	2	7	6	18
Total	9	13	86	48	156

**Funding for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.**

Funding for Catholic Schools in Western Australia is received from three main sources:

- Commonwealth Government Grants (50%)
  - State Government Grants (25%)
  - School Community Contributions (25%)
- Key**

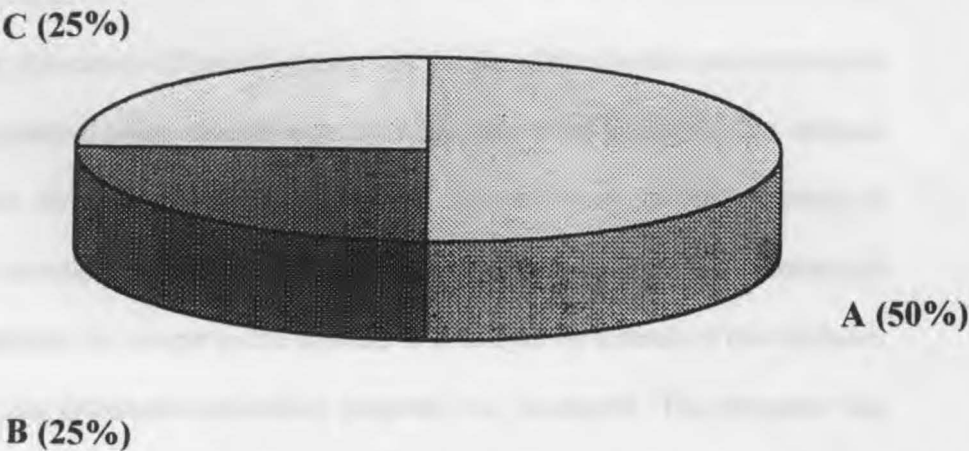
A

B

C

**Table 3**

This pie chart represents the break up for funding sources for the Catholic School in Western Australia.



## **Catholic Orientation Programs for Newly Appointed Principals Throughout Australia.**

It is essential to emphasize that all of the Catholic education systems within Australia have induction programs for newly appointed principals, each of which last for a minimum of one year. However, this study will examine only the orientation program, which commences each induction program of every Catholic education system. (See Appendix 2). The orientation program can be defined as “an initial introduction to the position, general information, locations, relevant personnel and a welcome” (Shields, 1997, p.20). The main reason for this is that the orientation program is the only compulsory section of the Western Australian induction process for Catholic primary school principals. All other professional development and aspects of the induction process (in-services) are completed on a needs or voluntary basis.

### **New South Wales**

The Catholic Education Office of Sydney was the first Catholic education system to develop a centralised orientation program for newly appointed principals. The original program came about in 1975 and prior to this, orientation in the Archdiocese of Sydney was inconsistent. In 1975 the Catholic Education Office of Sydney recognised the need to appoint lay people to the position of principal. As a result of this decision, a structured and systematic orientation program was developed. This program was designed to assist newly appointed principals assimilate into their new role. Up until 1998, ten revisions of the original 1975 orientation program offered by the Catholic Education Office in Sydney had been made. The current program consists of one full week in-service, prior to taking up the appointment. Similar to that of Western Australia, the orientation program in Sydney is compulsory.

The difference is that the whole induction process in Sydney remains compulsory while this is not the case in Western Australia (See Appendix 2). Therefore in Western Australia there is no further formal compulsory induction process. The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia does offer a number of seminars on a voluntary basis for newly appointed primary principals but only a few principals attend these.

## **Queensland**

Currently the Queensland Catholic Education orientation program is under review and is in draft form. This came about in response to the 1996 / 97 evaluation of the Education Department program conducted by Shields and attempts to factor in some of the results and recommendations that were made. Since only a draft of the Queensland Catholic Education Office document can be obtained, much of the detail is sketchy and not listed. However, it does appear to be very similar to that of Western Australia, in that preliminary orientation takes place prior to the appointment (see Appendix 2). The initial orientation, which is the main area for this study, occurs in January of the year of appointment and is directly followed by a mentoring program in February. This orientation program consists of two and a half days in total. The timeline then continues to include another three days in-service, in the principal's first year of appointment in March (each year). In this instance, a difference from the Western Australian program occurs, in that the entire Western Australian orientation program normally takes place prior to the commencement of the school year. Following this intensive in-servicing, the principal is encouraged to continue professional development.

This is again very similar to that of Western Australia, where courses are conducted throughout the year to assist the principals to effectively carry out their duties. These courses are voluntary in Western Australia and compulsory in Queensland.

## **Victoria**

The induction program in Victoria includes courses, which take place in the first, second, and fifth years of the principal's appointment. For the purpose of this review only the orientation section of the total induction program will be examined. It should also be noted that this three-year structure and format has existed since 1988 and no major changes have taken place since then (See Appendix 2). It is compulsory for all principals to attend all aspects of both the orientation and induction programs, over the five years of duration. Also, no further review of the course has been completed.

The first year program for the newly appointed principal in Victorian Catholic schools consists of eight and a half days of in-servicing. These days are spread throughout the year and only one day occurs prior to the commencement of the school year. In comparison to Victoria, all of the other states' orientation programs have their participants complete at least three days comprehensive in-service prior to the commencement of their appointment. As has been previously stated this is not the case in Victoria.

It appears from the details provided, that the Victorian orientation program is very similar in structure to the orientation programs of the other States of Australia.

The main difference being that the modules or topics are taught over an extended period of time in Victoria. For example where a module in Western Australia would take a morning session, the same module would take a day in Victoria. This possibly explains why the whole induction process in Victoria would take three years to complete. However, from the information obtained this cannot be substantiated, as only an outline of course content was provided and not specific details. It can be assumed that the philosophies that pertain to Catholic education in Victoria are covered more in depth and with more input. The time allocation allows for this. With the constant return of the newly appointed principal to in-services and modules taught, there would be a greater support mechanism in place for any newly appointed principal who was experiencing difficulties. There would also be the opportunity for a greater sharing of ideas, among the new principals because they meet regularly as a cohort.

### **Western Australia**

The original Western Australian orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals, (see Appendix 1) appears to be a modification of the Sydney Program. However, due to many years of modifications and developments the Western Australian orientation program has developed to meet the needs and specific requirements for Western Australian Catholic schools. These specific requirements include the unique structure / development of the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, the remote Kimberly schools, the Western Australian system of funding and policies unique to Western Australian Catholic schools.

While most Catholic education systems in Australia offer a minimum one-year induction process with compulsory in-servicing and professional development, this is not the case in Western Australia (see Appendix 2 ).

In Western Australia, as previously stated, the orientation program consists of a comprehensive four-day event. (This is termed the induction program for newly appointed Catholic Principals in Western Australian Catholic schools). After this initial four-day orientation program, a mentor program is established. This is where an experienced Catholic primary principal is partnered with a newly appointed Catholic primary principal. The rationale behind this is that for the first year of service, the newly appointed principal can contact an experienced principal to ask for support, guidance and advice as needed. While in theory this seems a very worthwhile and supportive program, in practice it has not achieved the desired results. The main reason is that there is often a lack of communication between the two principals. In some cases both principals had never met. The more recent mentor program has included a mentor from the central Catholic Education Office, as well as the experienced principal. This was introduced in 1998 but seems to have developed with the same problems as the previous mentor program. The problem was not due to a lack of interest, worth or value on either party, but to time management and a belief of poor performance on the part of the newly appointed principal.

The newly appointed principal often viewed this seeking of advice from a mentor as a lack of professionalism and unsatisfactory performance. It is generally understood by principals that this is not the case, but human nature casts a shadow of doubt when it is felt that unsatisfactory performance has occurred.

In 1992, the Western Australian orientation program took seven days to complete. As a result of participant evaluation and modification, the current orientation program now runs for four full days before the commencement of the appointment. The completion of the program usually takes place in November of each year and is followed by a school visit with the out - going principal. In this way, confidential information can be passed on directly to the new principal. This orientation is just one facet of the Western Australian Catholic School induction program that is being adapted and used by other states of Australia.

Many of the suggestions and impromptu have been eliminated from the program or refined and replaced with current theories and concepts appropriate for the times. The characteristics of the specific school, to which the principal has been appointed, have also been taken more into account. In the original orientation program a proforma example for a financial statement was presented to the applicants. Now each individual applicant receives the financial report from their new school to study, interpret, and ask questions about. In this way, the applicant receives a more detailed financial knowledge of the new school prior to taking up the appointment. The program also highlights the specific people to contact at the Catholic Education Office should a difficulty or concern arise. The newly appointed principal is also given two people for immediate support, should this be needed. They include, one person at the central office and another, more experienced principal, from another Catholic school.



All of the orientation programs throughout Australia, in particular for Catholic schools, have a top down emphasis. This means that the input for the course is presented in a lecture format by an 'expert'. Even though participation and interaction with the participants is expected as part of the course, most of the modules or sessions are for the presentation of information. For example, no time is allocated for research of a particular point of interest to the applicant. However, group work and the sharing of ideas are reinforced and portrayed as important. There is also a strong emphasis on communication and helpful advice rather than supervision. (See Table 4)

Auditing the Western Australian orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals is a very informative experience (See Appendix 1). For each module taught, the 'expert' from the central office presents the information with the associated literature. The reason for the "expert" presenting the information seems primarily a two-fold purpose. The first being that the newly appointed principal can identify the person to contact should the need arise in an area of concern. This is important in the Catholic education system as a strong emphasis is placed on the new principal as a person. In this way the individual needs of the newly appointed principal are considered by the central office. The Catholic Education Office also pays attention to the personal needs of the new principal and in many cases also the family situation. The orientation program also assists with interpreting information and dealing with problems and issues that may arise.

The second purpose is that the expert from the Catholic Education Office has a wealth of experience and is possibly the best person to provide the information about the module to the newly appointed principal.

**Table 4**

This table was compiled by the researcher so that it facilitated an ease of comparison between induction programs throughout the states of Australia presented by the Catholic Education systems within those states.

## OVER VIEW OF THE STATES ORIENTATION & INDUCTION PROGRAMS

STATES	ORIENTATION DURATION	COMPULSORY ORIENTATION	INDUCTION DURATION	COMPULSORY INDUCTION	MENTOR PROGRAM	TARGET GROUP	RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM
VICTORIA	2 DAYS	YES	Yr1: 8 X 1/2 DAYS Yr.2: 4 DAYS Yr. 3: 4 DAYS	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	YES
NEW SOUTH WALES	5 DAYS	YES	2 YEARS	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	NO
QUEENSLAND	2 DAYS	YES	2 YEARS 1 DAY TERM 1 2 DAYS TERM 2	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	NO
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	4 DAYS	YES	NIL (VOLUNTARY BASIS)	NO	YES	ONLY NEWLY APPOINTED PRINCIPAL. TRANSFERRING PRINC. COMPLETE 1.5 DAY MODIFIED COURSE	NO

**Research Questions.**

Since the researcher attended and participated in the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals and discussed the program with peers many questions were raised. Questions such as: Is this the best way to run an induction program for newly appointed principals? Is it good to mix experienced transferring principals with newly appointed principals at the same course? Did you have any expectations prior to the induction program about its content? What were the positives and negatives about the induction program? What improvements could you suggest if you had to administer the induction program?

It is questions like these, and the differences and similarities in the comments from other newly appointed Catholic primary principals, that have encouraged the evaluation and investigation of the current induction program as developed by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

In the light of the background to the study, contextual factors, and Catholic induction programs throughout Australia, this study evaluated *the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals, as developed by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.*

The following questions, are secondary to the main aim of the study but nevertheless guided the study;

- What are the needs and expectations of newly appointed principals of Catholic primary schools?
- What improvements can be made to the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals?

The intention of the study was for the researcher to construct answers to these questions based on the participant's responses and perspectives. The newly appointed Catholic primary principals were asked to share any of their feelings, concerns and thoughts regarding the induction program that they participated in. Targeting the newly appointed principal over two consecutive years, 1998 and 1999, allowed the opportunity for a larger sample size to be involved. It also allowed for more results and a balanced interpretation of these results. It also assumed that all of the comments made by participants were strictly confidential and would be from their personal experiences of the induction program.

The appointment of promising educators to their first principalship marks the onset of what is one of the most demanding career transitions in the field of education. (Harvey, 1995, p.1)

#### **Definition of Terms Used in the Research.**

**Orientation:** Within the context of this study, orientation is operationally defined as 'An initial introduction to the position, general information, locations, relevant personnel and a welcome.' (Shields, 1997, p.20)

**Induction:** By contrast the process of induction is understood to have a longer time frame, at least throughout the first year and also it focuses on the professional development of all relevant aspects of principalship. Many principals supplement induction with academic study.

**Note:** *Orientation and induction are two terms that are often interchanged and used to describe the same phenomenon. However for the purpose of this report, which is the study of orientation, they will be used and treated separately.*

**Catholic Primary School:** (Kindergarten – Year 7) The Catholic Church has established schools to give expression to its ministry of teaching. The Catholic school, as a key part of the Church's mission and the community of Catholic schools, enables the integration of Catholic faith, Church teachings with life and culture. (The Catholic School, 1977, p.5)

**Catholic Primary School Principal:** Ministers in the name of the Catholic Church and motivated by commitment to Christ, seek to serve young people and their families. Lay principals provide support and direction to their school communities. To achieve this the principal will demonstrate competency and leadership in the following roles or aspects of ministry; educational, pastoral, theological and managerial. (Catholic Principal's Deed of Agreement, 1999, p.1)

**Evangelisation** is a theological term that means helping people to make the Gospel of Jesus part of the “flesh and blood” of their lives. It means helping them to become the individuals God intends them to be, and teaching how to live knowingly as children of God.

**CEO:** Catholic Education Office of Western Australia

**CPPA – CPPAWA:** Catholic Primary Principals Association Of Western Australia.

## **Conclusion**

Since the Catholic school is an essential part of the Catholic Church's mission of evangelisation, the preparation and orientation of its newly appointed principals is imperative. If the needs and expectations of the newly appointed principal are met in the orientation program, then the new principal will have the opportunity to experience increased success. It is important that the new principal has an informed and practical knowledge of the school and an understanding of the place of the school in the Church's mission.

If the needs of the newly appointed principal are not met, then the unique gifts that each appointee brings to the role will not be realised. Therefore this study is significant because it addresses an important need. There has not been any research conducted for at least the past decade in Catholic schools in Western Australia to determine whether any improvements can be made for the betterment of the current orientation program.

# **CHAPTER TWO: Literature review**

## **Introduction**

This chapter sets out a review of literature that focuses on the orientation and induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals. In doing so, it shows that the literature regarding this phenomenon of the newly appointed Catholic primary principals is limited. This could be because the appointment of lay Catholic primary principals is relatively recent due to the fact that nearly all of the Catholic schools throughout Australia in the 1970's were lead by religious congregations. Therefore, the literature base will be expanded to included induction and orientation programs for newly appointed primary principals from government schools and not just from the private, Catholic sector.

Research on principal induction has been conducted in Australian Government Schools, (Harvey, 1988; Thomas and Hornsey, 1991; Mallia, 1992; Beeson, Matthew, and Baker, 1992; Hewitson, 1996; Shields, 1997) in the United States (Cale 1990; Parkay and Hall, 1992; Elsberry and Bishop, 1996) and in Great Britain (Haigh, 1997; British Head Teachers Association, 1996). This allows the identification of common themes that arise from the literature, both internationally and within Australia.

The review of the literature will include the simplified philosophy of a Catholic school and the Catholic school ethos. These two phenomena will be investigated, only briefly but succinctly, so that it can be established how they influence the collection and analysis of data within the specific Catholic education context.

Qualitative research methods and symbolic interactionism and associated literature will also be reviewed. The findings of these research methods will provide a background for this study.

### **The Newly Appointed Principal**

The issues of training and preparing the newly appointed principal are viewed as an extremely important aspect in the induction of principals. However, there have been relatively few studies carried out with this in mind. This training does not provide for the demands and range of skills needed in such a diverse and responsible role as principal.

The appointment of a first Principalship marks one of the most demanding career transitions in the field of Education. (Harvey, 1995, p.1)

With respect to the newly appointed primary principal, Thomas and Hornsey's (1991, p.4) study concludes that, "everyone expects complete knowledge and expertise from day one of their taking office even when it is known that it is the new incumbent's first principalship." Therefore it is essential that a newly appointed principal receives support and appropriate formal preparation before commencing in the role.

