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The Professional Background And Perceptions Of Principals On Their Leadership Role In Preprimary

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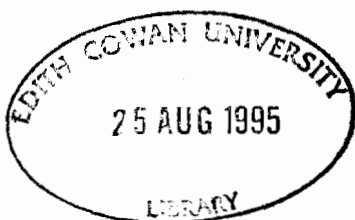
**THE PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND
PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS ON THEIR LEADERSHIP
ROLE IN PREPRIMARY**

By Elizabeth Stamopoulos Dip.Ed., B.Ed.

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Award of**

**Master of Education
at the Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University.**

Date of Submission: 6th February, 1995.



ABSTRACT

The incorporation of preprimary centres into Western Australian government primary schools has shifted the responsibility for administrative, managerial and educational leadership from the kindergarten director to the primary school principal. Several preprimary teachers and specialists in Early Childhood Education have expressed concern that principals lack theoretical and practical background in early childhood, have not been provided with professional development assistance, are providing inadequate educational leadership to preprimary teachers, and yet are responsible for appraisal of preprimary teachers. Similar concerns have been expressed in the United States, and resulted in the swing towards early academics and an acknowledgement of the significant differences between early childhood education and primary education. However, no study of these leadership issues has so far been conducted in Western Australia.

For these reasons this study investigated the question: *How do principals perceive they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre?* In order to answer this question, the study focussed on four areas: (a) the nature and extent of principals' involvement in the preprimary centre (as reported by both principals and preprimary teachers) in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership; (b) the nature and extent of principals' formal education and experience of Early Childhood Education; (c) principals' perceptions of their adequacy in preprimary centres; and (d) principals' perceived professional development needs.

This study involved a pilot study followed by the major study. The pilot study comprised 30 participants (15 principals and 15 preprimary teachers) from 15

schools followed by the major study which comprised 24 principals and 30 preprimary teachers within one metropolitan state district. In the pilot study data were collected using one instrument, the questionnaire, which was given to both principals and preprimary teachers and interviews conducted only when clarification of responses was necessary. The two instruments used in the major study were the questionnaire (Parts A, B, C and D completed by principals and Part A completed by preprimary teachers) and interview schedule (presented to six principals).

The majority of principals in the District surveyed indicated administration/management as their most important preprimary role. The introduction of educational issues resulted in a greater number of principals responding unsure or indicating inadequate performance. Principals reported little if any theoretical or practical background in preprimary and inadequate professional development assistance in dealing with problems. The majority of principals perceived the need for : mandating preprimary training for principals, providing each school with materials which outline developmentally appropriate practices, and providing professional development courses (ECE) for principals. A divergence of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers on who was involved in administrative, managerial and educational roles was indicated in the study.

DECLARATION

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

Date. 3rd February 1995.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study.

In all mainland capital cities of Australia kindergarten organizations were established between the years 1895 and 1910. Responsibility of the kindergarten director was two-fold. The first responsibility was the care and education of young children and the second was assisting parents to access charities which would assist them through self-help schemes. The kindergarten child was the link between the kindergarten and the home and information important to child development was made available to parents by the kindergarten director, through home visits and parent meetings. The kindergarten director trained and worked primarily in the field of Early Childhood Education (E.C.E.).

In time, the kindergarten director's role expanded. The director was an educator in charge of an assistant teacher, an educator of student teachers and an educator of young children. The kindergarten director taught children in the mornings and in the afternoons undertook work which included home visits and parent meetings. Kindertartens were used in the late afternoon by school-age children, as a venue for concerts, stories and games.

Until 1938, attempted Government intervention in the kindergarten field had failed. In 1912, Lillian de Lissa of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia, appeared before the Royal Commission in Education, arguing the need for kindergarten autonomy and resisting the push for public school involvement. Weiss (1989) quoted Lillian de Lissa "it (the Kindergarten Union) could do the job much cheaper than the public schools `because so much service is given in a missionary spirit'"

(p. 68). It was not until 1938 that government involvement was seen for the first time in the pre-school field on a limited scale with the establishment of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres in each Australian city.

By the end of World War II, Australia had seen a change in needs and attitudes in society as a whole. Parents who had voluntarily worked in kindergartens began to appreciate that the programs which had previously been run for disadvantaged children would also have benefits for their own children (Kerr, 1994; Piscitelli, McLean and Halliwell, 1992). In this way the middle class had discovered E.C.E. and the kindergarten director was given added responsibility for educating all children, helping parents understand how to meet their children's developmental and educational needs and working with a wide range of professional specialists (doctors., nurses, dentists, social workers, psychologists).

Until the 1970's the kindergarten director had worked and trained primarily in the field of E.C.E. This was to change in Western Australia in the 1970's when the involvement of government on a significant scale resulted in many early childhood centres coming under the administration of principals of primary schools and the Education Department rather than the Kindergarten Association. The principals, not drawn from the early childhood sector, had in the past been responsible solely for the education of primary school children. The Education Department directed its principals to incorporate preprimary centres into the school system and to provide administrative and educational assistance to preprimary teachers. Appraisal of teachers was to be the responsibility of the District Superintendent. Preprimary teachers, now part of the primary school, were under the leadership of the principal. Preschool teachers who worked in those kindergarten which chose not to join to Education Department in a formal sense, were under the leadership of District Superintendents. The principal was accountable to the District

Superintendent who in turn received directives from the Education Department of Western Australia. Few principals if any, had worked or trained primarily in the field of E.C.E.

In the 1980's further governmental developments emerged which were to influence kindergarten education although the focus of these developments was mainly the school sector. The *Beazley Report* (1984), sought by the newly-elected Labor Government, was prepared at a time of public concern about many educational matters. While emphasis was placed at the secondary level of education, ramifications of this enquiry permeated throughout the education system and into the field of E.C.E. One of the major outcomes of the *Beazley Report* (1984) was the formation of a performance appraisal system for all professional staff, under the jurisdiction of the principal. The *Beazley Report* (1984) followed by *Better Schools in Western Australia: A Programme for Improvement* (1987) brought changes not only to ministerial and school levels, but to the leadership duties of principals. The introduction of *Better Schools in Western Australia: A Programme for Improvement* (1987) relocated control from the headquarters of the Ministry of Education to schools and resulted in the closure of the Western Australian Early Childhood Branch within the central Ministry of Education. Kerr (1994) reported "with this closure pre-school teachers lost their centralised support structure which resulted in fragmentation of leadership and networks in the field" (p. 191).