At the very least, the beginning principal's expertise is thus expected to encompass a clear understanding of the role, appropriate exercise of position of power, maintenance or establishment of professional relationships and maintenance or establishment of processes and structures designed to facilitate goal achievement (Hewitson, 1995, p.20).

This view is supported by Daresh (1987) who found that common findings between the researchers indicated that at the beginning of the school year principalship is typically full of a great amount of frustration and anxiety, and that the pre-service programs designed to prepare individuals for the role of principal must represent cooperative efforts involving the school systems.



While it can be seen from these studies that the orientation and induction of the newly appointed principal is imperative, Donaldson (1991, p.201) argues that ‘no amount or quality of pre-service training will prepare a principal to hit the ground running.’

Thomas and Hornsey (1991) agree with Donaldson.

Despite an intensive two day induction, despite the issue to each participant of the 16-page departmental document “Guide to principals. Taking up new appointments”, and despite addresses by three primary principals, the preparation of these principals appears to have been none too successful (Thomas and Hornsey, 1991, p.6).

The report indicates that the induction program was far too ambitious in terms of the sheer volume of factual material. However, under no circumstances is it indicated that the induction process is not worthwhile.

The Thomas and Hornsey study investigated 53 recently appointed principals. (Eight later became involved in intensive case studies.) They posed a question to the newly appointed principals, “What could be done to facilitate the arrival of the newly appointed principal?” The results from the question posed were that the principals would have appreciated more in the areas of financial management; administrative overload as a stress factor; staffing and the lack of assistance. They also recorded that the newly appointed principals faced unrealistic expectations from their school communities. One should not assume that the study indicates or finds that induction programs are not beneficial. This is not the case. It was recommended that these induction programs be offered more systematically and over a longer period of time to develop real worth.

Similarly recent Australian studies by Mallia (1992), Hewitson (1996), Beeson, Matthews and Baker (1992) and Shields (1997), discovered the same results as those produced by Thomas and Hornsey (1991).

Hewitson (1996) for example, states:

It is not that the induction programs, written guides and experiences of practising principals are not worthwhile, but that, where possible, the preparation need of the principals-elect should be addressed more systematically and over a longer period of time. (Hewitson, 1996, p.21)

These researchers suggest that orientation and induction programs should be designed and structured more carefully so that more could be done to meet the needs of the newly appointed primary principal. They also suggest that a sufficient amount of time be allocated to successfully prepare the newly appointed principal. Therefore, it is essential that newly appointed primary principals receive as much support and preparation as possible before they commence in their roles as the leaders of an educational community. In this way skills appropriate to the position of principal can be developed and refined; skills in areas such as communication, community expectations, change, knowledge of legislation and time management, to name but a few.

In the United States, Cale (1990), and Elsberry and Bishop (1996) studied different induction strategies. These studies established that newly appointed principals needed a systematic, structured orientation program. They also discovered in their study that the school system or employer must be aware of the needs of the newly appointed principal. These needs included team goal setting, planning and curriculum development. Elsberry and Bishop found that effective induction included elements of the principal's needs in addition to conferences and the assignment of a mentor.

They termed the mentor a “veteran, district administrator” (1996, p.32) to assist the new principals during their initial posting.

Evaluation also was considered to be of great importance in the support of the newly appointed principals: “frequent, specific, constructive, informative and affirming feedback from the Administrator added to the effectiveness of the principal’s work”. (Elsberry and Bishop, 1996, p.3) Elsberry and Bishop found that this systematic and structured orientation program would assist newly appointed principals deal with some of the school – based problems that they may encounter in the initial stages of their appointment.

### **The Needs of the Newly Appointed Principal**

In Victoria, through the Victorian Education Department, Beeson, Matthew and Baker, (1992) conducted a study of one hundred principals, in the first six months of their appointment, using questionnaires and selected interviews. Their intention was to discover the professional development concerns for the newly appointed principal and identify common areas. Their study identified seven common concerns. These concerns were policy, relationship with staff, image of the school, administrative structure, communication, student discipline and time management.

The Beeson, Matthews and Baker, (1992) study highlighted the important implications to be understood in light of the tasks being faced by beginning principals. Their results also supported similar views from the interviewed principals. The interviews produced results that highlighted the frustrations felt by the newly appointed principals and that even though they valued participating in an induction program, all of their individual needs were not met.

Newly appointed principals in their efforts to ensure a smooth transition between the existing principal and their new appointment spent a considerable amount of time preparing before the school had actually commenced. Mallia (1992, p.13) reports that some respondents “spent the last few weeks of the Christmas vacation sorting through policy documents, mail and other material.”

A successful handover is viewed as an essential element for the newly appointed principal’s progression into the position. It not only provides continuity but also disseminates information and brings insight into supporting existing, specific, school based programs.

Mallia’s research also contained results that indicated no matter how effective the induction program or handover for the newly appointed principal, the main professional development needed was that of financial administration and budgeting.

The beginning principals also had difficulty coming to grips with the financial aspects of the school (Mallia, 1992, p.11).

This research finding has specific relevance for this study as well. This study will ascertain what further professional development the newly appointed principals require.

Similarly Hewitson (1996) conducted a study in which he interviewed six first year principals in Queensland. Many of the findings confirmed those of earlier studies on new principals in Victoria of Beeson, Matthews and Baker. These findings included practical “hands on” orientation and immediate initial survival skills were essential. However, his study did uncover a significant aspect specifically for primary school principals. Namely, that primary school principals in general, did not have prior experience as a deputy or acting principal, common among the secondary school principals.

Furthermore, in Hewitson's (1996) study, the newly appointed primary principal usually had a teaching load associated with the appointment especially in a one teacher or small- staffed school. These schools tended to be remote or have relatively isolated locations.

Hewitson's work produced results that were similar to the study conducted by Harvey (1988) even though the context of the newly appointed principal was remarkably different. Harvey's research included principals from senior high schools, district high schools and primary schools, while Hewitson was specifically concerned with the small primary school. Harvey's study included principals who were not necessarily beginning principals. Some principals who were taking up appointments in larger, more complex schools, had been a principal for several years at other educational institutions. Furthermore, the study included no principals from one or two teacher schools.

Hewitson's study is also similar to that of Shield's (1997) Queensland study in that it included a significant number of newly appointed principals from one or two teacher schools. It was also the principal's first appointment and they had no other experience in the principal role. However, some did have experience as assistant principals.

The most recent study conducted in Australia was that by Shields (1997). In conjunction with the Queensland Education Department, Shields specifically studied the orientation and induction process for newly appointed primary principals. Her study showed that the processes of orientation and induction for the newly appointed principal were crucial.

It was crucial in three significant areas - for themselves, for their communities and for their employer. The orientation and induction process for newly appointed principals was also compulsory.

Added responsibilities in the areas of risk management, increased community expectations for school involvement and accountability, and increased staff and student expectations for high quality people leadership and a supportive school environment have contributed to the pressures faced by school principals (Shields, 1997, p.20).

Shield's study highlighted the past problems with the orientation and induction process. The most noticeable problem being, the lack of consistency of the orientation program, from one year to the next. This problem not only affected the newly appointed principal but the managers who conducted the course. The study reflected upon the continuity of the program. She found that with no centralised organization taking responsibility for the orientation program, the program over the years lacked quality and consistency. Even though Shields felt that there was a continual need to refine and update the program, the lack of structured preparation and the fact that no one was ultimately responsible for its course led to the program's down grading.

Programs for beginning principals are often characterised by their irregularity, i.e. an excellent program one year, but the organising officer moves on to another position and the program is discontinued. Newly appointed principals will receiving training on financial management and staff training one year, but not time management. Such programs reveal inconsistency (Shields, 1997, p.20).

In the United States, Parkay and Hall (1992) identified five stages that principals' progress through in their induction into the position. These stages were described as survival, control, stability, educational leadership and professional actualisation.

Parkay and Hall also identified that it would take principals an average of three years to pass through all of the stages. The most interesting stage of Parkay and Hall's study was the stage that described as 'survival.' Within this stage the newly appointed principal was characterised by a state of 'shock'. This 'shock' in the position of principal accompanied feelings of personal and professional insecurities, a lack of self worth and a perception that every single decision was under scrutiny.

Parkay and Hall studied principals from both secondary and primary schools and the results reflect this choice. These studies suggest that the vocation of principalship is highly demanding both professionally and personally. This study demonstrated that the orientation program was crucial in the preparation of the newly appointed principal in order that they take up their position successfully.

Haigh (1997) investigated newly appointed principals in Great Britain and found that there was a great expectation for change. He discovered that one of the largest challenges for the newly appointed principal was to make positive judgements about change, particularly in the right areas and direction. His study had a limitation in that it was only concerned with this "change element" and the change agencies or factors effecting the change. The process of decision-making and assistance in this area was less of a consideration.

The study conducted by Haigh reflected the results discovered by Harvey. Harvey (1988) in his study of the induction and orientation of newly appointed principals centred his research on the professional needs of the newly appointed principal, in Western Australia. Harvey (1988, p.13) also discussed the concept of change and when it would be appropriate for the newly appointed principal to implement change.

With the appointment of the principal there is an air of expectation within the school community that some changes may occur. Changes could take on many forms including staffing, school timetable structures, committee composition, parental involvement, parental expectations and the day-to-day administration of the school. The newly appointed principal must consider how quickly any changes should occur, how many changes should take place, and the prioritisation of the changes.

It is essential that the orientation program is effective in assisting the newly appointed principal with the process of change (Harvey, 1988, p.14).

Most of the research conducted with beginning principals and their professional development in Great Britain has been associated with the British Head Teachers Association. National standards for head teachers have also been established. These standards set out the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes while directly relating to the position of headship.

The national standards define expertise in headship and are designed to serve as the basis for planning and professional development of both aspiring and serving head teachers (British Head Teachers, 1999, p.1).

Working with the governing body the head teacher must provide direction for the school, incorporating educational improvements and ensure that this vision can be achieved through responsible management.

The head teacher needs to involve the wider community in the school through networking as well as creating a productive environment to achieve the school's aims. (British Head teachers Association, 1999, p.2)



Effective headship was demonstrated by the newly appointed head teacher possessing a positive ethos that reflected the confidence of the school community. The teachers and staff, that the head teacher was responsible for, need to feel valued and supported in their understanding, teaching and evaluation of students and thus work effectively.

Similarly the pupils need to be motivated to progress in learning skills. Parents need to be respected as their child's first educators and kept informed to support their child's development. Finally resources, both staff and material, should be used efficiently and effectively.

Since all of the literature examined reviewed studies that were conducted in government schools, it is essential that two distinct components of Catholic education are briefly and succinctly discussed. They are the general philosophy of a Catholic school and Catholic school ethos.

### **Philosophy of Catholic Education**

The philosophy of Catholic education needs to be understood within the context of the mission of the Catholic Church – which is “evangelisation”. Catholic education seeks to help its students develop their natural gifts and qualities. That is intellectually, psychologically, spiritually, morally, religiously, socially, physically and creatively.

It seeks to help each individual develop as a “whole person” and recognises that each one has many special gifts given by God. In practice it can be said that the Catholic school seeks to help its students’ *integrate faith and culture* and *integrate faith and life*. (Houlahan, 1990). Only then can students become the individuals that God wants them to be.

### **Catholic School Ethos**

This leads onto the question of the meaning of the Catholic school ethos? The Catholic school ethos can be described through the support of the Christian Community, focused as it is upon the Person of Jesus Christ. It is the reflection of genuine concern for the students’ formation as Christians. The teachers will teach through their example and words of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as transmitted by the Catholic Church, meanwhile helping students to integrate faith, life and culture.

### **A Symbolic Interactionism Perspective.**

Symbolic interactionism provides a conceptual framework for achieving the outcomes of this study. That is the evaluation of the orientation and induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. Symbolic interactionism places importance on what humans say and do, which are the results of how they interpret their social world.

The core task of symbolic interactionism as researchers, then, is to capture the essence of the process for interpreting (or attaching) meaning to various symbols. (Borg, 1989, p.7)

It has been found that the foundations of a symbolic interactionism perspective originated from the work of Dewey (1930) and Mead (1934, 1938). However, Blumer is considered to be the founder of this thought in the social sciences.

Symbolic interactionism...does not regard meaning as emanating from the intrinsic make up of a thing, nor does it see meaning as arising through psychological elements between people. The meaning of one thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing. ....thus symbolic interactionism sees meaning as social products formed through activities of people interacting.  
(Blumer, 1969, p.5)

Symbolic interactionism provides a conceptual framework for acquiring knowledge from the social process of people and their interactions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Therefore, the meanings derived from the study allowed the researcher to construct meanings from the participant's social perspectives of the orientation / induction program. This forms the central data source. It is also important for researchers to place themselves in the situation of the participants so that a greater understanding and meaning of the phenomenon being studied can take place. In that way the phenomenon being studied can be understood and evaluated from the participant's perspectives and meanings can be generated from this perspective as well. With the use of qualitative research methods in this study this view of analysis is supported.

How inhabitants of a setting define their situation determines the nature and meaning of their actions. (Borg, 1987, p.8)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the literature from two aspects. The first being the induction / orientation program for newly appointed principals and the second being the needs of the newly appointed principal.

Limitations in the scope of literature were acknowledged and work from overseas as well as Australian and Western Australian examples were cited. It was found that there was a dearth of literature on the induction program for newly appointed principals.

Included in this chapter was a brief and succinct discussion on the philosophy of Catholic education and Catholic school ethos. By identifying a symbolic interactionism perspective theoretical frameworks were constructed.

# **CHAPTER THREE: Methodology**

## **Introduction**

The aim of this study was to evaluate the current orientation / induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals as developed by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. As a result of this study also attempts to identify the needs and expectations of these newly appointed principals of Catholic primary schools. In addition, the study will show what improvements could be made to the current orientation / induction program so that it could be made more meaningful to future, newly appointed Catholic primary principals.

## **Qualitative Research Methods**

Qualitative research simply stated is a description or analysis of what people say and do (actions) and an understanding of the context in which these actions take place. This view is supported by Angus, (1998, p.72) who states, “A description of what people say and do is an integral part of qualitative research.” According to Cobb & Hagermaster (1987, p.140) they indicate that qualitative research has an emic view of the world. ‘There is an emphasis on understanding the social world from the point of view of the participants in it.’ Lincoln and Gubas’ (1985, p.227) view of qualitative research extends to ‘accumulate sufficient knowledge to lead to an understanding.’

Many critics of qualitative research methods describe many of the advantages of this form of data collection. Huberman and Miles (1984, p.15) summarise the advantages of qualitative techniques as below:

Qualitative data are...a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring during local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, assess local causality and derive fruitful explanations... words have a concrete, vivid meaningful flavour that are often far more convincing to a reader or another researcher, a policy maker, a practitioner - than pages of numbers (Huberman and Miles, 1984, p.15).

It is important to realise that Qualitative Research methods are used to study a group of people and the activities of the members of this group. In this specific instance for this study, the newly appointed Catholic primary principals are the group; and their participation within the Induction Program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals, as presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia is the activity to be studied.

The qualitative procedures used in this study considered the behaviour and mindset of participants in the context of their occurrence. The quantitative method of data collection and giving numbers to phenomena was not appropriate for this study. This was because the phenomena being evaluated required subjective responses from each of the participants.

A qualitative rather than quantitative approach was adopted for this study since it was considered that qualitative methods would provide and record the participants' evaluations and perceptions more realistically than statistical information. It also would enable the researcher to attempt to understand the feelings and anxieties faced by the newly appointed Catholic primary principals after the completion of their induction program.

A descriptive and qualitative design of research is a study that Best (1981, p. 93) describes as an interpretation of 'what is'. It is concerned with conditions that exist, options that are held, processes that are going on and effects that are evident.

Qualitative methods of research are ways of discovering what people do, know, think and feel by observing, interviewing and analysing questionnaires. The main thrust of this study of the Orientation Program for newly appointed Catholic principals in Western Australia will be through analysis of a questionnaire and participating in an in-depth interview. Once collected the raw data was processed and analysed with the aim of identifying any patterns or common themes. Discrepancies between participant's responses were also highlighted.

The data was then examined and discussed in relation to the limited literature available on the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals.

This chapter now outlines and describes the research evaluation model used, design in terms of sample size and selection, data collection strategies implemented, purpose, and the procedure of the study implemented within this research. Details of the selection of the participants are also given. In addition, the reliability and validity processes adopted for the study are outlined.

The Conceptual Framework is derived from the literature and research and forms the basis of the study, which was to evaluate the orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

## **Models of Evaluation**

Since the study has been developed with a symbolic interactive perspective and the use of qualitative research methods, it was necessary that a model of evaluation be adopted that supports these views. When an evaluation of a principal's induction program is conducted it is necessary that the data generated will allow one to make decisions about the design of the program:

Educational evaluation is the process of making judgements about the merit, value or worth of educational programs (Borg, 1989, p.769).

Qualitative oriented evaluation models assume that the worth of an educational program or product depends heavily on the values and perspectives of those doing the judging. Therefore, the selection of persons or groups to be involved in the evaluation is critical. What the participants think, say, and do form an integral part of the data for the evaluation.

### ***RESPONSIVE EVALUATION:***

Robert Stake pioneered the qualitative approach to educational evaluation. His evaluation model was called responsive evaluation and it focuses concerns and issues involving the people who are in or running the program.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified four major phases that occur in an evaluation of this type. The first phase involves the basis of the evaluation and organising what is to be evaluated and who will be stakeholders. In this particular study the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals is the phenomenon to be evaluated. The stakeholders represent the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia that conducts the program, and the newly appointed principals.



As it has previously been stated, and for this study only, the newly appointed principals will be the source of results. It should be noted that while the Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia supports this study, however, some constraints have been put in-place. These constraints are discussed within the study. Therefore, it is the evaluation of the orientation program from the participant's perspectives that is the focus of this study.

The second phase of a responsive evaluation is to identify the concerns and issues. This was achieved by the administration of a questionnaire to all of the newly appointed Catholic primary principals from 1998 and 1999. In this way the whole population sample of newly appointed Catholic primary principals, from the two sample years, had the opportunity to participate in the evaluation.

The third phase of a responsive evaluation is to gather information that pertains to the identified concerns and issues. Information was gathered by the researcher in the forms of a questionnaire and in-depth interviews.

The fourth and final phase of a responsive evaluation is the preparation of the results and recommendations. In this particular study, actual quotes of responses from the participants were included in the results. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.771) also recommend that the evaluator make judgements and recommendations based on the information gathered.

Responsive evaluators typically do not specify a research design at the beginning of their study but allow for changes in design as the study progresses. This could cause a great deal of anxiety for an inexperienced researcher because without some framework of design the research may lack structure and quality. Therefore this study initially used elements of Evaluation and Policy Research models. These models yield descriptive data using the participants' own words to describe the induction program and its activities.

The research attempts to attribute meaning to the induction program. According to the model the researcher should spend time with the participants who are being evaluated in their place of employment. This research is involved with qualitative research skills and as such it is an aim of the researcher to interpret the significance of the studied event for those who are taking part in it. Then, to attribute meaning to the induction program studied from the point of view of the participants. This will be completed either by participant observation or by in-depth interviews at the participant's place of employment.

Rather than starting from predefined goals or goals extrapolated from the official program description, the participant describes the program as they observe it working (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p.204).

Within this study there is an emphasis on the way in which things happen rather than whether a particular outcome is reached. The participant's recognition of how the program developed and what happened within the program is researched and evaluated. This aspect proved to be the most important from the point of view of this particular study in that it was necessary to find out what the participants thought of the orientation program in relation to their needs rather than the program's goals.

Therefore, it is important to consider what has happened from many points of view on the expected / unexpected and / or anticipated / unanticipated. This enables the researcher to be totally open to one or any of the results or data that emerge from the study. It should be noted that a selection of questions in both the questionnaire and in-depth interview was directed at the principal's needs and their expectations of the orientation program. In this way the outcomes and measurable effects are evaluated against the demonstrated needs.

An assumption underpinning the study of the orientation program is that the newly appointed principal has a basic understanding and experience of the Western Australian Catholic education system. Also it should be noted that before any appointment is made, a background check of the applicant has occurred and promotion to the position of principal in the Western Australian Catholic education system is not on seniority but on suitability.

Finally, it is understood that with this form of research evaluation that the acquisition of data continues until the data becomes redundant rather than when the subjects are representatively sampled. In this study the initial collection of data was by the form of a questionnaire that sampled all of the participants and therefore the participants were not just representatively sampled.

## **Population, Survey Sample and Participant Selection**

The use of a qualitative approach to this study had its implications. Huberman and Miles, (1984) indicated that the factors considered in selecting the sample must include the settings, people involved, the events that occurred and the review of the processes that had taken place. Another implication to be considered was that the study would be able to be modified and adapted as the researcher found necessary. With this in mind, the researcher of this study had to establish some uniform and common settings that would cause minimal influence to the results and to the findings of the study.

The settings of the initial questionnaire were the participants' own choice. Most had decided to complete the questionnaire, in one uninterrupted session, in their office at work. However, for those participants who volunteered to become involved with the in-depth interview, more specific criteria were established. It should be noted that the population sample was small. However, the Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia recommended that only the participants who volunteered take part in the interviews.

The Director expressed to the researcher that due to the 'newness' of the participants and the enormous amount of pressure associated with such a position that only those who volunteered would take further part in the study and no additional pressure was to be applied by the researcher for their participation.

The criteria established for the interview was that an allotment of time would be necessary to complete the interview in one session. All answers would remain confidential and that due to geographical reasons the interviews would be conducted by telephone.

Every newly appointed Catholic primary principal for 1998 and 1999 would be invited to become involved in the study so that a reliable sample size may be obtained. Experienced principals who were transferred between schools were not included in this study.

The study comprised ten principals from the years 1998 and 1999. Of the ten principals who were sent questionnaires seven responded. This represents 70% of the total available sample population for the years 1998 and 1999. From the high rate of return, it is believed that the findings represent an accurate evaluation of the orientation program. This result may be explained by the personal approach undertaken by the researcher in contacting the participants and attempts made by the researcher to deal with considerations of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. The letter of support from the Director Of Catholic Education in Western Australia, which was sent with the surveys, also would have encouraged the participants to respond to the survey.

The newly appointed principals were appointed to primary schools in all four regions of the dioceses of the Catholic education system. (Perth - metropolitan, Geraldton, Kimberley and Bunbury). The schools ranged in student population from two teacher schools of 44 pupils to full single streamed schools of over 300 pupils. The study also included newly appointed principals of Aboriginal Catholic schools.

From this 70% response rate to the orientation survey only two participants indicated that they were willing to be involved with the follow up interview. This represents 28% of the participants that had responded to the questionnaire. This result was not encouraging. However, because of the restraints placed upon the researcher, this was the final number. It would also assume that selected themes discovered in some of the questionnaires would have to be commented upon further by other participants. The interviews enabled a clarification and elaboration on selected questionnaire findings.

### **The Design of the Study**

The researcher found no instrument specifically designed to evaluate the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals as presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. Therefore, it became necessary to develop an instrument or instruments that would evaluate this program.

The instruments used in this research were a questionnaire (See appendix 6) and follow up in-depth telephone interviews (See appendix 7) from those participants who indicated that they were willing to participate in the study further.

These were considered the most feasible data collection techniques considering the small sample size and the vast geographic distances between the researcher and the participants. Another reason for the choice of these data collection strategies was to collect and gain as much information as possible to obtain creditable results.

The use of symbolic interactionism approach meant that it was essential to be aware of the validity of the data. Foster (1981, p25) states that 'the researcher is in the same position as the subjects in trying to make sense of a social situation.' This was an important consideration of the evaluation.

### *Questionnaires*

Use of a questionnaire, designed around pertinent issues from the literature, enabled the researcher to cover all of the newly appointed Catholic primary principals from the two target years of 1998 and 1999. This is one of the many advantages as listed by Langley (1987, p.9) who states that 'questionnaires allow data to be collected from a large number of people from a wide vicinity.' This advantage of a questionnaire suited this study as many of the newly appointed Catholic primary principals first appointments were to small rural schools throughout the state of Western Australia. If the researcher used participant observations, then far fewer participants would have been able to be targeted within the study.

Langley also lists two distinct disadvantages in the use of questionnaires. They are: first, the possibility of a low response rate and secondly, a question cannot be explained to respondent (Langley, 1987, p.9). Furthermore the questionnaire reported on problems from the participant's initial induction program rather than on how they perceived the real problem.

For example, the staff's perception to an initiative introduced by the new principal may have changed because of the amount of time lapsed from the induction program to the commencement of the appointment. This is understandable considering that the study underpins the newly appointed Principal in their initial appointment period into a totally new environment.

The questionnaire was developed from the works conducted by Lake (1985), Duck et al. (1988), and Harvey (1988). It contained both closed and open-ended items. The open-ended items were included for the purpose of allowing expression of ideas and thoughts and recommendations. When designing the questions for the induction questionnaire six ethical issues outlined by Deschamp (1983) were considered. First, anonymity was assured. Second, participation in the survey had been reported accurately and was considered voluntary. Third, requests were made only for data that was not available from other sources. Fourth, the questionnaire was given to a colleague to check for bias, clarity etc in its construction. Fifth, the questionnaire was trialed by a colleague. This enabled the researcher to give the participants an accurate duration of time necessary to complete it. Finally, results were based solely on the information gathered and a conscious effort was made not to speculate about matters that had no data. With this procedure in place an analysis of the questionnaire was conducted prior to its administration.

A Pilot questionnaire was trialed with a principal who was appointed in 1997, which was not in the targeted years. The principal was asked to test the suitability of the questions. Modifications were made before the revised questionnaire was sent out to the participants.



### *Interview schedules*

During the study an interview schedule was developed to help clarify and highlight aspects of the questionnaire data. Unlike the written questionnaire, it involved the researcher communicating directly with the participants. Hook (1981, p.136) stated.

The value of an interview lies in its ability to gather information about people's knowledge about feelings and attitudes, about beliefs and expectations about intentions and actions and about reasons and explanations.

An interview was arranged for the two newly appointed Catholic primary principals who volunteered to participate further in the study. As was previously stated only these two participants were able to continue in the evaluation process.

Data from the questionnaire responses were analysed and used to formulate and design the interview questions. The questions were designed to probe more deeply into the principal's responses, to gain insights into the reasoning of principals about reported behaviour and gain a deeper explanation of their evaluation of the induction program.

The researcher maintained focus on the topic in the interview by using strategies of probing further, encouraging responses, immediate elaboration and immediate clarification.

The information provided at the interview was immediate and the researcher did not have to wait for responses to be mailed back. This was a distinct advantage for the researcher. The interview also allowed the researcher to develop empathy with the participant.

The participant observer cultivates an empathetic understanding with the participant that is nearly impossible with quantitative methods (Wilson, 1977, p.25).

All of the in-depth interviews were tape-recorded. All transcripts were relayed back to the principal for clarification before the results were examined and analysed.

The in-depth telephone interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis in order to clarify points in the questionnaires, as has been previously alluded to. The telephone interviews were flexible enough to enable the interviewer to adapt the situation to each participant, which included for example, outside office distractions or loss of clarity in the phone connection.

They could be expected to reflect an open-ness and possibly more honest responses since both the interviewer and the participant could respond to, explain and clarify individual questions. The researcher was also able to follow up any unclear responses by further questioning.

The advantages of an interview, whether face-to- face or by telephone, were described by Tuckman (in Cohen and Manion, 1980, p.243) as:

....providing access to what is 'inside' a person's head, it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information)., what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

As with questionnaires, interviews also have their disadvantages. Interviews take a considerable amount of time and with the use of the phone interviews, as in this case, may also cost a considerable amount of money. Secondly, the respondent may be inhibited and not be entirely honest. Thirdly, the interviewer must stick to the questions and may not be skilled at the interviewing procedure. Langley (1987, p.23) identifies the main disadvantage of an interview is that "it is difficult to compare directly the results because each interview is unique."

With these two data collection techniques used, the study was designed to probe participants' views regarding the evaluation of the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals that had emerged from the literature.

### **Data Analysis**

The qualitative procedures used in this study considered the behaviour and mindset of human beings in their context of their environment or social situation. The quantitative method of data collection and giving numbers to phenomena was not appropriate for this study. This was because the phenomenon being studied required subjective responses from each participant.

To establish how participants responded to all questions, answers were analysed. Open-ended item analysis was used to identify emergent categories, confirmed by other participants. Interview responses were analysed similarly. In-depth telephone interviews were transcribed and the data collected was considered together with the data from the questionnaires.

Initially the questionnaires were analysed identifying common themes and concerns. All similar responses were grouped together and then significant differences were also highlighted. Glasser and Strauss, (1977) termed the emergence of particular themes and patterns from qualitative data as the 'constant comparative method'. This method was also used to analyse the data from the interview, even though only two participants agreed to participate. Their common patterns were also grouped together. It is understood that the constant comparative method involves continually collecting and analysing data. In this particular study the researcher constantly checked the new data received with the data already analysed, in an attempt to derive further meaning.

The researcher must constantly check new data with old and whether the new adds extra meaning to what is already known by confirming, extending or contradicting. (Angus, 1997, p.89)

Geertz in Miles and Huberman (1984), states that description, whilst not as easy as numbers to analyse, is able to render more meaning than numbers alone and should be used throughout data analysis.

From the results of the questionnaire, detailed interview schedules were constructed so that the interviews reflected, not only what the individual participant had highlighted but that of a majority of participants had discussed as well. In this way more elaboration of the responses could be sought. Data previously obtained could be questioned, substantiated or rejected.

The in-depth telephone interviews were tape-recorded and then a transcript produced. Each participant was given the opportunity to re-read the draft transcript, verify and edit it where they felt appropriate. Analysis involved reviewing the transcripts, interpretations of results achieved and noting common emerging themes between the two participants. The data collected was considered together with the data from the questionnaire.

The reader must be mindful of the time elapsed between the questionnaire completion and conducting the in-depth telephone interviews. Even though the participants were asked to 'cast their minds back', to the time when they completed the questionnaire and comment upon certain responses or lack of details, clarification etc, it could be argued that the newly appointed principal's comments may now not represent a true indication of the responses at the time of the questionnaire.

Harvey (1988), discussed the demands on a principal being dynamic and that the principal's perceptions of their concerns may also change over time.

Analysis was then completed comparing: the survey/ questionnaire and the interviews to the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic principals in Western Australia. In light of these conclusions, recommendations were made for changes to the present orientation program.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The researcher adopted a number of measures to increase the validity within the study.

First, to be certain that what was focused upon or measured was accurate both in its content (content validity) and design, the questionnaire and interview schedule were developed and refined by a peer principal (audit process) before they were administered to the participants.

The researcher also used tape- recording for the interviews after which a word by word transcript was produced. This transcript was then presented back to the participants for checking and confirming of answers before any interpretations or analysis took place. This minimised any bias in the interpretation of data by confirming with the principals the accuracy of the data collected.

Every strategy used to collect data was described and outlined in detail to the participants. In other words the researcher withheld no information of the processes involved and the data collection methods that were going to be used within the study.

This information was articulated in both written and oral forms before any data collection took place.

LeCompte & Goetz (1982, p 40) stated,

Replicability is impossible without precise identification and thorough description of the strategies used to collect data.

To further ensure reliability of the data, the setting in which the interviews were conducted was the same.

The research must be conducted in settings similar to those that researchers hope to generalise about, where the same forces act on one day will be interrupted (Wilson, 1977, p247).

Quotes of primary data were used so that the reader had a detailed description of the research and the participants could generalise regarding the findings and assertions that they had made.

## **Ethics**

Prior to the commencement of this research, ethics clearance was sought and obtained by the ethic's committee at Edith Cowan University. In this way all participants would be assured of their correct treatment within the study. All participants were told that all of their responses would be totally anonymous and that under no circumstances would any of their names be associated with this study. However, they were instructed that quoted responses may appear in the final copy of the study Prior to the commencement of this study approval was also sought and granted from the Director of Catholic Education.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Certain limitations apply to this study. The small population and sample size may pose a problem. The study is limited to only those newly appointed Catholic primary principals in the years 1998 and 1999. The sample size must be comprehensive so that it is reliable and valid.