Prior to 1987 policies were developed centrally from government priorities. "It is the task of government to interpret and define these priorities in a policy sense" (Government of W.A., 1986, p. 5). After 1987 the Ministry of Education¹ informed schools of government priorities and asked for them to be incorporated in

¹ In 1987 the Education Department of Western Australia was renamed the Ministry of Education. Subsequently, in January 1994 the original title was again adopted. References in this thesis use the term which was in existence during the period being discussed.

the school through a school development plan. "The plan enables the school to demonstrate the extent to which it has incorporated ministry policy and community priorities into its operations" (Ministry of Education W.A., 1989, p. 3). To ensure accountability to the local community, a formal decision-making group was established in each school to represent the community and staff and allow participation by all. "Amendments to the Education Act assented to on 8 July 1988 provided the opportunity for community participation in the formulation of the educational policy and operations of the school" (Annual Report, 1988/89, p. 18).

Better Schools in Western Australia: A Programme for Improvement (1987) was a result of the Government's push for "efficiency", "effectiveness" and "accountability", and was to result in a new structure of administration and a new direction for school leadership. In order to be responsive and adaptive to the needs of parents community participation in the formulation of educational policy in the school was to be the focus. The key ideas in the Report were "devolution" and "community participation". The District Superintendent was to be responsible for monitoring the quality performance of schools and reporting their progress to the Ministry. The principal was to become administrator, manager and instructional leader and was expected to accept responsibility for the appraisal of teachers. Although the principal was permitted to delegate teacher appraisal to senior staff the final recommendation, in consultation with the performance management advisory group, was to be made by the principal.

The response from principals to these changes was one of concern. Principals felt added managerial burdens may affect educational leadership and not improve the quality of education at the primary school level. Most principals felt there was a degree of uncertainty about the initiatives surrounding *Better Schools*.

Within the area of E.C.E., principals were faced with further confusion in areas of designated responsibility. Until 1989 no written guidelines on managing preprimary had been provided for principals. As a result an attempt was made in 1989 by the Ministry of Education, through the publication of *Guidelines, Pre-primary, Pre-school Administration* to outline some of the roles and responsibilities related to preprimary, so that principals could base their decisions on well-documented and established practices. Although the publication set out specific policy and guidelines applicable to the administration of preprimary and preschools in Western Australia application of these guidelines was not prescriptive. Cullen (1990) stated:

The principal who seriously peruses the section on 'Early childhood aims and programs' is unlikely to stand accused of failing to understand the philosophy which underlies the teacher's program - a not infrequent complaint from early childhood teachers. (p. 12)

In December 1989, the Ministry of Education Western Australia moved to correct some of the concerns by dedicating 1990 to the year of "rebuilding morale". However this did not ameliorate the need to re-focus on the role of the principal within Western Australia's public education system. In 1991, The Western Australian Primary Principals Association (WAPPA) deemed it necessary to report on and clarify the role expected of their principals. Berson & Stranger (1991) stated:

This report owes its inception in the industrial dispute of 1989, when primary principals had cause to reflect on their relationship with the Central Office of the Ministry and on the role of the primary school principal in a changing education system. (p. v)

The Report set the primary principal's role as an "educational leader" which incorporated both the management of the school and the task of instructional leadership. The Report recommended:

That primary principals establish their role as educational leaders by directing the management functions of the school and leading the instructional program of the school towards enhanced learning in students. (p. 8)

At present, within the literature much has been written on the issue of leadership and its contribution to school competence and excellence. The importance of the role of the principal as an educational leader is supported in the literature. Sergiovanni (1984) stated:

The educational leader assumes the role of 'clinical practitioner,' bringing expert professional knowledge and learning as they relate to teaching effectiveness, educational program development, and clinical supervision. (p. 6)

Goodlad (cited by Sergiovanni, 1984) stated: "Our work, for which we will be held accountable, is to maintain, justify, and articulate sound, comprehensive programs of instruction for children and youth" (p. 7). This view is supported by Schiller (1985) who stated "curriculum decision making is now expected to be at the school level, thus requiring new expertise and expectations of teachers and principals" (p. 2).

The role of the principal as an educational leader attracted the attention of writers in the field of Early Childhood Education. As a result of the incorporation of kindergartens within the existing elementary system in the United States of America (U.S.A.) attention was focused on the effectiveness of the principal as an educational leader. Issues of concern raised by early childhood specialists (Caldwell, 1973; Goodlad, 1976 as cited in Campbell, 1987; Shane, 1971; Thurman, 1970) addressed the importance of educational leadership. Campbell (1987) stated "several studies [Cross, 1981; Justiz, 1985; Robinson, 1982] of principals' effectiveness arrived at the unsurprising conclusion that to be effective in

administering programs, the principal needs to have acquired both knowledge about and experience with the area of program to be administered."

The context and scope of the primary principal's position in Western Australia is clearly reflected in "The Draft Position Description" of Principals of Primary Schools within *The Education Circular* (February, 1992). The principal is responsible for school planning; staff management; curriculum management; student management; school and community interaction; management of school finances, resources and operations; and classroom teaching.

In Western Australia *The Education Circular* (1992) sets out curriculum management as "the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the curriculum" (p. 152). The position entry criteria for principals stated the need for a sound understanding of "the content and structure of the curriculum for primary education" (1992, p. 154). Although no mention is made of "preprimary education" the assumption is made that it is considered incorporated under the area of "primary education". Even when principals were sought for early childhood education centres (K-2) as a trial (Class 4) appointments were given to personnel at the school if they demonstrated four years teaching experience in the early childhood or junior primary section of the school. According to Education Department personnel this selection process has changed. In 1995 appointments will be made on a promotional basis which does not specifically address a pre-requirement of preprimary background. Failure to address the preprimary (early childhood field) is significant in Western Australia as preprimary has been part of the school system for approximately 20 years. This situation is not only characteristic of Western Australia. The Schools Council National Board of Employment, Education and Training (May, 1992) stated:

Reports that recommend remedies fail to consider the impact of change on the early childhood sector, or assume that early childhood programs will fit satisfactorily into models developed for primary schools generally. (p. 3/4)

The Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training (May, 1992) reported: "Early childhood programs in schools are invisible in the large number of official reports of schools over recent years". This has serious implications when it is clearly required that principals take responsibility for preprimary administration, management and education within their schools. Educationists such as Elkind (1988), Fishhaut & Pastor 1977, Hitz & Wright (1988), Seefeldt (1988) and Thurman (1970) clearly state the significant differences between primary education and E.C.E.

Despite the physical location some preprimary centres being off the school site, all preprimaries are under the jurisdiction and leadership of the principal. "The majority of primary schools cater for children from 4 to 12 years of age and offer a program in broad curriculum areas from preprimary to Year 7" (The Education Circular, 1992, p. 150). *The Education Circular* further states "in some places where the school's pre-primary centre is not on the main school site, contact needs to be maintained with the relevant staff as well as parents" (p. 150). The principal is expected to be directly involved in the preprimary centre and is deemed the primary leader in determining the school's quality and character.

In Western Australia no studies which identify the educational background and experience of principals and their perceived needs in regard to preprimary education have been conducted to date. These issues are significant given the introduction in 1993 of full-day five year old preprimary sessions within government schools. This initiative met with disapproval from sectors of the community and the success of these centres is being monitored by the community. The Parliamentary Opposition

Education spokesperson recently stated that parents and teachers opposed to the full-day sessions for five year olds could not stop it: "They have to settle down, reconcile to the fact the program will take place and make damn sure it works for the sake of the children" (The West Australian September 18, 1992, p. 13). Further objections have stemmed from the Education Department of Western Australia's failure to consult specialists in the area of E.C.E., the speed with which the proposal was implemented, and the lack of assistance provided to principals.

In 1993 a report was prepared for The Minister for Education by the Ministerial Task Force on voluntary full-time pre-primary education and related matters, chaired by Hon B. Scott to report on relevant issues pertaining to full-time preprimary education. As a result of this report in 1994 the Western Australian government released a ministerial statement which highlighted deficiencies. Specifically it mentioned "the hurried introduction of full-time preprimary education for only one-third of the children of the state along with the poorly co-ordinated provision for four year olds is unsatisfactory" (Moore, 1994, no page). In June 1994, a Director of Early Childhood Education Policy was appointed to monitor and implement Task Force Recommendations.

Given developments in policy and practice since these programs were absorbed into the school sector there is a clear case for reviewing the capacity of school principals to provide educational leadership to the preprimary sector. To date this issue has not been addressed.

In an era where principals are expected to lead their schools past competency and into excellence based on a sound knowledge base and experience, a significant catalyst in school excellence is the principal. The ability of the principal to work harmoniously with all staff in a school is a vital ingredient for consensus and unity.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

Because of changed structures within government regarding the direction of kindergartens, preschools and preprimary centres most principals in Western Australia who are in charge of preprimary centres have primary school training and limited experience in E.C.E. Principals, not drawn from the early childhood sector, are expected to make decisions regarding early childhood directions, policy, programming and evaluation of teachers. When perusing the promotional positions available for principals of primary schools within W.A. no mention is made within the selection criteria, of the need for applicants to hold a knowledge base or practical experience in the field of preprimary education or E.C.E. The literature clearly outlines the differences which exist between E.C.E. and primary education and the miseducation evident in the United States where administrators, teachers, parents and policy makers have increasingly moved away from the basic developmental needs of young children and towards more formal curriculum driven approaches (Elkind, 1986; Hitz & Wright, 1988; Kamii, 1985; Kamii, cited in Decker & Decker, 1988; Roper, 1987; Sava, 1989; Shepard & Smith, 1989).

With the introduction of a number of all day five year old centres within public schools in Western Australia attention has once again been directed to the importance of the principal as an educational leader. This study examines the perceptions of principals on how well they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in the preprimary centre, the kinds of professional development needs principals perceive they have in contending with any problems related to preprimary, the capacity of principals to make key decisions about preprimary centres attached to primary schools and the knowledge base from which these decisions are derived.

For these reasons, the purpose of this study is to investigate the question:

How do principals perceive they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre?

In order to answer this question the study will be based around four subsidiary questions.

Q. 1. What is the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals, as reported by the principal and the preprimary teacher, in the preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership?

Q. 2. What is the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals responsible for preprimary centres?

Q. 3 What are principals' perceptions about their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres?

Q. 4 What kinds of professional development needs do principals perceive they have in contending with any problems related to preprimary?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Most principals in the state of Western Australia who are in charge of preprimary centres are principals who have primary school training and limited experience in preprimary education, Thurman (1970) described the uneasiness felt by a principal when entering a kindergarten class:

There are no reading groups; there seems to be continuous activity; all the children are not doing the same thing at the same time; and the teacher seemingly does little talking and even less in the way of visible teaching. (p. 205)

Fishhaut and Pastor (1977) described the differences between an eighth-grade or a fourth-grade teacher and a preschool teacher. They stated:

The only commonality is the field of education; the common factors are the 'working with people' factors. The differences in curriculum, classroom objectives, teaching methods and styles are extreme. (p.43)

Elkind (1988) further outlined differences which exist between E.C.E. and education in the upper levels of schooling:

Early childhood education has its own curriculum, its own programs of teacher training, its own method of evaluation of classroom management. These overlap curriculum, teacher training, evaluation and classroom management at upper levels of schooling, but they are far from being identical. (p. 27)

Hitz & Wright (1988) reported that respondents of their survey indicated "teaching kindergarten is sufficiently different from elementary instruction to warrant specialized training" (p. 29).

Seefeldt (1988) reported on a study undertaken by Johnston:

One study demonstrated that the kinds of problems that early childhood teachers face, and thus the skills required of them, are different from those needed by teachers in K-12 schools. (p. 248)

Seefeldt (1988) further reported "the field of early childhood, however, maintains that teaching children under the age of 8 requires different skills and understanding than those required for teaching older children" (p. 248).

The early years of education are not only gaining increasing recognition from educational specialists, but from the Australian Schools Council. The Schools Council Papers focus specifically on the Early Years because of a national view which calls for attention to the crucial importance of this part of schooling. Within these papers it is strongly argued that principals should be "highly efficient managers" as well as "dynamic educational leaders" and an equally important focus is given to accountability and preparation of school leaders. The Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training (September, 1991) provided a national directive:

It is imperative that those who are responsible for the early years of schooling receive appropriate training and executive support, so that effective curriculum, professional and organisational leadership are exercised in all centres of learning and teaching concerned with young children. (p. 15)

In Western Australia at present principals in charge of preprimary centres are administrative, managerial and educational leaders of the preprimary year. In addition principals are required to co-ordinate continuity of learning from K to year 1 and ensure the cohesion of the program across the school.