The second limitation is that there may be an unconscious inclination for the participants not to respond completely honestly, due to their recent appointment to the position. Honesty cannot be guaranteed as participants may slant their views to say what they think should be said. They may well be concerned about what is reported back to the central Catholic Education Office and therefore inform the researcher of only selected parts of their opinion. The participants may feel that any negative comment or criticism may be viewed as detrimental to their future and role with the Catholic education system

Factors, which may impact the participants' responses, may include

- willingness to be seen as co-operative and supportive of the system;
- rapport with senior staff;
- affirmation to give a favourable response;
- perception about "rocking the boat";
- their age.

Thirdly, the use of an interview contains limitations. An interviewer may affect results from the interactions with the participants and interviewer bias may occur. The interviewer must therefore adhere to strict guidelines for interviewing by only interjecting to pose new questions and keeping the discussion on task. (Also the specific directives regarding the voluntary participation in the interviews as stated by the Director was considered a limitation.)

The fourth issue was the principals' willingness to divulge information to the Researcher, who was both a peer and colleague. The follow-up in-depth interviews were used to present data, analysed from the questionnaire. They were also used to seek the principals' reactions and feelings about the findings.

Finally, the results will apply only to a period of time when this study was undertaken. A repetition of the study at a later date may produce different results, especially if the current induction program, offered by the Catholic Education office of Western Australia, is modified.

### **Steps of the Process.**

The 15 steps involved in this study will be tabulated. Then a brief summary of this chapter will then be provided:

Step One	An identification of a need to evaluate the orientation section of the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals.
----------	---



- Step Two                      The Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia gave her approval for the research to be undertaken.
- Step Three                    Ethics clearance was sought and approved.
- Step Four                    A letter of introduction and explanation of the study was sent to each participant. It stated that participation within the study is only known to the researcher and has been cleared by the Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia (see Appendix 3).
- Step Five                    Preparation of data gathering instruments.
- Step Six                     Data gathering instruments trialed by an experienced Principal.
- Step Seven                  Adjustments made to data gathering instruments.
- Step Eight                  Consent notes collected.
- Step Nine                    A questionnaire was administered to the participants.  
(See Appendix 6).
- Step Ten                    Reminders sent to participants to improve response rate.  
(See Appendix 8)
- Step Eleven                After the questions from each of the groups of participants was analysed interviews were conducted from all participants who indicated that they wished to participate further. It should be noted that a tick the box section was located at the end of the questionnaire, to ask the participant if they were prepared to participate further in the study by the way of an interview.

It is fully understood, and also a direct request from the Director of Catholic Education that the interviews were to be completed on a voluntary basis. All results from the interview were recorded, a transcript was produced and then returned to the participant for verification, amendment and final analysis. The participant will always remain anonymous and only known to the researcher. (See Appendix 7)

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Step Twelve   | Data and literature acquired throughout the course of the study was then analysed.   |
| Step Thirteen | The results from the questionnaire and interviews was analysed in relation to the literature to develop an overall picture of the orientation program and its suitability for the newly appointed Catholic primary principal.        |
| Step Fourteen | A follow Up Thank You letter was sent to all participants.<br>(See Appendix 5)   |
| Step Fifteen  | The researcher made recommendations to the Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia, on how to improve the orientation program for newly appointed principals in Catholic primary schools and to better meet their needs. |

### **Summary of Chapter 3**

This Chapter outlined and described both stages of the study by giving a description of their purpose, design, procedures and methods of analysis. Aspects of reliability and validity were taken into account. The instruments within the research were related but separate, one being designed to gain deeper insights into the study.

# CHAPTER FOUR: Results

## Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected from the questionnaire and in-depth interviews. All of the 10 newly appointed Catholic primary principals in the 1988 and 1989 intake were invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire data represents responses from seven of the principals who participated. This represented a 70% response rate. Reasons for the high response rate have been discussed in the previous chapter. The principals' initial appointment were to schools within the four dioceses of the Western Australian Catholic Education system. (Perth – Metropolitan, Geraldton, Kimberley and Bunbury). The schools ranged in student population from two teacher schools of 44 pupils to full single streamed schools of over 300 pupils. The study also included newly appointed principals of Aboriginal Catholic schools.

Only two participants volunteered to participate in the in-depth interviews, which were the second method of data collection. This represents 28% of the participants who had responded to the questionnaire. While this result was not as encouraging as expected, it was the final number. Due to the nature of the study targeting newly appointed primary principals, in their initial stage of their appointment, constraints were placed upon the researcher whereby only those who indicated that they were willing to participate further could be interviewed. Under no circumstances were principals to be approached or coaxed into further participation. The reason for this has also been elaborated upon in earlier chapters.

Within this chapter findings are presented under the two questions that guided the study. The questionnaire and in-depth interview results were also presented in this same format. The first question that guided the study was to determine the needs and expectations of the newly appointed Catholic primary principal. As has been stated in chapter one, this study is specifically concerned with the four-day orientation program completed through the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia and it recognises that this orientation program is the only compulsory segment of the total principal induction program. The second question that guided the study was to ask what improvements could be made to the current induction program as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

All of the results and recommendations are based on the available data and hence reflect the needs and concerns of this specific sample of participants.

#### **Results based on the first question that guided the study:-**

##### **The Needs and Expectations of the Newly Appointed Primary Principal.**

From the results it was found that the newly appointed Catholic primary principals have a diverse range of needs and expectations. A full transcript of the in-depth interviews can be located in Appendix 9 on pp.110 - 128.

The role of school principal has changed in recent times with increasing demands placed upon the person. They are expected to have expertise or talents in many different areas. These areas may include, as examples, leadership skills in the areas curriculum, education, administration, religion, inter-personal, industrial relations and finance. Therefore, the role of the orientation / induction program and the professional development form crucial elements in the preparation and needs of the newly appointed Principal. Thomas and Hornsey, (1991, p.3) from their research support this view: "Newly appointed principals have a kaleidoscope of things to be done."

Currently in Australia, educational reforms are occurring at a great rate. We are in the process of developing national frameworks for the curriculum (outcomes) and assessment (benchmarks) as well as work place reforms. With this occurring, schools are now being geared towards becoming more accountable, efficient and effective. The curriculum presented to the students today has a broader depth of experiences and requires the results to be presented in measurable outcomes.

With this shift in the educational realm, there must be a focus on how the newly appointed principal learns the role so that the total co-ordination of the school can be catered for. The complexity of the role of principal involves both human and structural needs for the whole school community.

The traditional paradigm focused on how appointees learned the role of the principal, especially as this related to administrative responsibilities, organising staff and coordinating the total operation of the school.  
(Harvey, 1995, p.2)

With the greater complexity of the position of principal we can see that there are greater demands placed upon the new appointee in a variety of areas. These areas have already been elaborated upon.

A majority of participants indicated that they had attended the induction / orientation program with an open mind and they hoped that they would be able to have some of their concerns and issues answered. Other participants wrote that they had clear expectations of the program. These included, budgeting, pay schedule analysis, policies and funding. The main reason why some of the participants had these expectations about the program is that they had communicated with previous attendees of the orientation program and were therefore, aware of the course content.

One principal wrote, *"I need to know what the Catholic Education Offices' expectations and support for me would be. I expect that the induction program would fill in some of the administrative blanks that you have as an assistant principal."*

Another participant commented that,

*"I was hopeful of receiving knowledge that would be immediately used and contacts to follow up at a later date."*

Yet another participant commented, *"I expected that I would get this opportunity to hone in on my survival skills."*

These results achieved were similar to those examined in the literature review.

Hewitson (1995, p.20.) said,

At the very least, the beginning principal's expertise is thus expected to encompass a clear understanding of the role, appropriate exercise of position of power, maintenance or establishment of professional relationships and maintenance or establishment of processes and structures designed to facilitate goal achievement.

The same participants who went into the orientation program with an open mind, did not prepare for the program in any way. Even from interviewing the participants further, no results could be obtained regarding why the participants did or did not prepare.

More than 50% of the participants surveyed indicated that they had felt they had prepared for the orientation program by acting in the role of principalship while they were in a different role (assistant principal or the like). This was found to be a comment that contained some interest. These participants viewed the orientation program as a teaching tool to ‘teach’ them how to be a principal and by acting in the position of principal they felt prepared, at least informally, for the orientation program.

Drawing further from these results and specifically the interviews, the participants indicated that they thought that the orientation program was to ‘teach’ them the fundamental basics of becoming a principal but found this not to be the case. Donaldson (1991, p.201) argues that ‘no amount or quality of pre-service training will prepare a principal to hit the ground running.’



There was an even spread of participants who participated in professional development, aimed at leadership in some form, for leaders prior to taking up the principal appointment at the new school. Fifty percent indicated that they had and fifty percent indicated that they had not. This result highlighted the fact that assistant principals did not recognise all of their professional development as relevant to a future role as principal. Although all who took part in this study had previously been a part of a school administration team, as an assistant principal, only half viewed this experience as professional development in preparation for the role of principal.

The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia conducts annual meetings with the administration teams of the schools to discuss school based policies and future goals and directions, to be taken with the general teaching staff. Therefore, it could be expected that these in-services should be viewed as professional development.

One participant indicated he had participated in *'professional development courses run by the CEO for assistant principals and principals'*. This action was supported by another participant who suggested that the professional development courses that he had attended were *'leadership programs as offered by the CEO.'* The most expanded answer provided by a participant was, *'Yes I have participated in at least 1 or 2 professional development courses for leaders since 1991 (As an assistant principal run by the CEO for leaders.) Many of these courses were very helpful in a variety of areas'*.

It would be an advantage if the opportunity arose to ask the participants in what specific area were these professional development courses of assistance.

In the interviews these participants indicated that the question might need to be written much more specifically so that the generalised perception of professional development, for a specific purpose, could be addressed. *'You need to make sure that the principal who responded understood clearly, what professional development they were completing and using in their roles'*.

All of the participants in the orientation program found some of the content useful. This was expected because the researcher believed that these inexperienced principals would find something useful, especially if presented by the administering body (CEO).

The most common responses to the question that related to most beneficial section of the course were networking and the financial input. However, other participants responded favourably to questions about industrial relations, the CEO system and faith development. Both Mallia (1992) and Hewitson (1996) concluded from their research that newly appointed principals indicated that financial administration and management was the most important area where they needed further assistance.

The question was posed to the participants, "Were the relevant Catholic Education Commission policies discussed adequately in respect to new principal appointment within the orientation program?"

Of the participants, 80% indicated that the relevant policies needed to successfully commence their principalship were discussed at the orientation program. This was an expected response as the Catholic Education Office has many policies and it would be generally be regarded that the participant had familiarity with Catholic Education Office policies, handbooks and awards.

It would take a greater amount of time than the length of the course to attend to all of the Catholic Education Office policies. The orientation program content indicated that this policy session of the program was definitely of an introductory nature, as were all of the sessions of the orientation program and that it was designed to promote an overview with policies and not to study them in depth.

It was expected and anticipated by the researcher that all of newly appointed principals would have had some experience and exposure to selected policies through either their teaching or assistant principal roles. Another expectation was that the participants would become increasingly familiar with selected policies as they use and refer to them more frequently in their position as principal. Only one participant indicated that more policy details were needed in the orientation program. This was not regarded as a common response by a majority of participants, however, the comment was included in the recommendations.

Probing further through the in-depth interviews provided some concluding details on the needs and expectations of the newly appointed Catholic primary principal from the induction program.

The first interviewee commented *“I would like a bit more on finance, something with parents and their handlings / dealings, enrolment policies, as these topics seem to be across the board.”*

The second interviewee responded that, *“It would have been preferred that we could look at the new appointment individually. The individual circumstances of a new school would be remarkably different from school to school. ...Role play or case study, interview techniques because some people may not have been involved in putting together interview panels.”*

These two in-depth interviews highlighted the diverse range of responses to the needs and expectations of the newly appointed principal. It also demonstrated that no matter what the content of the induction program, it is purely by chance as to whether it meets each individual participant's specific needs.

The literature also supports the views held by the participants. Both Mallia (1992) and Thomas and Hornsey (1991) reported that a majority of the principals in their study indicated that financial management was the area that needs further elaboration and assistance:

The Victorian beginning principals also had difficult coming to grips with the financial aspects of the school (Mallia, 1992, p.11).

Cale (1990), and Elsberry and Bishop (1996) studied different induction strategies. These studies found that newly appointed principals needed a systematic, structured orientation program. They also discovered in their study that the school system or employer must be aware of the needs of the newly appointed principal. These needs included team goal setting, planning and curriculum development.

Networking is a relatively modern term, although this practise has been occurring for a long time. However, in Catholic schools, the term has not been so widely used. The reason for this is that most Catholic schools were under the administration of a religious order and as such were quite insular in their approach. The basis of the school ethos pertained to the particular charisma of the religious order administering the school.

The interviews discovered that the networking between the experienced and newly appointed principals was one of the most important aspects of the orientation program. As one participant indicated, the program fostered a sense of belonging and fitting in, shared ways of relating and dealing with similar problems as well as other issues and concerns in common. Mallia, (1992, p.18) noted “the high value which principals placed upon their networks, through which shared concerns in policy and curriculum development and discussion on administration procedures, staff and submissions appear to have provided regular sources of advice and support.”

This result provided some interesting data. The participants discussed networking as one of their priorities for the induction program. *“It would have been great to have an informal chat session with experienced principals. Meeting other new people, listening to experienced principals and meeting heads of sections in different areas of the Catholic Education Office.”*

One reason why participants acknowledged that networking should have been more successful was due to the 'mentor program', which forms a part of the total induction program. The mentor program is where a more experienced principal is assigned to the newly appointed principal for support and guidance. It was interesting to note that even after a significant period of time (6 months or longer) that some participants had not even met or heard from their mentor. One participant commented, *"A formal meeting with your mentor, peer principal would have been a great advantage while on the induction course."*

On the other hand a participant stated, *"It has been over six months that I have held my position of principal of my new small, rural Catholic primary school. In this time, my allotted experienced principal in fact, I have not even had a phone call from him.(has not been in touch) It is possible that he may have assumed that all is OK with me and if I needed support then I would contact him. But I feel that as he is the more experienced / senior principal it would have been wonderful if even he rang me on the first week of my appointment just to touch base and say hello."*

**Results based on the second question that guided the study:-**

**What are the Improvements and Limitations to the Current Induction Program?**

A full transcript of the in-depth interviews can be located in Appendix 9 on pp110 - 128.

The literature (Thomas and Hornsey, 1991; Harvey, 1988 and Shields, 1997) suggests, that no matter how well planned the induction program, or how professional the newly appointed principals are, there will be some aspects of the position of principal that are still not addressed or known adequately. Donaldson (1991, p.201) states that, “no amount or quality of pre-service training will prepare a principal to hit the ground running”. Similarly, Hewtison (1996), indicates that practical ‘hands on’ and immediate initial survival skills are essential for the newly appointed principal.

What was discovered by the study was that all of the information presented met needs but the ‘overload’ caused a great deal of concern. In fact the most recorded criticism of the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals was that of ‘information overload’. All of the participants (100%) indicated this in either their questionnaire, interview or both. This highlighted that there was too much information presented in such a short period of time. Thomas and Hornsey (1991, p.6.) state that,

Despite an intensive two day induction, despite the issue to each participant of the 16-page departmental document “Guide to principals. Taking up new appointments”, and despite addresses by three primary principals, the preparation of these principals appears to have been none too successful.

One participant summed up the concern expressed by all of the other participants in their questionnaire by *“Too much information in too short a time span – overload!”* The in-depth interviews also supported this opinion. *‘In hindsight I thought that the induction course was good but we were probably given too much information in such a short period of time. Sometimes my brain switched off. It would be better to have two days with another follow up day. In this way we could have time to process the information and could come back and ask questions if we were unsure.’*

The other participant from the in-depth interview also supported this view. *“Rather than 3 or 4 days all at once, days spread over a longer time would be better. In fact by the end of day 2 you’re pretty much into information overload. I think that you need to cut it down to some core things and then place another day later on so that more information can be passed on at a later time.”*

It can be seen from these results that the participants were overwhelmed with all of the information presented but they did not indicate that any section of the information was not worthwhile. Even when questioned in-depth in the interview, the participants indicated that the problem was the quantity of information presented.