In view of the national directive to government schools, it is seen as imperative that school leaders receive appropriate training and executive support in order to provide effective leadership for young children. In Western Australia this issue has resulted in growing tension between principals and preprimary teachers regarding the provision of leadership in preprimary education. Several preprimary teachers and specialists in E.C.E. have expressed concern at principals' theoretical and practical background and the subsequent lack of educational guidance given by principals to preprimary teachers. Tension results when principals as leaders hold different philosophies, beliefs and values from their preprimary teachers. According to Rodd

(1994) tensions can emerge when "individual philosophies about caring for and educating young children are derived from subjective beliefs, values and preferences supported by personal experience" (p. 51).

Teachers have expectations of principals and concern is expressed by preprimary teachers when educational guidance is not provided. This concern is amplified when it becomes clear that principals hold responsibility for teacher appraisal in both preprimary and primary sectors.

No previous studies have been undertaken in Western Australia examining principal's perceptions on how they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre. Furthermore no Western Australian studies determining the principal's professional background, qualifications and experience of early childhood education have been located.

1.4 Definitions used.

Because many terms are used differently in different contexts the definition of terms used in this study is set out below:

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:- *The education and care of children between 3 and 8 years of age.*

PREPRIMARY CENTRE:- *The setting in which government funded education and care of children turning 4 and 5 years of age between January and December of that year takes place.*

PREPRIMARY YEAR:- *The education and care of children turning 5 years of age between January and December of that year. This is the year prior to the first year of compulsory schooling.*

KINDERGARTEN DIRECTOR:- *Refers to a person who oversees the preschool program running in a preschool or kindergarten. In this study early childhood teachers in preprimary centres may have been kindergarten directors in an earlier period prior to 1975.*

PRINCIPAL:- *Refers to a person in charge of a primary school which may contain a preprimary centre. In this study 23 of the 24 principals have responsibility for primary schools containing preprimary centres as well as classes from year 1 - 7.*

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER:- *Refers to a person who has undergone specialist study in the field of early childhood education. In this study all teachers working in preprimary centres are early childhood teachers.*

PERCEPTIONS:- *The understandings, impressions, specific ideas, or concepts formed by an individual.*

ACADEMICALLY ORIENTED PROGRAMS:- *Refers to programs where the primary emphasis is on direct, formal instruction to develop reading and mathematics skills.*

1.5 Summary of Chapter 1

The field of E.C.E has undergone rapid changes in Western Australia since the 1900's when kindergarten organisations were privately run and under the leadership of a kindergarten director who trained and worked primarily in the field of E.C.E. In 1975 the W.A. government became formally involved in E.C.E. Preprimary

centres were established and became part of primary schools. From this period to today the administration of preprimary has moved from the kindergarten director, to the early childhood teacher, to the school principal.

With the incorporation of preprimary centres into schools principals were expected to undertake a leadership role in preprimary education and be responsible for the appraisal of teachers. In the main, principals had primary school training and experience. Certain dilemmas appeared and were identified in anecdotal records of preprimary teachers and specialists in E.C.E. within Western Australia. These dilemmas include lack of educational knowledge and experience held by principals in charge of preprimary centres, lack of leadership given to preprimary teachers and concern by early childhood teachers that principals are responsible for teacher appraisal.

This study addresses some of these issues. This chapter set out the context in which the study was conducted. The second chapter comprises the literature review, and the third chapter outlines methodology of the research. The fourth chapter presents data collected as part of the study and the fifth chapter discusses the research findings, presents conclusions and outlines recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out a review of literature which addresses three areas considered pertinent to this study. The first section addresses the nature and extent of the principal's leadership role in the preprimary centre. The second area examines the field of early childhood education and reports on evident differences between preprimary and primary education and the third area focuses on the educational background, experience and perceptions of principals in charge of kindergarten/preprimary centres.

2.1 The Nature & Extent of the Principal's Leadership Role in Preprimary & Primary Schooling

In Western Australian government primary schools the principal's role is that of administrator, manager and educational leader. Delegation of power to other staff members may ease the burden placed on principals, but it does not alter the responsibility. As school's re-organise and greater powers and areas of responsibility are handed to principals, there is a need to continue reviewing these changes and to ensure that appropriate training and guidance is given to people affected by re-organisation. Directions to principals outlining the nature and extent of their leadership role needs should be well-documented. Failure to address these issues may result in tensions between staff and a lack of direction within schools. The principal is of primary importance in determining school quality, competence and excellence.

In order to investigate the nature and extent of the principal's leadership role in respect to primary schooling and the principal's role in determining the school's quality, two dimensions need to be considered. The first examines the nature and extent of the principal's role in administration, management and education. The second dimension focuses on the quality of leadership necessary for "competency" and "excellence" within education.

2.1.1 The principal's role in administration, management and education

Examination of developments in Western Australian government schools shows the responsibilities faced by principals have increased over recent years demanding greater time and energy across the school K-7. The *Beazley Report* (1984) and *Better Schools* (1987) brought changes to the leadership function of principals. The principal is now administrator, manager, educational leader and responsible for the appraisal of teachers.

In Victoria decentralization has had an effect on the role of principals thrusting upon them a greater role in educational leadership and school authority without the additional preparation and training necessary for their new role. Principal adjustment to this new role has varied in its success or failure and resulted in concern by principals in their attempts to maintain school quality (Chapman, 1986).

The 1992 paper prepared by the Schools Council for the National Board of Employment, Education and Training reported "many principals, teachers, clerical staff and parents are feeling considerably overburdened as the process of devolution is implemented, perhaps too quickly or without adequate preparation" (p. 49).

Devolution has created for the principal a primary role of major significance, requiring decision making and leadership direction in administration, management

and education. There is now more to manage than was previously the case in schools (Deer, 1982). Tasks associated with this role are numerous, a few of which include administration and management of personnel, buildings, school records, finance, community participation and other issues prescribed by The Education Department. When addressing issues of educational leadership, tasks include setting educational goals into school policies or school development plans, implementing curriculum into each school year, staff development, appraisal and evaluation of staff and curriculum.

As a result of increased responsibility the issue arguably becomes whether one person can fulfil the role of administrator, manager, educational leader and host to the introduction of new areas such as preprimary education. These added responsibilities present principals with the difficult task of acquiring new skills and knowledge necessary for such diverse roles. Skills required for administration and management are different to those required for education and teaching. How young children learn in the primary school years is deemed to be different from children's learning in the preprimary years. The successful application of these skills into primary schools is reliant on the presence of leaders who hold strong administrative, managerial and educational leadership capacity. Concerns are raised when principals are faced with the implementation of new areas such as a preprimary year which require different knowledge and understandings from those characteristic of primary. In such instances not only is it necessary that written documentation be provided to principals stating the nature and kinds of involvement expected of them in preprimary centres, but professional development should be available to assist principals with their new role.

Various views are presented by writers in education when determining whether one person can effectively fulfil the role of both manager and instructional leader.

These views focus on sources from which leadership should be derived and do not question the necessity of a sound knowledge and practical experience of the areas within one's leadership. Rallis & Highsmith (1986) argued that the roles expected of principals are so diverse that if they are to be educational leaders they must hold a deep knowledge of the areas within their leadership realm. However Rallis & Highsmith (1986) presented a problem: "Most principals hold degrees in administration, not advanced degrees in teaching or curriculum or philosophy of education" (p. 301). One solution may be that schools recognize existing resources and use them, that is the management skills of principals and the instructional leadership of teachers. "Informally or unofficially some teachers have been performing the tasks of instructional leadership" (Rallis & Highsmith, 1986, p. 645). Another view presented as a result of a proposal from a Schools Commission study by Duigan argued that principals could be assisted by "teachers undertaking duties formerly expected of the principal by a system of rotation" (O'Callaghan, 1987, p. 49).

A recent trend in New Jersey is the employment of principals without teaching background. Believers in this approach feel that principals have little time for educational leadership, and there is no research supporting the argument that teachers are better as principals or leaders than non-teachers. The result has been a move for the employment of principals from non-teaching backgrounds. This move does not support the notion that educational leaders hold a strong educational background in the field in which they will be working. Instead successful applicants receive training vital for their new position. Cooperman (1989) supported the New Jersey's Department of Education proposal for a new system of training and certifying principals. "I believe the new plan holds all principals to a high standard of preparation at the same time that it opens up the principalship to excellent people who would not have been able to qualify under the old system" (p.

11). Principals without educational background were required to serve an internship before taking charge of a school. After completing a "residency" of one or two years they were to complete 135 hours of study in key education topics. Principals were then eligible for principal certification.

This move has been opposed by several writers in education on various grounds. Thomson (1989) stated "teaching experience strengthens the competence as well as the credibility of principals. Both qualities are essential to effective school leadership" (p. 15). Thomson went on to state that principals were heavily reliant on teaching experience in five major areas: Employing teachers; supervising instruction; leading or managing teachers; understanding and working with students and conferring with parents.

Guthrie (1989) opposed the move to introduce principals without educational background. "Without first-hand knowledge of the issues and demands of teaching, they will lack credibility with the faculty under their supervision" (p. 14). Rallis & Highsmith (1986), while agreeing on the need to utilize the instructional leadership of teachers within the field did not support leadership from outside the teaching field: "current research affirms that teachers are dubious of leadership from the outside" (p. 300).

In Western Australian government primary schools anecdotal comments from preprimary teachers and early childhood specialists raise concern that principals with little or no early childhood background are directed by the Education Department to provide educational direction to preprimary centres. The claim is made by preprimary teachers and early childhood specialists that little if any professional development is provided for principals. Tensions arise when principals fail to provide educational leadership and in many instances preprimary teachers are

dubious of leadership from outside the preprimary field, thus undermining the credibility of principals as preprimary leaders.

In Western Australian government schools as a result of the incorporation of preprimary centres within the primary school and devolution of authority from the Education Department to schools, principals are in charge of the administrative, managerial and educational aspects of preprimary centres. Whether this leadership should require extensive principal training (Pierce & Weischadle, 1978, cited by Barnes, 1992) or assessment centres for principals so as to diagnose their weaknesses and needs (Rist, 1986) or educational leadership from within the teaching field (Rallis & Highsmith, 1986) are matters which need to be addressed.

The principal's leadership role in Western Australian government schools in the areas of administration, management and education has several dimensions. Two significant dimensions of relevance to this study are appraisal and evaluation of teachers and the clinical supervision of teachers within the school.

2.1.2 The principal's role in the appraisal and evaluation of teachers

One of the extra work loads placed on principals in Western Australia an outcome of the Beazley Inquiry was the formation of a performance appraisal system of all professional staff. In the past this duty was conducted by the District Superintendent. Within Western Australian government schools, teachers across the school K-7 are subjected to performance management if they are beginning temporary teachers with less than 3 years experience, temporary teachers with prior teaching experience, part-time temporary teachers, permanent-on-probation teachers. Each performance management group (PMG) may comprise all or some of the following - the principal, a deputy principal, a person nominated by the principal, a person nominated by the teacher. Although appraisal may be delegated

to others, responsibility is still held by the principal. The principal is expected to co-ordinate the performance management process and establish advisory groups. The principal provides administrative support and may participate in the appraisal process or delegate responsibility for appraisal to more relevant senior staff. The principal makes the final recommendation in consultation with the performance management advisory group and has the right not to recommend permanency. In such cases the District Superintendent (or nominee) visits the school and assesses the teacher's suitability for permanent staff.

The appraisal and evaluation of teachers is an important educational leadership role in that it affects important issues such as promotion, permanency and employment. The literature raises certain dilemmas which need to be addressed and are pertinent to this study. The first deals with principal accountability. The second issue relates to the evaluator's knowledge base of what is being evaluated and the third refers to teachers and their reliability as peer evaluators.

The issue of accountability which surrounds education at present is an important one which should not only be restricted to teachers, but involve principals and administrators (Murphy, 1985; Scriven, 1988). In many instances principals are neither supervised nor evaluated regularly. Appraisal and evaluation are complex procedures requiring definite skills, knowledge and training which may be acquired through training programs or other means. Principals need to be involved in professional growth when leadership becomes a responsibility (Weiss, 1989).