Both in-depth interviews and 90% of the questionnaires alluded to the need for a change in the structure of the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals. Beeson, Matthews and Baker (1992, p.3) suggest, “a sufficient amount of time be allocated to successfully prepare the newly appointed principal.”



In the United States, Parkey and Hall (1992) identified 5 stages that principals progress through in their induction to the position of principal. (These stages have been elaborated upon in the literature review on page 28.)

Parkay and Hall also identified that it would take a principal an average of 3 years to pass through all of these stages. From this research the participants from this study can level the same criticism. A change in the structure of the current induction program as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia is needed.

The preparation needs of principals – elect should be addressed more systematically and over a longer time span (Hewitson, 1996, p.21).

Ninety percent of the participants who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they would prefer the same initial 3 to 4 days induction course followed by a systematic and structured, support program. This support could take on a variety of different forms but the most recommended was a series of allotted days over the first year of appointment. *“I would prefer a 3 ½ day course and then perhaps followed by a set day here and there each term for issues, concerns and support.”*

From the in-depth interviews the same results were apparent. The support needed must be programmed and structured for at least the first year of the appointment. The actual content of the professional development was to incorporate more on financial administration, budgeting, payroll, administrative issues, current educational programs, industrial relations issues, changes in Catholic Education Office policies, the newsletter as a tool for communication, staff appraisals, leadership skills, staff morale, input from current principals, enrolment policies and problems encountered in principalship. These were not prioritised in order and some components may require further elaboration.

Seventy one percent of the newly appointed Catholic primary principals had no real idea of the diversity of the role of principal. The two exceptions were those principals who had acted in the role for a semester or longer. Those principals who had acted for only a term did not realise the diversity of the role when the position extended longer than this period of time. *“Intensive input later in the first year of my appointment would have been extremely beneficial. In that way after I had processed the information, I could go back with any concerns or problems that needed clarification”.*

This view is also supported by an overwhelming number of induction programs throughout other states in Australia. Nearly all of the other states of Australia had a structured support program for newly appointed principals for at least the first year of their appointment and in the case of Victoria for the first five years of principalship.(See Appendix 2)

Fifty percent of the participants who responded in the questionnaire felt uneasy with the orientation program group which contained both newly appointed and experienced, transferring principals. Some of the newly appointed principals felt inadequate in comparison to the very experienced Principals, who were transferring between schools. They also felt inadequate with their knowledge about current Catholic Education Office policies. *“Grouping experienced, transferring principals with newly appointed principals caused me concerns. I felt intimidated with responses to workshops and questions with my more experienced colleagues watching on.”*

On the other hand several participants wrote and acknowledged the worth of having the more experienced transferring principals as a part of the induction group. *" I was keen to hear the words of wisdom from the experienced principals and what really happens in the school."* Another said, *"It would have been great to have an informal chat with the more experienced principals."*

From the interview process, another dimension to the composition of the induction program group was also identified. The participants felt that the size, location and needs of the school differed between small country primary schools and large metropolitan secondary schools. A participant commented, *"What would a secondary school principal, with a student population of over 1000 and a multi million dollar budget, want to know or have empathy with my two teacher rural primary school with a child population of some 44 students?"*

*"It would have been more beneficial to group the primary principals and a separate group for secondary principals. If there were enough personnel available it would be even more beneficial to divide this group further into city and rural schools. Problems faced by rural school principals tend to be somewhat different to their city colleagues. An example would be the availability of staff."*

The British Headteachers Association support this view. Their literature identified that during the training of their new head teachers (principals) sections of the course were devoted to head teachers with similar school situations. (For example, school size or school location.)

Again a majority of participants indicated that they had acquired enough information about their new school, prior to taking up their appointment, to successfully commence the administration and running of the new school. This was possibly due to their own initiatives and that of the departing principal. The interview with the departing principal of the school proved to be beneficial. All but one of the participants stated that the meeting had influenced them in some way in which they had initially operated the school.

This meeting between the newly appointed principal and the departing principal brought insight into specific school based programs, special needs of the school community, school population details and on going concerns associated with the school. While working with the newly appointed principal the departing principal must describe the direction in which the school was progressing. This is so the newly appointed principals can incorporate appropriate educational improvements and ensure that this vision can be achieved through responsible management and c0operation.

The headteacher needs to involve the wider community in the school through networking as well as creating a productive environment to achieve the school's aims (British Head teachers Association, 1999, p.2).

While acknowledging the initiative of some of the newly appointed principals, many of these principals were not given the same support on hand over by the departing principal. It was evident by the responses, that a structured / formal handover is required to maintain continuity, disseminate information and develop a smooth transition between principals.

Participants felt that formal hand over procedures should be documented and sent to the departing principal as well so that a specific structure can be in place and so that correct and relevant details are handed over. It was also suggested that the departing principal be invited to one session of the orientation program so that information from the departing principal can be passed on and a formal off-site hand over may occur. As well as this a formal on site visit, by the newly appointed principal, is still viewed as an essential. In this way it provides all newly appointed principals with a similar opportunity for a successful and informative handover. This is a formal off site handover and then a school visit is required prior to taking up the appointment.

One participant commented, *“Handover is very crucial, very important. A structured interview with set and general discussion points is essential. It would be good to have one formal interview at the Catholic Education Office as a part of the induction program and an informal interview at the new school. There are many things that you should and need to know before they come up and ‘bite you’.”*

Another participant elaborated upon this view by saying, *“Things that I needed to know I wasn’t told and things that should have been put into place or what ever were not and it was left up to me, a newly appointed principal to decide. These things should have been decided and put into place before I arrived or before handover.”*

It is acknowledged that most of the Catholic orientation programs for newly appointed principals in Australia are top down by input and design. However, current research indicates that while some knowledge could be presented through this method, a far more effective transmission of knowledge is achieved by the use of case studies. This is where a case study is presented to small groups of participants who in turn formulate decisions and conclusions about the case study in a collaborative way. The orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals in Western Australia, as conducted by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, adopts as a basis for its program the use and incorporation of a variety of different modes of information delivery.

Seventy percent of the participants who responded to the survey were in favour of a 'top down' presentation of information in the orientation program. These participants felt that they were there, at the induction program, to listen and absorb information. They also felt that this method of information delivery saved valuable time since the content was so great.

One participant commented, *"Sometimes, as in the case of the induction program, top down information delivery is needed as it saves valuable time."* Another participant stated, *"Overall I was happy with the format. There were sufficient opportunities to ask relevant questions."*

From the in-depth interviews one participant responded, *“I feel that there was a sufficient combination of all of the forms of information delivery. There are some times when top-down is needed because it is the simplest and best way to go about it. Certain sections of information you just need to be told. However, since we had the odd case study and group discussion as a part of the induction program, it added to the variety of information delivery and enhanced learning.”*

Current research in the format and presentation of professional development for professionals indicate that the “top down” format of information delivery does not provide participants with the best learning situation. In this case of the induction program ALL of the participants responded that they were happy with the blend of information delivery at the induction course. They felt that the top down approach is needed in instances where factual direct information needs to be presented in such a short period of time and that this is the best format of delivery in this case.

Participants enjoyed the case studies, problem solving, group work where they occurred and also found these methods of information delivery to be valuable. A specific example of the case study approach was indicated in the industrial relations section of the presentation.

Since the parish priest is involved in the appointment of the principal in the interview process, they should be invited to a session with the newly appointed principal to encourage bonding and mutual respect, to allow a partnership between school and parish to grow. (This could occur at the initial school visit or at some time prior to the hand over of the school.)

The relationship between the parish priest and the newly appointed principal could be the centre of discussion between the parish priest and the newly appointed principal, during the induction program. In this way many new and possibly innovative ideas can be shared with every new partnership. No research could be found to support or disclaim this view.

A final result to consider was that some of the participants involved in this study felt that they could not be too critical of a system-operated orientation program. They had a feeling or perception that 'big brother is watching you'. Some participants possibly felt that if they spoke up or were too critical, it may affect their relationship with the Catholic Education Office personnel and be detrimental to their careers. *"You can't always bag the presenter...If I speak out who will know what I have said...CEO always endeavours to do what is best for newly appointed principals."*

#### **Summary of Chapter 4**

This chapter presented an analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Many key issues have been identified as a result of the data studied. The study collected data that identified newly appointed Catholic primary principal's perceptions about the induction program. A majority of principal's indicated that the induction program overall was very beneficial but with any program, fine-tuning and improvements can always be made.

Secondly, principals acknowledged their particular needs and expectations of the induction program as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office.



Data from the induction program identified some improvements that could be made. Most participants indicated that information overload was considered to be the main criticism. Participants also suggested that the major improvement to the current program would be structured support over the first, initial year of appointment.

The lack of literature upon this specific topic and in particular its relation to Catholic education proved to be a hindrance. There was also reluctance by the participants to involve themselves further in the study possibly due to three reasons. The reasons were a lack of time, too many other duties to attend to, and a fear that the Catholic Education Office may not respect criticism of their induction program.

# **CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusions and Recommendations**

## **Introduction**

This chapter will report the major conclusions derived from the study. The study was undertaken to evaluate the induction program, as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, for newly appointed primary principals.

The two questions, which guided the study, were: First, what are the needs and expectations of newly appointed principals of Catholic primary schools? Second, what improvements can be made to the structure of the current orientation program for newly appointed Catholic primary school principals? The implications of the study will then be addressed and, finally, several recommendations will be offered for further research.

## **Conclusions**

This study discovered that overall, a majority of the needs and expectations of the newly appointed Catholic primary principal were met by the current orientation / induction program offered by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

As with any similar program, there is scope for modifications, further development and / or improvements. This is the case for the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia's orientation / induction program. Many of the participants were grateful that the governing body of Catholic Education (CEO) provided some form of induction and introduction to the position of principal of a Catholic school.

The first question that guided the study was the needs and expectations of the newly appointed principals who participated in the induction program.

A significant number of principals in this study stated that they had frustrations with the administrative demands placed upon them. The administrative demands included budgeting, financial administration and time management. It also included prioritising events at their new school. Most said that they felt inadequate in coping with the new role as principal and that the induction program, while comprehensive in its structure, still required modifications. This result supports the claims made by Dean (1988). He claimed that time management skills are needed to be included in the professional development of the newly appointed principal.

In the time frame of this study, that is the start up phase of the school year, the new appointees were attempting to establish a presence and some credibility with the staff and school community. They were negotiating the culture of the school, at the same time, trying to make sense of their new situation. This demonstrates that the newly appointed principal must have expertise in a variety of areas including administrative responsibilities, time management, organising staff and the total operation of the school to ensure success.

Much of the limited literature cautions that the start up phase of the school year is critical in the life of the beginning Principal (Harvey 1988, Donaldson,1991). This comment was supported by participants who felt unable to cope satisfactorily with the demands of their new role in a community, which is very demanding.

Participants felt that they should prepare for the induction course by having some pre-reading. This could take the form of case studies or discussion points that could be brought up at the actual course. At this point in time there is no formal pre-reading required to participate in the induction program.

The same could be said for the shared leadership program. In this program, the assistant principals share some of the responsibilities with the principal in the running of the school. Each school operates completely separately as it is up to the discretion of the principal how much he / she is willing to commit to the shared leadership model. However, those newly appointed principals who have had successful shared leadership programs feel that this is essential for a smooth transition into a new role of principal.

Another conclusion reached from the results of this study is that assistant principals must commence to recognise professional development as relevant to a future role as a principal. The courses presented by the Catholic Education Office should include some specifically for those assistant principals aspiring to be principals in the future. This conclusion will be elaborated upon further in the discussion of the second questions results.

The researcher can fully comprehend the administrative and personnel concerns by the Catholic Education Office to administer one induction program per calendar year. In this way this governing body does not differentiate between the sizes of the school, as an example, but treats all principals as one to service the total Catholic school community. For example, a large secondary school principal is not considered to be more important or one having greater needs than a principal of a small rural primary school or visa versa.

However, recognition should be given to the unique characteristics of small rural communities and the close relationship between the school and the community. It should also acknowledge the potentially different roles of principals in these types of schools.

This study concluded that newly appointed principals felt uneasy about the composition of participants within the induction program. Most of the uneasiness concerned the experienced transferring principals and newly appointed principals being in-serviced together. British Head teachers have developed an induction program that brings together new head teachers (principals) with similar school situations for selected sections of the induction program. However, it still maintains a centralised, unified program. This process should, and could, be easily adopted for the Western Australian situation.

The second question that guided the study concerned improvements, if any, that could be made to the current induction program, as developed and presented by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia for the newly appointed principals.

From the results it can be concluded that all of the participants required further in-servicing or structured support over the first year of appointment. By completing set, structured, professional development, for several days over the first year of appointment, principals could address specific issues and concerns that arise as well as network with other newly appointed principals.

These days could occur at the commencement of each term. For example, the professional development day at the commencement of term three could be related to school budgeting and finances. This is a significant area as the results show that the participants felt that they needed more help in this matter.

The Catholic Education Office has numerous support staff in the financial area that are contactable at all times by phone or appointment. This professional development day could be held at the commencement of term three to specifically assist the newly appointed principal as they will be required to prepare and submit their first full school budget at the end of this term.

It can be concluded from the results of the study that principal's faced 'information overload'. This was not only from the excitement of the promotional position but the added responsibilities, and the amount of content discussed and presented at the induction course.

In order to eliminate this problem some pre reading or in-service should be sent to all participants in the course two weeks before the course commences. It should contain an outline of the course and expected outcomes from sessions. In this way if a participant does not receive the expected outcome from the session then they can consult the presenter or fellow newly appointed principals.

Findings from this study indicate that in many cases, outgoing principals did not complete a satisfactory hand over to the new appointee. In some cases there was not even a handover file available.

This factor caused major problems for some of the new principals who reported not having programs, student records or other vital information about the school to guide them in their new jobs.

The outgoing principal may well be one of the most valuable sources of support and information to the incoming appointee. Immediate information both written and verbal could be given from an experienced person who is likely to be aware of the 'culture' of the school and its community.

Many wasted hours and possible periods of uncertainty and frustration could be avoided if this source of support was readily available in the form of a comprehensive and structured handover. This finding supports the literature and in particular the study conducted by Mallia (1991, p.18). The research indicated that a productive meeting between the departing and in-coming principal can ensure a smooth transition for the school and community.

It is the contention of this author that outgoing principals should take more responsibility for the induction of the incoming principal. Again, inclusion in the Induction Program may facilitate this and a formal set meeting should be planned with the outgoing principal under the directions of the Catholic Education office.

## **Recommendations**

As a consequence of the results obtained from both the questionnaire / survey and the comprehensive interview with the newly appointed Catholic primary principals, the following recommendations are made.

***RECOMMENDATION 1***

A variety of information delivery techniques should be maintained through out each day of the induction program. (In this way information can be passed onto the participants in a variety of ways so that interest can be maintained and the participants who better learn by a variety of methods can be catered for. It also allows for higher thinking and problem solving strategies to be included in the course.)

***RECOMMENDATION 2***

Secondary and primary principals should be broken up into groups for different sessions of the orientation program. In this way specific information particular to the type of school can be presented. (It also allows for the participant to gain first hand specific information of their new school and maintain a high level of interest.)

***RECOMMENDATION 3***

The induction program should include days throughout the first year of appointment so that issues can be discussed, further information disseminated and networking can occur with peers. (This is viewed from the results of this study as the most important recommendation because the participants highlighted this as an imperative for a more successful induction program.)

***RECOMMENDATION 4***

A formal interview with the transferring principal should be set up on the Friday of the induction program. This is so that the information and questions to be raised are current in the newly appointed principal's mind. This also ensures that every newly appointed principal has a formal interview and that a preset time has been allocated. (Should another interview be required, the two principals (incoming and outgoing) are to co-ordinate a mutually agreeable meeting time and venue.)



The transferring principal should be invited to attend or sent a list of criteria / questions/ points to be discussed with the newly appointed principal. In this way a semi formal agenda is set. (Some transferring principals have been at the same school for a long period of time, up to twelve years, and need to be sensitive of the possibility of naïve questions and concerns being raised by the newly appointed principal.)