The principal as an evaluator of preprimary teachers requires a knowledge of preprimary content, methodology and an understanding both theoretically and practically of theories about child development and learning (Caruso, 1989). The literature clearly states significant differences between preprimary and primary

education in areas of knowledge, methodology and learning theory. Fishhaut & Pastor (1977) argued the existence of differences in curriculum, classroom objectives, teaching methods and styles between preprimary and primary school. These significant differences warrant the necessity for background knowledge and training in the field of preprimary education in that a knowledge of primary education is not often seen as sufficient when evaluation of the preprimary teacher is being undertaken. Caruso (1989) argued that principals are often directed to supervise and evaluate teachers in areas in which they hold no knowledge or minimal knowledge. That the principal does not hold the adequate knowledge and practical experience for appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers is an issue within Western Australia. This issue is of concern to preprimary teachers when promotion, permanency and employment are being determined.

The majority of Western Australian preprimary programs are conducted in small groups requiring continual movement. The programs are meant to be responsive to the needs of individual children within each preprimary centre. In the majority of cases preprimary education through its own curriculum, teaching style, classroom management and evaluation, is distinguishable from other primary years.

Caruso (1989) reported on how principals in elementary schools often held backgrounds in secondary education, producing problems when instructional supervision was applied to younger children. Caruso (1989) reported problems if "principals lack an understanding of the growth and development of elementary school-age children...and/or may not have tolerance for methods of teachings which require movement and small group work" (p. 46).

Difficulties and complexities are faced by evaluators in all situations and levels of education (Hatfield, 1981). Existing approaches proposed and implemented in the

area of teacher evaluation are questioned by Scriven (1988) who claimed that "essentially all of the approaches in use are invalid, not just to a minor extend (sic) but fundamentally" (p. 9). Scriven (1988) further stated historically for cost reasons use is made of an invalid process known as "let the principal do it all on the basis of judgement" (p. 19). Within the schools problems associated with teacher evaluation focused on principals' lack of confidence, experience and time to carry out evaluation. Lyons, Hildebrandt, Johnson & Holdaway (1987) stated that where principals lacked knowledge and skills "they may compromise the evaluation process by giving satisfactory ratings to teachers whom they know to be incompetent" (p. 10). The literature outlined a lack of consensus on the qualifications and knowledge necessary for evaluation. Caruso (1989) reported:

At present there is little agreement among experts in the field of supervision as to what the essential background qualifications and professional experience should be for those in supervisory/administrator roles at the various levels of schooling. (p. 46)

The third issue refers to teachers and their reliability as peer evaluators. Several writers argued that peer teachers are not reliable when asked to appraise and evaluate each other due to issues of loyalty to each other. Scriven; Millman & Darling Hammond, 1990 (cited in Chadbourne & Inguarson, 1991) argue "peers are not very reliable judges of teaching...and that teachers are unwilling to probe deeply or make critical judgements of colleagues with whom they may continue to work after the evaluation" (p. 6). In Western Australia teachers are permitted to nominate a person to appraise and evaluate their performance. Their choice can be that of a peer teacher. Winter (1987) queried the use of peer appraisal as a sensitive issue..."Who will blow the whistle on a colleague when it might mean precipitation into wastage and poverty, rather than careful re-training?" (p. 10). These are issues

facing appraisal and evaluation of teachers in Western Australian government schools.

The appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher is of significance in so far as this process allows principals to assess good practice and ensure the quality of the preprimary program when issues of permanency, employment and promotion are raised. In order to appraise and evaluate not only preprimary teachers, but teachers in any year level, certain conditions must exist. The evaluator must hold the skills necessary to perform this leadership role, have a knowledge of the content which is being taught, have a knowledge of methodology and an understanding of educational theories significant to the age group being evaluated. If this role is delegated to others the principal must ensure the person fulfils all these requirements. Only when these issues are present will evaluation be just.

2.1.3 The principal's role as a clinical supervisor of teachers

The process of performance management outlined by the Ministry of Education, Western Australia (n.d.) requires the principal not only to be an appraiser and evaluator of teachers but in addition a clinical supervisor. A preliminary interview allows the principal and teacher to agree on performance targets. At least one formal interview follows where targets can be reviewed and progress monitored. The appraisal interview takes place at the end of the semester and is between the teacher and the principal and/or members of the Performance Management Advisory Group.

The purpose of supervision is important in that it involves principals in the development, evaluation and refinement of school programs and provides feedback on teacher performance (Smith & Andrews, 1989). Supervision is important when seeking the achievement of competence in education and vital in ensuring excellence

in education (Sergiovanni, 1984). In order to be effective principals directly intervened in classrooms, offered assistance to teachers in educational matters and worked closely with them (Lyons, Hildebrandt, Johnson & Holdaway 1987).

These views are supported in a report undertaken by the National Association of Elementary Schools Principals (1990):

The principal is active not only in developing the school's curriculum but in carrying it out, working closely with teachers in determining effective instructional strategies. On a day-to-day basis, the principal is a frequent classroom observer and regularly confers with teachers on ways to improve instruction. (p. 7)

The importance of principal involvement, knowledge and feedback to teachers is stressed by writers such as Chalmers (1992) and Sergiovanni (1984). Effective clinical supervision is accompanied by an educational leader whose knowledge, guidance and feedback on programs is sound so that educational leadership is fulfilled.

With the continual changes taking place in education systems today and the focus on teacher accountability, some teachers may not be fully conversant on current policy and effective practice. The educational need for assistance is expressed by preprimary teachers as well as teachers in other fields in their attempts to grasp new concepts and research. As new strategies are introduced problems become evident when teachers return to the workforce after a gap of many years and attempt to incorporate new changes into their programs. The teachers may cope with change by looking to their educational leader within each primary school. In Western Australian government schools the educational leader for K-7 is the primary school principal. In the past, advisory teachers and inservice programs were adequately provided. The Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training (January, 1992) reported that in Australia today "substantial reductions in

the number of consultants and other advisory staff at central and regional office levels has added to teachers' frustration" (p. 36).

The January, 1992 paper identified an existing problem on the part of principals in ensuring constructive and regular feedback to teachers of young children. "There appears to be little evidence of periodic appraisal being implemented at present in systematic and action-oriented ways in the early years of schooling" (p. 38). Many educational writers argued clinical supervision has limited capability and is time-consuming. Within Western Australia not only are principals required to become involved in the supervision of teachers but in many cases the preprimary centre is off the school grounds making access more time consuming. The Education Department of Western Australia has informed principals that even when the preprimary centre is off-site contact must still be maintained with staff.

Anecdotal comments from some Western Australian early childhood specialists and teachers claim that often principals are unwilling to venture into the preprimary centre or that when advice is given it is often contrary to the philosophy behind preprimary education. Writers such as Johnson & Snyder (1986) and McCormack-Larkin (1985) have argued the importance of regular classroom visits to teachers. Scannell (1988) reported on a series of studies (Croghan & Lake, 1984; Rutherford, 1985) which found effective principals were "proactive" in that they actively championed teachers' causes. These principals had a clear vision, translated the vision, provided a supportive environment, monitored and intervened. Regular visits into classrooms were seen as important while less effective principals spent most of their time completing administrative and managerial work. Kuykendall (1990) argued that "directors without education in child development can impede the work of skilled teachers" (p. 49).

The field of preprimary education is itself surrounded by varying educational perspectives and individual beliefs which result in conflict between early childhood teachers (Rodd, 1994). *The Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training (August, 1992)* reported "without a sound understanding of the philosophies and principles which underlie the education systems of which they are a part,...school communities run the risk of pursuing directions or initiating activities, that are simply not in the best interests of all children" (p. 29).

Principals need a sound understanding of the content and structure of curriculum for preprimary education when supervising teachers. Manasse (1985) stated the importance of three areas when appointing principals to schools - placement, pre-service and in-service. Firstly "districts need to increase their attention to placing principals in schools that are the best match for their particular strengths and styles" (p. 456). Preprimary centres need principals who are educational leaders and yet the position entry criteria for principals in Western Australia states the need for a sound understanding of "the content and structure of the curriculum for primary education" (The Education Circular, 1992, p. 154). No mention is made of "preprimary education." It is assumed that preprimary education is considered under the area of "primary education" despite strong argument in the literature that significant differences exist between primary and preprimary education. In respect to pre-service, Manasse (1985) stated "preservice training, then, must realistically take into account the nature of the work and work setting of principals" (p. 457). To date in Western Australia universities have not addressed this issue with respect to sector specific areas such as preprimary. Providing principals with some compulsory units in preprimary education may be one solution.

Sashkin & Huddle (1988) recommended "improved college-level training programs that incorporate up-to-date knowledge along with internship experiences" (p 9). Manasse (1985) further commented on inservice training by stating, "currently, inservice training tends to focus on specific instructional areas, curricular or technological innovations, implementation of new legislation, or other one-shot activities" (p. 457/458). Miland (1983) supported the need for compulsory courses arguing that, "courses must be compulsory that is, principals must be required to attend: their position as educational leaders in the school is too crucial to be left to chance participation" (p. 11). Day (1994) reported on a survey undertaken in Western Australia which questioned four principals and six deputy-principals on the general provision of training or inservice assistance by the Education Department and argued "none of the principals surveyed believed training courses provided by the Education Ministry had been useful" (p. 7). They felt more valuable and relevant training courses would be found with outside agencies rather than the Education Department.

In the view presented by Guthrie (1989) if principals cannot competently assume an educational leadership role encompassing clinical supervision then:

A better solution would be to enhance the role and ability of teachers. Improving their qualifications would ensure that the pool of persons eligible to be principals is sophisticated and talented. (p. 15)

Within each school administration, management and educational leadership is essential whether or not the principal is drawn from a background of teaching experience. The trend towards collaborative leadership and shared responsibilities may ease the burden but particular skills are required and it does not remove the accountability of the principal to the Education Department, teachers and community. At present Western Australian government school principals quite

often find that the preprimary centre is not within the school grounds but a substantial distance away. This adds to the challenge of providing effective leadership which includes appraising and evaluating the preprimary teachers.

2.1.4 Competence and excellence in education

With the push for "efficiency", "effectiveness" and "accountability" in education principals face added administrative tasks and a new direction in leadership. This new direction in leadership demands progression past the realms of "competence" into the field of "excellence". In the past the mastery of certain basic rules and facts were the skills expected of educational leaders. At present the phenomenon most tenaciously sought by educational leaders is excellence. Educational writers (Prakash & Waks, 1985) outlined the importance of excellence, and developed a conceptual framework to assist in dealing with four possible conceptions each with their own criteria for excellence. Both Prakash & Waks (1985) and Walker (1990) outlined the difficulties experienced when trying to measure excellence. Walker (1990) reported that although difficult, excellence can be expressed in measurable criteria such as "quality", "adequacy", "effectiveness" and "perfection". The task of identifying excellence is seen as vital if people are to value, respect and adopt it (Johnson, 1982, cited in Walker, 1990, p. 8). Without the presence of leadership Caldwell (1985) believes "quality and excellence in schools cannot be achieved" (p. 22).

Principals as educational leaders within school systems need to address specific issues if excellence is to be attained. Initially they must successfully demonstrate competence comprising three significant components. First a 'knowledge component' which requires a leader to possess a thorough theoretical and practical knowledge of the field under one's realm. Areas which need to be addressed are

diagnosing educational problems experienced by teachers, counselling, supervising and evaluating teachers, assisting and supervising curriculum development and providing inservice and professional development for teachers. Equally important, principals need to be aware of the types of teaching strategies and organisational features within each school year. Second 'skill component' which encompasses the skills vital for co-ordinating the school environment, such as dealing with conflict and group cohesiveness and the ability to supervise people within the school so they all work towards a common goal is needed. Third an 'attitude component' which includes the adoption by principal's of a positive belief in the value of existing areas or new areas which have been implemented into the school by the Education Department. Principals need to accept and adopt ownership of areas within their leadership if competency is to be achieved. The necessity for these components to be present is emphasised by educational writers such as Jorde-Bloom (1988), Keefe (cited by Chalmers, 1992), and Sergiovanni (1984).