### **Further Research**

The findings of this study have consolidated the previously documented literature on beginning principals and have added to the limited amount of literature available regarding the induction program for newly appointed principals to Catholic schools in Western Australia.

Avenues for further research have emerged from several of the issues.

In particular:

- i. Professional development requirements for the newly appointed Catholic primary principal would provide a sound arena for further research. While Harvey (1988) has initiated this study, there is a need to focus specifically on the Catholic school and possibly small rural schools.
- ii. An evaluation of the current induction program as to the content of the program after its initial three and a half days of in-service. For example what in-servicing could take place for newly appointed principals in their first year of appointment, second year and so on? Should a similar format be developed as in Victoria with structured support continuing for five years but decreasing over that same time period. This is a follow-on from this particular study in the opinion of the researcher.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided a review of the background to the study followed by conclusions. The findings of the study indicated that the major concerns related to the amount of information presented at the induction course, structure and follow up professional development over the initial year/ s of appointment as principal. In addition, the study confirmed that peer support and networking were both valued and a need for the newly appointed principal.

Finally, recommendations were offered for further research including suggestions for the evaluation of the current Induction Program offered by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. Caution must be exercised, however, in making generalisations from this study considering the small sample size, which comprised the whole population of newly appointed Catholic primary school principals from the years 1998 and 1999, and numbered only seven.

## References

- Angus, M. (1998). *Methods of Research in the Social Sciences Study Guide*, 71 – 110.
- Beeson, G.W., Matthews, R.J., Baker, J.R. (1992). Beginning principals in Australia. In F.W. Parkay and G.E. Hall (Eds.), *Becoming a principal: The challenges of beginning leadership*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Boston, pp 308 – 328.
- Best, J.W. (1981). *Research in education*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall.
- Berg, B. (1954). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: perspective and method*, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall.
- Borg, W. & Gall, M. (1989). *Educational research – an introduction*, New York: Longman Inc.
- Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S. (1992). *Qualitative research for education*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- British Head Teachers Association, (1999). *National standards for headteachers (n.d.)*. London: British Headteachers Association.
- Cale, J.H. (1990). *A study of induction strategies and their application among newly hired school principals in the state of Missouri*. USA: Kansas State University.
- Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, (1999). *Annual Report 1999*. Perth.
- Catholic Education Commission of Sydney. (1999). *Principal's induction program – 1999*. Sydney.
- Catholic Education Office of Victoria, (1999). *Principal's induction program – 1999*. Melbourne.
- Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, (1999). *Principal's induction program – 1999*. Perth.
- Cobb, A. & Hagermaster, J. (1987). The criteria for evaluating qualitative research proposals. *Journal for nursing education*. 26(4), 138-142.
- Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1980). *Research methods in education*. Kent: Croom Helm.
- Crabtree, B.F., & Miler, W. (Eds.). (1982). *Doing qualitative research*, Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

- Daresh, J.C. (1987). *The highest hurdle for the first year principal*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington D.C.
- Dean, B. (1988). Supporting the small school principal, *The Practicing Administrator*, 10 (3), 12 – 14.
- Duck, G., Webb, E., Cunningham, D., McSwan, D. (1988). *Teaching in rural and isolated areas of Queensland*. Toowong: Board of Teacher Education, Townsville: James Cook University.
- Elsberry, C., Bishop, H. (1996). *A new deal for principals*. Reston: Vancouver.
- Fullan, M.,(1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. London: Cassell.
- Gay, L.R. (1981). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application*. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill.
- Guba, E. (1978). *Towards a methodology of Naturalistic Inquiry in Educational Evaluation*. Los Angeles: University of California.
- Harvey, M.J. (1988). *The professional development needs of newly appointed Principal*. Perth: Western Australian College Of Advanced Education.
- Harvey, M.J. (1995). *Entering the life-world of the school: The case of the beginning principal*. Perth: Edith Cowan University.
- Haigh, G. (1997). Who's in charge here? Oops! Suddenly it's me. *The Times Educational supplement*, London: (Vol) 4246 November.
- Hewitson, M. (1996). The preparation of beginning principals in Queensland: An overview of findings. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 33(2), pp 20 – 30.
- Hickey, B.J. Jobst, J. Quinn, P. Healy, R. Bianchini, J. (1993). *Mandate Letter From The Bishops of Western Australia*, Perth: Catholic Education Office.
- Hill, S., Harvey, M., Harrison, B. (1998). *Western Australian teacher professional development survey: Summary of key findings*. Perth:Edith Cowan University.
- Hook, C.(1981). *Studying Classrooms*. Waurm Ponds, Victoria: Deakin University.
- Houlahan, G. (1990). *The truth will set you free*. Perth: Catholic Education Office.
- Langley, P. (1987). *Doing social research: A guide to coursework*. England: Alden Press.
- LeCompte, M.D., & Goetz, J.P. (1982). *Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research*, *Review of Education Research*, 52(1), 31 –60.

- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*, Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Mallia, M. (1992). 'The principal as manager', *Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australia Council for Educational Administration*. Darwin, July, 1 - 29.
- Miles, M & Huberman, T. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: A source book of new methods*. London: Sage Publications.
- National Catholic Education Commission (1999). *Principal's induction program – 1999*. Canberra.
- Parkay, K.W. Hall, G.E. (1992). *Becoming a principal – the challenges of leadership*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation an research methods*. United States: Sage Publications.
- Queensland Catholic Education Commission. (1999). *Principal's induction program – 1999*. Brisbane.
- Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, (1977). *The catholic school*. Australia: St. Paul Publications.
- Shields, M. (1997). Newly appointed principals – A study of orientation and induction, *The Practising Administrator*, (Vol) 19, 20 –23.
- Thomas, A.R. and Hornsey, A. (1991). *The first year as principal: A study of the arrival and settlement of NSW primary and secondary school principals*. Armidale: University of New England.
- Wilson, S. (1977). *The use of ethnographic techniques in ethnographic research*, *Review of Education Research*, 47(2), 245-263.

# **APPENDIX 1**

**Catholic Education Office – Perth**

**Principal's Induction Program- 1999**

# PRINCIPAL INDUCTION PROGRAM 1998/99

MON 9 NOVEMBER 1998	TUES 10 NOVEMBER 1998	WED 11 NOVEMBER 1998	THUR 12 NOVEMBER 1998
<b>9.00 Introduction</b> (Therese Temby)	<b>PRIMARY</b> Principal as Curriculum Leader	<b>Principal as Manager</b>	<b>SECONDARY</b> Principal as Curriculum Leader
<b>9.15 The Induction Process</b> (Geoff Hendriks) - Program - Peer Support - Pastoral Link Program	<b>9.00 Curriculum Leadership &amp; Faith Leadership</b> (Christine Edwards & Maureen Mears)	<b>9.00 Introduction to Financial Management</b> (Roger Walsh, Dianne Marshall & Greg Taylor)  - Role of Principal - Basic Accounting Language - Chart of Accounts - Accounting Procedures - Accountability - Timeline of Events	<b>9.00 Curriculum Leadership &amp; Faith Leadership</b> (Christine Rodgers & Diana Alteri)
<b>9.30 The Catholic School in WA</b> (Eileen Lawrance) - Structure of System - School Boards - Lines of Accountability - Bishop's Mandate	<b>SECONDARY</b> <b>9.00 Professional Protocol, Critical Policies &amp; School Visits</b> (Geoff Hendriks)		<b>PRIMARY</b> <b>9.00 Professional Protocol, Critical Policies &amp; School Visits</b> (Geoff Hendriks)
<b>10.30 Morning Tea</b>			
<b>11.00 The Catholic School in WA (cont)</b>	<b>11.00 Primary &amp; Secondary Sessions cont...</b>	<b>11.00 Introduction to Financial Management</b> - Sources of Income - Staffing Guidelines & Funding Formula - Budget Structure - Recurrent Vs Capital Income & Expenditure - Discretionary Vs Non-Discretionary Items - Levies and Fees	<b>11.00 Primary &amp; Secondary Sessions cont...</b>
<b>12.00 Non Gov't Psychology Service</b> (Wilson MacNeil)			
<b>12.30 Lunch</b>			
<b>1.30 Student Support Services</b> (Maureen Thomson & Sandra Brogden) - Special Education - Aboriginal Studies	<b>1.30 Communicating Effectively</b> (Paul Andrew)  - Conflict Resolution - Dealing with difficult people - Communicating without Conflict  <b>3.30 CPPA Briefing</b>  <b>4.00 Sundowner (CPPA)</b>	<b>1.30 Introduction to Financial Management</b> - Cash Flow - Monthly Reports - Annual Reports - Individual 1997 School Budgets  <b>4.00 Mass Practice - New &amp; transferring Principals</b> (Sr Joan Buckham)	<b>1.30 Overview of Industrial Issues in Schools</b> (Paul Andrew) - Enterprise Bargaining Agreements - Managing Performance - Duty of Care - Appointing Staff

ALL SESSIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED IN G4

# **Appendix 2**

## **An overview of the States of Australia Orientation and Induction Programs**

This table was complied by the researcher so that it facilitated an ease of comparison between induction programs throughout the states of Australia presented by the Catholic Education systems within those states.

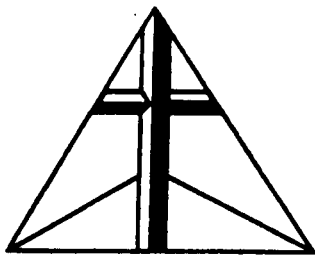


# OVER VIEW OF THE STATES ORIENTATION & INDUCTION PROGRAMS

STATES	ORIENTATION DURATION	COMPULSORY ORIENTATION	INDUCTION DURATION	COMPULSORY INDUCTION	MENTOR PROGRAM	TARGET GROUP	RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM
VICTORIA	2 DAYS	YES	Yr1: 8 X 1/2 DAYS Yr.2: 4 DAYS Yr. 3: 4 DAYS	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	YES
NEW SOUTH WALES	5 DAYS	YES	2 YEARS	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	NO
QUEENSLAND	2 DAYS	YES	2 YEARS 1 DAY TERM 1 2 DAYS TERM 2	YES	YES	ALL NEW PRINCIPALS INCLUDING TRANSFERRING PRINC.	NO
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	4 DAYS	YES	NIL (VOLUNTARY BASIS)	NO	YES	ONLY NEWLY APPOINTED PRINCIPAL. TRANSFERRING PRINC. COMPLETE 1.5 DAY MODIFIED COURSE	NO

## **APPENDIX 3**

**Sample letter: Letter of Introduction to Participants About the Study.**



TRUTH, LOVE AND MERCY

# Saint Gerard's Primary School

31 CHANGTON WAY,  
WESTMINSTER, W.A. 6061

PHONE 9349 8706  
FAX 9349 9823

---

1<sup>st</sup> February, 2000

Mr. K Mc Naught  
The Principal  
Santa Clara School  
91 Coolgardie Street  
St James W A 6102

Dear Keith,

I am happy to have this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment to the position of Principal at Santa Clara School, St. James.

My name is Sam Fontaine and I am also in the role of Principal at St. Gerard's School, Westminster. I am undertaking a study of the Orientation Program for newly appointed Catholic Primary Principals in Western Australia as a part of my Masters Of Education.

I would like to invite you to take part in a short survey on the Orientation Program, which you participated in. My aim is to analyze and evaluate the Orientation Program for newly appointed Catholic Primary Principals to discover if any improvements can be made to the Program. A survey will be sent to you in the next few weeks. Please take the time to complete it and return it in the envelope provided through you Mail West Collections.

The Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia, Mrs. Therese Temby supports me in this endeavor and is aware of this study taking place.

You should also be aware that **all of your responses are confidential** and only I will know your identity. My reporting back to Edith Cowan University and the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia will include no individual names what so ever.

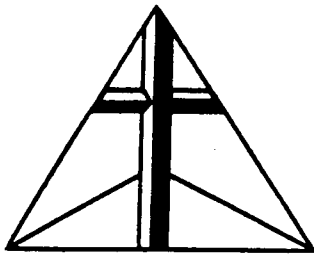
The study is a most important one for all newly appointed Catholic Primary Principals in the future and I would be grateful for your support and participation.

Yours faithfully,

Sam Fontaine  
Principal.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Sample Letter – Letter of Explanation to the Participants About the Study**



TRUTH, LOVE AND MERCY

# **Saint Gerard's Primary School**

31 CHANGTON WAY,  
WESTMINSTER, W.A. 6061

PHONE 9349 8706  
FAX 9349 9823

---

1<sup>st</sup> February, 2000

Mr. K Mc Naught  
The Principal  
Santa Clara School  
91 Coolgardie Street  
St James W A 6102

Dear Keith,

In February I wrote to you seeking your Co-operation and participation in a research project established to evaluate The Orientation Process of Newly Appointed Catholic Primary Principals.

I have been looking with considerable interest at the survey results of the study as they have been returned to me. They will clearly have important implications for this Orientation Program in the future.

I know how much time and effort participating in the study has meant on your part. I have also been impressed by your willingness and that of your colleagues in being prepared to openly and honestly evaluate the Orientation Program for newly appointed Catholic Primary School Principals.

You indicated on your survey that you would be willing to participate in an interview. I will be contacting you in the very near future to organise a mutually suitable day and time for us to meet.

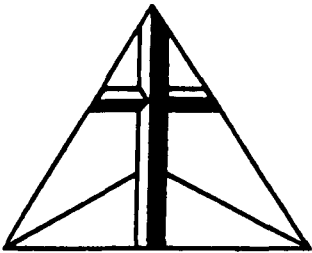
I most sincerely thank you for all of your help and assistance in this project and best wishes for your continuing success .

Yours faithfully,

**Sam Fontaine**  
Principal.

## **Appendix 5**

**Sample Letter – To Participants. A Letter of Thanks for  
Their Efforts in the Data Gathering.**



TRUTH, LOVE AND MERCY

# Saint Gerard's Primary School

31 CHANGTON WAY,  
WESTMINSTER, W.A. 6061

PHONE 9349 8706  
FAX 9349 9823

---

1<sup>st</sup> February, 2000

Mr. K Mc Naught  
The Principal  
Santa Clara School  
91 Coolgardie Street  
St James W A 6102

Dear Keith,

Thank you for completing this survey.

I realize the time constraints that you have in your role as Principal and completing the survey is greatly appreciated.

Please complete all of the questions and return the survey in the envelope provided. All of the other instructions are on the cover page of the survey. If you would like to participate in a follow up interview, please indicate this in the box provided at the end of the survey.

**Be assured that all of your responses are strictly confidential.**

Yours faithfully,

Sam Fontaine  
Principal.

## **Appendix 6**

### **Questionnaire sent to Participants**



## INDUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What were your needs, attitudes and expectations before you attended the induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals?

---

---

---

---

2. Did you participate in any other professional development for leaders prior to taking up your appointment at your new school?

---

---

---

---

3. Did you prepare in some way before attending the induction program?

---

---

---

---

4. Were the relevant policies associated with your appointment discussed at the induction?

---

---

---

---

5. What were the useful things that were learnt from the principal's induction program?

---

---

---

---

6. What were the limitations of the induction program?

---

---

---

---

7. Did you acquire enough information about your school prior to taking up the appointment?

---

---

---

---

8. Did your meeting with the past principal of the school influence the way in which you operated within the school?

---

---

---

---

9. Looking back, what other information did you expect to be presented at the induction program so that you could function more effectively as a principal at your new school?

---

---

---

---

10. The information presented at the induction program was delivered by lecture format or "top down". Do you feel that other formats of information delivery should or could have been used? Please explain your response.

---

---

---

---

11. Do you feel that the induction program used enough problem solving, case study or collaborative learning strategies?

---

---

---

---

12. Is the current three and a half day structure to the induction program the best structure to the course?

- a. 5 day orientation program including a school visit?
- b. Initial 4 day orientation program followed by 1 day per term professional development such as an issues day?
- c. Initial program followed a structured support over the first year of appointment
- d. Other Suggestions?

---

---

---

---

13. If you had the opportunity for completing further professional development, subsequent to your appointment, what would you like to see in place? (Please tick)

Church's Mission

Administration skills

Religious Education

Industrial Relations

Communicating Effectively

The School Newsletter as a tool

Others?

Leadership skills

Finance and Budgeting

Understanding Catholic Ethos

Staff Morale

Appraisal of Staff

Public Relations and the School

14. If you were to design an induction program for newly appointed principals, what would be the key elements that you would include?

---

---

---

*Please mark this box if you are not prepared to be involved in a follow up interview regarding the three and a half day induction program for newly appointed Catholic primary principals that you attended.*

## **Appendix 7**

### **Interview Questions**

**PRINCIPAL INDUCTION INTERVIEW  
- MASTER OF EDUCATION –  
THESIS COLLECTION OF DATA**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview further to completing the principal induction questionnaire. The purpose of this interview is to clarify some responses and to gain some deeper insights into your experiences in your first year as principal.

I wish to remind you that this conversation is being taped and that all of the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and no names will be divulged in any form of the report. I will send you a copy of this interview before any formal analysis is carried out.

The interview will follow the same basic format of the questionnaire, that is, general background information, pre-service training, principal induction, professional development and general comments.

Do you have any questions or comments before we begin?  
Please feel free to add any questions or comments as we proceed.

Check for any missing biographical data.

## **Interview Questions**

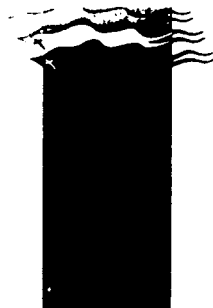
1. What professional development for aspiring principals could the Catholic Education Office offer?
2. It appears that the newly appointed Catholic primary principal would like to continue to have an induction program followed by structured support over the first year. What sort of support do you suggest?
3. Who should provide this support?
4. What format should this support be presented in?
5. There has been a lot of recent research on delivery formats of information to participants with regards to professional development. In general, how did you find the delivery / presentation of the information at the induction course?
6. Do you feel that small groups or problem solving would be beneficial in the presentation of information for this particular course?
7. A number of people responded from the survey indicated that they were concerned about knowing the duties of specific staff members at your new school. For example secretary, bursar, AP's. etc. I mean you have had experience as an assistant principal. Explain how you felt and would this information be beneficial before your appointment? Say you knew a secretary and what her role exactly should be?
8. Do you think that there should be a more formal interview with the previous schools principal? In this way specific information could be passed on and should the meeting occur at the Catholic Education Office after your three-day induction and you know you will have to meet formally. Then followed up by an informal meeting at the new school?

9. Once you were in the position of principal did you understand the administrative requirements and guidelines that you were responsible for? For example pay schedules, salary sheets, enrolment of new children, induction / appraisal of staff, your rights v employer rights v union rights, personality management and difficulties, personality types of staff, parents, children, etc. Would you like to comment on that?
10. Another overwhelming response was that the participants needed more input into the financial or budgeting for the new school. What more can you suggest to do in this area for those who have concerns?
11. What use of existing / experienced principals should be made in the induction course? How would you go about this?
12. Do you feel that the current mentor program is successful? What would you do to improve this program?
13. Do you feel that going to this induction program that you were given too much information in a short period of time and if you do think that how would you rectify the situation?
14. Do you feel that more intensive input, later in the year, would be beneficial as well in your first year? Like another day later in the year?
15. What other information would you present in an induction program?
16. How would you say going about presenting this information? Presenting the delivery of this information?
17. If time was no object, what else could you suggest (In an optimum world)
18. Any general comments about any of the discussion points or any comments that you would like to add about the induction in general?
19. Many thanks for your assistance in this study and for your generosity of time in completing the principal induction questionnaire, and also participating in this interview, which has been most beneficial. Thankyou.

## **Appendix 8**

**Letter of Support from the  
Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia.**





17 January 2000

Mr Sam Fontaine  
Principal  
St Gerard's Primary School  
31 Changton Way  
Westminster WA 6061

Dear Sam

Thank you for your letter of 1 December last year. My apologies for the delay in replying.

I am certainly supportive of your research and would be very interested in the outcomes. I believe the outcomes will be useful as we further develop the induction program.

Please find enclosed suggested amendments to the survey questions.

My best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Therese Temby

## **Appendix 9**

**Transcripts of the in-depth interviews.**

## In –depth Interview Number 1

### **PRINCIPAL INDUCTION INTERVIEW - MASTER OF EDUCATION – THESIS COLLECTION OF DATA**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview further to completing the Principal Induction Questionnaire. The purpose of this interview is to clarify some responses and to gain some deeper insights into your experiences in your first year as Principal.

**I wish to remind you that this conversation is being taped** and that all of the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and no names will be divulged in any form of the report. I will send you a copy of this interview before any formal analysis is carried out.

The interview will follow the same basic format of the questionnaire, that is, general background information, pre-service training, Principal induction, professional development and general comments.

Do you have any questions or comments before we begin?  
Please feel free to add any questions or comments as we proceed.

Check for any missing biographical data.

## **In –depth Interview Number 1**

### **1. What Professional development for aspiring Principals could the Catholic Education Office offer?**

I think that they'd I mean that the course that they do run isn't too bad.

It probably. It needs to be more of an ongoing basis throughout the first year or two perhaps.

I know that this becomes difficult for country people but maybe they could do it at regional offices or something.

Rather than just giving three days and then giving you like a... mentor.

A mentor thing is good but it dies off quickly.

I had a few phone calls and they sort of touch base with you and that sort of thing in the first six months.

### **Do you feel that the Mentor was interested in you?**

*Oh yeh. Yeh, but I mean as you appreciate once your are in the job you do get so wrapped up in what is going on in your own world and the needs and demands of your job that it is hard to find time to put aside for someone else at another school.*

### **2. You have answered question two already and that was It appears that the newly appointed Catholic Primary Principal would like to continue to have an Induction program followed by structured support over the first year.**

#### **What sort of support would you suggest?**

No I think that it needs to be more of a ... perhaps even a ...look at it as more of a networking opportunity.

To um... I mean a side from those three days and as newly appointed Principals you are there together for that induction.

Aside from that you never get together with those people ever again.

***That's right, true.***

Where as it would be good to meet with them say towards the end of the first term and then again towards the end of the second term.

Or the end of third term.

In their first year and compare notes and see how people have settled in, what problems they have encountered in settling in and so on.

And that would be something that could be facilitated by the Catholic Education Office as a part of their induction process.

And a follow up in the first twelve months.

***They tended to think that possibly if you were going to have it in third term that you could flow on the Principal's Conference.***

*That would be I suppose a good opportunity because you do have 99% of the Principals attending.*

*And then whether you want to leave it until three terms into the year before those people touch base.*

**This is to make sure that you touch base with the same people who went through with you just as a follow up to network with those people.**

I mean I had thought about having it on a regional basis and I suppose when you look at that you might only have one newly appointed Principal in that region.

**That's right. Yes.**

To sort of tack that onto regional meetings.

**It just adds another dimension that I don't know if the regions could cope with.**

The agenda is already crowded at those regional meetings and it would probably mean for those Principals to stay behind after everyone else had left.

The case of the Country people, like in our South West Region, I wasn't the only newly appointed Principal in the region there was at least three of us I think at the time.

Now we sort of keep in contact but that's really something that we've done off our own back.

**Sure and you just touch base on that behalf.**

**5. There has been a lot of recent research on delivery formats of information to participants with regards to Professional Development. In general, how did you find the delivery / presentation of the information at the Induction course?**

I think that you need a combination of all of the delivery.

There are some things, which do need to be top down, but you know that this is the simplest and best way to go about it.

Certain bits of information that you need to be told.

But I just think after having the lecture bit, top down, maybe some things can be case studied or work-shopped or work through examples or case studied and that sort of thing.

**6. Yes, great. Thank you. That probably alludes to question 6. I think that you have already answered that.**

**Do you feel that small groups or Problem solving would be beneficial in the presentation of information for this particular course?**

I think that that sort of thing would be great to do six to twelve months down the track.

**Great Idea.**

So that people can bring their own case studies.

Obviously change the name to protect people or what ever, you know hat I mean.

But when you have you can do all of the case studies in the world but there's nothing that compares to your own situation the real life experiences that you could bring back to your workshop.

**I think that most First Year out Principals are most happy to share when no one judges that at all.**

No, No and I have found I must say I have found all of the Principal's in the South West Region because they are the ones that I see at meetings and deal and interact with.

They have all been incredible supportive and anytime that I have rung someone to bounce ideas off or asked for help or what do you about this or about that.

They are only too willing to share .

**And that's fantastic to hear. That's really good.**

It has been great in that respect.

You couldn't ask for a better or more willing group of Principals.

**The peer support program is there for you on an informal basis.**

See like my Like when they chose your mentor, and they tell you that at the induction, Now for example my mentor was a Principal in Perth, right.

**Yes.**

So I never see them. It would be better to match your mentors with people that are in Um...

**Some one that you are going to have regular contact with?**

My mentor happened to be a Principal that I did know and I can put a name to the face and met with him prior to him being my mentor.

So when I was told who it was I thought that I didn't know them from a bar of soap.

It was some that I did know and so that was great and he was good t terms of functions as he came up to me.

And asked how's it going?

**And that's Great to know.**

Things like that and he probably rang me three or four times in the first six months maybe?

**And it has just waned off since then.**

But I can partly understand that.

Mt mentor is XXXXXX, and so of course his situation in Principal ship has changed. In taking over a double stream primary school and so on and so.

**Sure**

I don't think that he has phone me this year to see how I am going.

I don't know if it is something that is done for only the first twelve months or what?

**I think that the program as it is set up is form twelve months but it should be more on going and so that's a good point there.**

**7. A number of the responses from the survey indicated that they were concerned about knowing the duties of specific staff members at your new school. E.g. secretary / bursar, Assistant Principals etc.**

**Explain how you felt and would this information be beneficial before your appointment?**

I think that it is.

Most schools it is pretty hard to standardize that.

Because most school .. even if you did have some think in terms of some sort of generic duty statements or whatever.

As you know yourself what AP's end up doing varies so much from school to school.

**That's true. Yes.**

And when you get into your school, you change it yourself anyway.

**That's right.**

Unless the office wants to prescribe something, which is mandatory and so, you know that it going to be the same in every school.

But I can't ever see that happening and I think we'd loose some of the creativity and spontaneity and perhaps uniqueness out of our schools if we did try to do that.

**Sure.**

I think that it is just a matter of getting in and you know part of that settling in phase is just fact finding in terms talking to everyone and.....

**Getting your hands dirty.**

Yes, getting your hands dirty.

Finding out what everyone does who does this who organizes that.

Who's responsible for this, that or the other.

Because you can find that you know as I say it varies greatly from school to school. And the nature of the schools in say Perth tend to forget about the fact because you mainly deal with normal single stream schools or double stream schools gets some uniformity according to the structure.

Once you get into the country and you get schools where you get composite classes and you get very small schools.

**It is a real different set up and a different kettle of fish so to speak.**

Well you mightn't have AP's. I came down here and had only one AP.

Sure.

I mean we are now big enough to have two but we only had one.

**So that was a learning curve as well, too. Having one person to be there by your side.**

Well, That's right it is a different dynamic to the leadership team.

When you are having the meeting.

There are only the two of you .

There's not that third person to bounce off ideas around with.

I found that took a bit of getting used to.

**Sure.**

Those sort of dynamics.

**8. With regards to that Leadership team, with your previous school Principals should you have a very formal meeting with this Principal, prior to you follow up informal meeting.**

**So in other words, after the Induction course, should the existing Principal come and have a formal meeting with you, say at the Catholic Education Office, and then followed up by an informal interview or meeting at the new school?**

**Would you say that it would be beneficial or of no advantage at all?**

Look I think that is, you have touched on one area, which I must say from my experience and may be that and well no I actually done this sort of thing twice now. Hand over is very crucial, very important.

I have had one, which is pretty good, when I went to XXXXX, and the one that I had down here was shocking.

**So the things that you needed to know you weren't told?**

Things that I needed to know I wasn't told and things that should have been put in place or what ever were not and it was left up in the air for me to decide. Things that should have been decided before I had arrived. Or before hand over.

**So there fore you are saying that the formal interview at the Catholic Education office as well as the informal interview back at the school is imperative and needed.**

Yep. I think what they need to do is that they gave us a, as you might recall, they gave us a book to do with our hand over which we could touch on.

**Yes.**

And discuss it.

I don't know how.

Obviously we got a copy of it and I don't know if Principals that are out there get a copy of it?

Or how well they are in-serviced on what they should be including and areas that they should be touching on in the handover.

**See I feel the same about the parish priest of the New School.**

**He was on the interviewing panel with you and he should be there part of the time when you talk about hand over of the school.**

**He should be involved in some other way too. This is so he gets to know you on a different level as well.**

**To try and bring the Parish and the School together.**

Yes, that's not a bad idea.

**9. Once you were in the position of principal did you understand the administrative requirements and guidelines that you were responsible for?**

**For example pay schedules, salary sheet, etc.**

**Enrolment of new children, induction /appraisal of staff, your rights as employer VS staff union rights, Personality managements and difficulties, personality types of staff, parents, children etc**

**You know, once you're in that position did you understand this sort of stuff or was it just a big learning curve for you.**

No, a lot of that I understood.

I guess that was the benefit of 12 months as principal, you know acting in Derby.

**Sure. And that was a great experience for you to have.**

Yeah and I guess I also been fortunate in that even as an A.P.

I had two bosses in succession that were pretty open and there weren't any big secrets in terms of ...

**No well that's terrific that they shared their full responsibilities with their A.P's in a proper three - way leadership team.**

To have input on / and consultation on just about every aspect to the school.

There was no sort of areas that were out of bounds or you couldn't have your five cents worth.

**10. No because that lead to another overwhelming response from the respondents that there was more needed in input for financial / the budgeting of the new school. So what could you suggest for those people in that area?**

*Yeah again that was a pretty ah...*

**It's very subjective I understand and it depends on your handover.**

You really need to sit down and go through budget with that outgoing principal as part of the handover

**Sure and that should be the budget of the school**

That didn't happen in my case.

Then when I did come in, I basically had to re-work the entire budget.

**To suit your needs.**



You Know, I spoke to obviously people in at the office and said look what has been left in place in the budget I cant work with this.

I need to make whole sale changes / adjustments to it.

They said OK and just give us a copy of what ever you come up with.

**And that is good of them to do that.**

Which I did and I ran it past them so that hey could check the bottom line and make sure that I had not made any big stuff ups and I wasn't going to end up \$50 000 grand in the red at the end of the year.

**So what you are sort of saying is that the outgoing Principal needs a more formal input into this induction process.**

Well yeah and I think that they need P.D. and in-servicing so that they are more aware of what the requirements are.

**For a newly appointed Principal.**

I think that they forget and maybe that they have been a Principal for 10 or 15 years or goodness knows how many years and they are not of fey with it all. And I guess a lot of what we are responsible for now didn't exist

**11. When they were principals. So that brings me to my next question.**

**What use of existing / experienced Principals should be made in an Induction Program?**

**How would you go about doing this?**

**I think that you have already touched on that .**

**That their input is valuable and their experiences are needed to be explained so that the newly appointed Principal can gain some understanding and learning for their experiences.**

Yes, for sure.

**12. Do you feel that the current mentor program is successful?**

**What would you do to improve this program?**

**I feel that you have already answered this on how your mentor was there fore you initially but needs to gentle reminder about it is a whole year sort of process.**

Just having Mentors that are in your region.

Rather than having and I know that it is not as much of an issue in Perth and I know that it may even be good to get input from some one from a different region but that is not really practical down here.

I might only see, it is usually only those Principal meetings bump into each other at the CEO and that because you don't go.

**That's right. It makes it difficult.**

You are that little bit more isolated, even being so closer as we are here in XXXXX

But It would be good I feel personally if your mentor rather just having .. the only time I caught up with mine XXXXXX last year was at the Principal's Conference. So it was like the end of third term and he was good because he did seek me out and asked me how are things going

**And that's important too.**

It was great yes that he did that.

**But it was late.**

It would be good to have that opportunity to have that in First term.

### **13.Changing the tact a little**

**Did you feel that you were given too much information in a short period of time?**

**How would you rectify this situation?**

Yes. Well, I think that you need to cut it down to some of the core things to be maybe policy wise. And then the rest of it becomes a more on going thing. I know that it again presents difficulties country wise but certainly for the metro there is nor reason why they couldn't pull those people back in.

**I think that you have alluded to the country a lot but if you are going to assume the responsibility or Principal then the Catholic Education Office has to support you through that first year and be aware that even in the country that these guys need more support than the metro.**

Well probably. Maybe where that is where you do incorporate into the regional meetings and we go to Bunbury or Geraldton or where ever.

**Sure and then you are saying that a more intensive input later in the y ear will be beneficial as well.**

Yes rather than three days or four days what ever it is all at once, by the end of the second day you are pretty much into information overload.

I think that you cut it down to some core things that you need to make you aware of before you set foot into the place and maybe that's where one of those sessions. It would have been good to say pull in the outgoing Principals of the school as well.

And cut out one of the other days of information that they gave us and do that first term or second term or some time.

### **14.What other information would you present in an Induction Program?**

I think some of the things that hey could probably look at does depend upon the individual circumstances, maybe sort of even role play or case studies, interviewing techniques, cause I mean for some people they may not have been involved in putting together interview panels,

**And that's right. A good point**

Prior to becoming a Principal

### **15. So I think that you have highlighted my next point about How would structure the delivery of the information?**

**Different delivery methods throughout the day so that it doesn't become stale in one format.**

*Yes for sure*

### **16. If was time was no object, what else could you suggest? I think that you have really highlighted a lot but is there anything else that you could suggest? And that leads on to the next point**

**Any general comments about any of the above discussion points or any comments that you would like to add about induction in general?**

No I think that I have probably covered most things. I just think that they need to break up.... What was 3 or 4 days?

**It was 3 ½ unofficially because sometime was spent in preparation for the Liturgy. And I understand the importance of the Liturgy and I understand the importance that the morning should have more structure. For example a session with the Parish Priest and then the afternoon you have formal visit. The Thursday night was the dinner / dance and I think that on the Friday you should have a formal interview with the old Principal at your new school. So you may as well kill a whole week but all Principals know that if you are leaving on that week you will have the new Principal coming on that Friday.**

Well you may as well hold those meetings back in Perth because a bulk of the Principals will be there anyway.

**They will be there for the dinner.**

**That is one of the objectives that everyone has a set amount of correspondence as far as time, and knows the structure.**

**I think that one of the main points that you have highlighted to me, that there needs to be guidelines for outgoing Principals, is excellent and one that I haven't thought about I think that it would be really valuable.**

I think that they need to have a check-list in terms of stuff to have ready for hand over. Expectations.

I mean that well I will give you an example. Here I had ... I came down for two meetings down here before school finished. Then I came in twice during the holidays to have a meeting and it was .....

**It was more informal just chit-chat sort of thing?**

Yes it wasn't I had issues that I wanted to address but you the outgoing Principal had things that they had on their agenda that they wanted to discuss. And in the end even after three or four meetings, I found that there was still a lot of things that I never got around to asking, that I never got to find out. Then I had to rely on my AP telling me.

**Or the secretary or some other staff member?**

Yes because she had areas that she wanted to touch on and areas that she really didn't want to go through with me. And also in terms of when it gets down to nuts and bolts, things like the actual formalities of hand over. I had to ring her up in Perth and I was down here just to get a set of keys off her.

**You see that poor.**

I assumed that when do actually take control? Is it from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January?

**From the beginning of contract period.**

It was like late January before I got a set of keys.

**Ultimately it could have been given to you straight away when you went down for your meetings. You are going to be the Principal of the school. Give him a key.**

They are sorts of issues that need to be sorted out.

**But I think that these are good issues that you have brought up because I feel that we can isolate these issues for the future. We can make some sort of formal Induction process that meets more of the needs of the newly appointed Principal.**

But you should know as a part of this process I am going to receive a set of keys at this point. And I know I will officially take over on that date and I will be able to walk into that place on that day

**On New Year's Day you should be able to walk into that place.**

Well for example the outgoing principal here was still shredding and clearing out her office.

In fact in all four meetings that I had here I never got into her office, once.

**Yes that's hard. Very hard.**

We sat in the interview room for all of our meetings. I began to suspect that she had dead bodies in here or something?

She had the shredder in here and was shredding things left, right and centre.

**And really that's hard on you because you should have been told everything that was going on. It is not like you are going to go a blab what was going on. It is your school it is for your protection and your benefit that you knew what was going on.**

Personal or private. It doesn't matter what she was shredding was fair enough. But it should have been done. She was still packing boxes and stuff into the third week of January.

**And that makes it hard on yourself.**

Well I couldn't get in here.

**Yes that's true.**

I ring her up and say I had to relocate and I had boxes of stuff and so my staff packed.

**And you wanted to be up and running before the first day of school.**

I wanted to sort out the office. Rearrange the furniture, settle in, you know.

**And be look efficient rather than walk in and have nothing set up.**

**Many thanks for your assistance in this study and for your generosity of time in completing the Principal Induction Questionnaire and also participating in this interview, which has been most beneficial.**

## In –depth Interview Number 2

### **PRINCIPAL INDUCTION INTERVIEW - MASTER OF EDUCATION – THESIS COLLECTION OF DATA**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview further to completing the Principal Induction Questionnaire. The purpose of this interview is to clarify some responses and to gain some deeper insights into your experiences in your first year as Principal.

**I wish to remind you that this conversation is being taped** and that all of the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and no names will be divulged in any form of the report. I will send you a copy of this interview before any formal analysis is carried out.

The interview will follow the same basic format of the questionnaire, that is, general background information, pre-service training, Principal induction, professional development and general comments.

Do you have any questions or comments before we begin?  
Please feel free to add any questions or comments as we proceed.

Check for any missing biographical data.

## **In –depth Interview Number 2**

### **1. What Professional development for aspiring Principals could the Catholic Education Office offer?**

I think that looking back probably what might have been a good idea before I came to XXXXXX, may have been just to spend one day with another Principal, from another school just to pick up a few ideas from another Principal

Whether just to visit another school leader and another school and even though I have done a little bit of study I have found that to be beneficial as well. On School Leadership I recommend that for beginning Principals.

**That's terrific.**

### **2. It appears that the newly appointed Catholic primary principal would like to continue to have an induction program followed by structured support over the first year.**

**What sort of support do you suggest?**

It would be good and I have thought a few times it would be great to be able to meet with the half a dozen of us who were the Induction Principals from last year.

To meet up again to see how we are all going.

**That's a good idea.**

And it is just good to know that other people have the same problems as you do.

That's always a comforting thought.

**Or as I should say in your case XXXXX are excelling as you are.**

There you go you will go places XXXXX.

It also amazing the diverse tasks of the Principal of which you never really know.

I suppose that there is really no way of knowing until you sit in the seat yourself.

Now for instance one little girl has cut her hand and you whisk her up to hospital in a mission day where you are responsible and you end up doing heaps of things yourself because you are the Principal. I suppose nothing could really prepare you for that or that fully anyway.

**No that's right.**

Yeah, or even just I suppose like meeting with last years induction Principals but being lead by an experienced Principal as well.

*Having them there to bounce ideas off as well.*

**Terrific.**

### **3. So who do you think should provide this support?**

I suppose that it should be the Catholic education Office.

I suppose that they always get a hiding from everything. Also the CPPA could provide some support there as well. Whether they could provide their own maybe induction for beginning Principals as well.

**Right**

And also if the understand I suppose it's a bit of a dying race.  
The tiny school because there aren't too many of us around.  
Who are quite unique in the problems that a small school would have as compared to bigger schools.  
Little things like your budget where we have to go to a PD or to Bunbury Education Office, you always have to get a relief teacher in because you're a teaching Principal in small schools. The budget then blows out a hell of a lot more than a bigger school.  
**That's right.**  
Little things like that.

**4. There has been a lot of research recently on the delivery formats of information to participants with regards to Professional Development. In general, how did you find the delivery presentation of information at the Induction Course.**

Look I thought that it was very good. It would have been I am just looking back on it to. Look I thought that it was good.  
There was small groups, there were big groups, there was small group discussions, there were listening to older more experienced Principals.  
It would be good to have if we did meet again this year.  
It would be good to have a similar thing again with an experienced Principal.  
But I thought that it was worthwhile.  
It would have been good to go and visit other schools at the time as well.  
If we could have all possibly jumped onto a mini bus, for an afternoon, and went and visited one in the morning and one in the afternoon of an experienced Principal.  
Just to see how they operated as well.  
**Sure. So that you found small groups, problem solving were beneficial in the presentation of information in that course?**  
I did. Just as it went on I became more confident.  
More confident when speaking in small groups and putting your point of view across and asking questions.  
**Terrific.**

**7. A number of people responded from the survey indicated that they were concerned about knowing the duties of specific staff members at your new school. For example secretary, bursar, AP's. etc. I mean you have had experience as an Assistant Principal. Explain how you felt and would this information be beneficial before your appointment? Say you knew a secretary and what her role exactly should be?**

Yeah. I guess that it would be beneficial to know their role.  
But the again in every school, it different with different personalities, its different.  
And unless you have moved around to a few different schools you would be unaware of the role of the secretary and how it differs in many different schools.  
And like when you are in a small school you do not have any Assistant Principals as well. But to delegate those jobs.  
You are always older and wiser after you have been in the job but being able to delegate things around is great.  
I know myself that I have taken on a lot more deeds from P & F to Board then possibly should have but then when you are young and green, naive you do those things.

No six months down the track you think that some else should be doing those things for me

**Sure.**

But in my role it is hard to I suppose give an accurate answer because there aren't a lot of staff here.

**That you could rely on.**

One lady three days per week in the office and three or four staff members are working flat out any way.

**8. Do you think that there should be a more formal interview with the Previous school's Principal? In this way specific information could be passed on and should the meeting occur at the Catholic Education Office after your three day Induction and you know you will have to meet formally. Then followed up by an informal meeting at the new school?**

I strongly agree with that. I think that, that would be great. A structured interview and then another interview at CEO and whether or not there is a third person there as well to ensure that all points are covered. It would be great idea.

**Do you think that the parting Principal should be called into CEO for say ½ a day or an in-service to remind them I mean that some of them have been Principal in that same school for ten or twelve years of what information that they need to pass on to these new Principals?**

Yeah, That would be a great idea.

**Because a lot of them pass on what they think that you need to know but not really what you need to know.**

Yeah, that's right. That's right.

It like a lot of things you like walk into things and whack it's hit you without any warning.

It is always good to half and idea what is around the corner, sometimes.

**9. Once you were in the position of Principal did you understand the administrative requirements and guidelines that you were responsible for? For example pay schedules, salary sheets, enrolment of new children, induction / appraisal of staff, your rights v employer rights v union rights, personality management and difficulties, personality types of staff, parents, children, etc.**

**Would you like to comment on that?**

Yes my answer has two letters in it. N O

No I didn't realise that the job was so diverse but you just need to, I guess, distinguish between the important and the urgent and to delegate tasks.

But I suppose that there could have been a little more of that type of work in the Induction Course But I guess that they can't cover everything in the Induction Course.

In dealing with an irate parent would have more skills and that way.

And enrolment policies as well.

I was a little bit rusty on that.

I know for my own benefit but I am better at that now.



**I think that most of the people that I have spoken to are agreeing with you. The diversity was just huge that they said even if you touch base on a few more of the things in this Induction, Even make the course a bit longer, not to overload the information but to break it up it would be beneficial.**  
I definitely agree.

**10. Another overwhelming response was that the participants needed more input into the financial or budgeting for the new school.**

**What more can you suggest to do in this area for those who have concerns?**

I was fortunate that I did an acting position for the final term some two years ago.

As an AP you should work with your own school Principal on preparing budgets.

I was fortunate that my x-principal allowed me to work with him in preparing the budget.

I think that that is crucial for anyone wanting to become a Principal and or even let the Assistant Principal work on it as an individual so that you can come back to the Principal and see how you compared.

See what he put what ever dollars in whatever places.

**Sure. That's terrific.**

Then you can just have a good chat and talk where you think that money should have been and he thought why so much money should have been somewhere else.

**11. What use of existing / experienced Principals should be made in the Induction Course?**

**How would you go about this?**

The more existing Principals the better.

And maybe even one or two first year out Principals would be a good idea too.

Because it is a fairly steep learning curve for the first year and I feel that it would be good to learn off someone in their first Year Out Principal or someone else from a tiny school.

And some one from a single steamed school as well.

And also the wise old fox and the experienced Principal as well.

Those guys you seem to admire who always sit back and remain calm and not get flustered and always have their finger in many pies.

Those that don't seem to stressed about it.

Those wise old foxes that we have in experienced Principals.

**Terrific.**

And whether we hop on a bus and gone to visit one or two of their schools or just met like we did with one or two of them at the CEO.

**Call them in because on Thursday Night is the Dinner night and most of them would come in anyway.**

Yeah, that's right.

**12. Do you feel that the current mentor program is successful? What would you do to improve this program?**

I think that it is a good idea.

Unfortunately at the moment I have not met my mentor.

Through one reason or another but he has rung up twice and to see how you are going.

And once or twice I have got on the phone to him to ask what do I do here?

Because the Principal that you have been with before you almost certainly know their response to a point of view.

It is just good to get another point of view.

My mentor has helped me out once or twice in really curly situations and I really do appreciate the assistance.

He is at triple streamed school and I have a total of 59 children at my school.

He still has been very, very good to me.

**That's good to know.**

**13. Do you feel that going to this Induction program that you were given too much information in a short period of time and if you do think that how would you rectify the situation?**

Yes that's a good point.

In hind sight I thought that Induction Course was good we probably were given a lot of information in as much as short time.

Sometimes my brain is full after five minutes.

I suppose whether we had one day a week over three weeks may have been better, I don't know.

Or we had two days with another day to follow up later on.

Where we had time to process the information and we had to come back and ask questions later on.

**Sure.**

**14. Do you feel that more intensive input, later in the year, would be beneficial as well in your first year?**

**Like another day later in the year?**

Yes that would have been.

By the time that we would have processed that information and gone back with any other concerns. A full day or a half a day would have been good.

**First term, second term, third term. All of the terms, what do you feel?**

**Would it have been better to have a day in the Office at the end of the first term so that we could deal with any issues that have come up so that they can speak to you.**

Look, late first term or early second term would have been great.

I think definitely there.

Or whether even at a school somewhere because no matter what school you walk into you pick up five or six things as soon as you step inside someone else's school.

**Sure.**

And it would be good just to have it at a school instead of the CEO one day and with an existing Principal and someone from CEO sitting there together and you know you need a few things around the table being the country of the city.

**15. What other information would you present in an Induction Program?**

Look a little bit more on finance. Some thing with parents. Enrolment policies, these need to be fairly similar across the board.

But just the many varied tasks involved in being a Principal from cleaning of the toilets to putting band-aids on and in the next minute you are doing something reasonable important.

I suppose that they are all important, but you end up doing so many different things.

**Sure**

Nothing really could prepare you for that but.

**16. How would you say going about presenting this information? Presenting the delivery of this information?**

Interactive discussion, small groups, and whether visiting schools was one of the options.

**Good suggestions.**

**17. If time was no object, what else could you suggest (In an optimum world)**

The only other thing that I could think of would be a little more study or serious study.

Or visiting other schools.

**Great.**

I am sounding a bit like a broken record there.

**No, it is a really good point.**

**18. Any general comments about any of the discussion points or any comments that you would like to add about the Induction in general?**

I suppose for a start it is good that the CEO provides an Induction Course.

And no matter how good you are going you can always do better.

I also think that it is great that you are doing a little bit of research.

So it will be better because of this.

I understand that a few years ago they didn't have this facility.

So they are doing that now and they will get better at it.

The thing that amazed me about the Induction is that all of the people up there all seemed very approachable and we went around to different departments met different people they had name badges on and seemed reasonably pleased to see us.

Which was good. They seemed very approachable.

So when you get on the phone you know who you are talking to sometimes.

**Name to a face.**

Name to a face.

You meet other people. Met lots of really good people from CEO and at that time you sort of high on expectation and you are high on excitement about the new job ahead.

And then whack by the end of the first week I think what have I got myself into?

That was positive to meet all of the different people in the different departments up there.

And they were really good people.

**Many thanks for your assistance in this study and for your generosity of time in completing the Principal Induction Questionnaire, and also participating in this interview, which has been most beneficial**  
**Thanks.**