In order to achieve school competence the principal as an educational leader should incorporate these components into the school setting. Chalmers (1992) stated "when principals and other school leaders fail to acquire and then demonstrate these competencies a vacuum is created that can lead to teacher insecurity" (p. 54). Anecdotal comments from early childhood specialists and preprimary teachers reflected these concerns. They argued that principals do not hold a theoretical and practical background in preprimary education necessary for the provision of educational leadership and the appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers. Educational writers outlined significant differences between preprimary and primary education which focus on differing philosophies of how young children learn best, curriculum, classroom objectives, teaching methods, own method of evaluation of classroom management and styles (Elkind, 1988, Fishhaut & Pastor, 1977, Hitz & Wright, 1988, Seefeldt, 1988, Tayler, 1992, and Thurman, 1970).

When principals do not possess a theoretical and practical background in preprimary education components necessary for educational leadership become difficult to achieve. Components such as the diagnosis of educational problems, counselling teachers, providing supervision and evaluation, inservice training and assisting teachers in developing curriculum are issues requiring knowledge of the preprimary field. Chalmers (1992) supported this view by stating "successful instructional leadership is dependent upon the knowledge base of the leader(s) in the school. School administrators cannot hope to act upon the deficiencies exposed by their information systems if they are unfamiliar with current pedagogical theory and practices" (p. 54/55).

The achievement of excellence in a school setting is reliant on the presence of certain forces or components which are in addition to those listed within competence. The school principal must maintain a high degree of visibility by visiting classrooms, becoming involved in school assemblies and ceremonies and providing a unified vision. In addition the principal must bond together staff, students, parents, community and other personnel as believers in the type of work and the beliefs being portrayed by the school. (Batsis, 1987, cited in Dantley, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1984). In this way a sense of ownership of a project or belief is accepted. Equally important is a sense of vision and the skills necessary for pulling individuals and systems together. At present in Western Australia the principal is expected to encourage continuity between preprimary and the primary school demanding leadership skills vital in bringing all individuals together to achieve a common goal. Weiss (1989) supported this view when she stated, "principals must provide the necessary leadership...to pull together the separate elements which exist in every school and make them work" (p. 1).

The strive towards excellence in schooling requires mastery of the types of components illustrated in this section. Without the presence of knowledge, vision, group cohesiveness and the bonding together of staff within the school attempts to ensure competence and move towards excellence in education at the preprimary level diminish.

2.2 The Field of Early Childhood Education

A diversity of opinion among experts on the most appropriate education for young children surrounds the field of early childhood education. At present within Western Australia principals in charge of preprimary centres are faced with an enormous range of preprimary programs based on various early childhood theories, philosophies and approaches dominated by individual beliefs and values which often cause conflict within the early childhood field. Preprimary teachers choose their approaches based on their beliefs. Principals within one school when supervising, appraising or evaluating preprimary teachers may be subjected to programs which are teacher-directed or informal, play-based or more structured. Learning can occur spontaneously as a result of children's interests or it can be formally led by the teacher. This view is supported by Bihr, cited by Goodrich (1981): "Some say only play, some want a watered down first grade, some recommend the cognitive approach, while still others see the program assuming the role of the parent." (p. 13). Mitchell (1989) reported that, "no single kind of early childhood program has a monopoly on quality" (p. 670). As educational leaders of preprimary centres principals require the appropriate knowledge of the various early childhood theories, philosophies and approaches chosen by their preprimary teachers. Without this understanding of programming, appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers may be difficult to achieve and result in a major dilemma for school principals. (Decker & Decker, 1988).

This section of the literature review investigates three areas seen as pertinent to this study: first, the sources from which early childhood curricula are drawn and their different perspectives; second, developmentally appropriate programs and academic orientated programs; and third, differences between E.C.E. and primary education.

2.2.1 Sources from which early childhood curricula are drawn.

The origins of programs operating within the field of early childhood education are outlined by Spodek (1985) as being Children, Developmental Theory, Learning Theory, Organized Knowledge and School Content. The principal as an educational leader must not only understand these sources of curricula but also the various perspectives or approaches used by preprimary teachers when developing individual programs.

In regard to children as a source of curricula many theorists in the field of early childhood education emphasize that early childhood curricula originates from children themselves. Froebel and Montessori, considered pioneers of E.C.E., used as their main source of curriculum, observations they had made of children. This approach, operating today, is reliant on the teacher's observations as a basis for framing a programme. When appraising, evaluating and supervising preprimary teachers familiarity with this method of curriculum development becomes necessary if principals are to provide educational leadership to preprimary teachers who have selected to use this approach. Within each source of curricula preprimary teachers may present different approaches or perspectives, such as maturationist, behavioural, psychosexual or interactionist. "One educator may see a set of potentials while another sees only deficits; one may see only the intellectual behavior of the child, another only the emotional or social behavior" (Spodek, 1985, p. 31).

Developmental theory is another source of curricula found within early childhood curriculum. One theory, based on Gesell, groups children's behaviour by age into developmental norms based on observation of young children. Children are then provided with learning experiences which are felt to be appropriate for their age. Criticisms of this approach focus on the influence of environment and culture which cause variations in child development. Analysis of six Piagetian early childhood programs indicated use of different elements of theory with different interpretations. Spodek (1985) stated, "in translating theory to practice, elements of the theory get discarded and other elements are added. Thus, even when programs are rooted in the same developmental framework they can differ from one another in essential and significant ways" (pp. 32/33).

The existence of discrepancies between developmental theory and teacher's practices can be found in preprimary centres and are reflected in the literature. Preprimary teachers may theoretically state they use a developmental approach while practically they contradict themselves by making use of worksheets within the preprimary setting. The appropriateness of developmental theory as a primary source of curriculum is questioned in the literature (Cullen, 1994, Spodek, 1985) on either grounds of discrepancies between theory and practice or the fact that education visualises what ought to be rather than child development theory which proposes what is. Principals with an educational role in preprimary need to be familiar with developmental theory when guiding teachers in the translation of this theory into practice.

The third source of curricula evident today stems from learning theories. Learning can be seen as being dependent on a child's environment and composed of the acquisition of knowledge, skills, dispositions and feelings over time. The literature outlines various interpretations and approaches of learning theory which educational

leaders need to understand. Spodek (1985) presented his view that, "learning theory attempts to account for short-term change" (p. 33). Spodek (1985) outlined examples, such as Skinner's learning theory and the "conduct curriculum" developed by Hill (1923) which construes kindergarten as a place for habit training and recommends teachers adopt stimulus situations. Another view presented in the literature is by phenomenological psychologists, Snygg and Combs (1949) (cited by Spodek, 1985), who outlined "the goals of learning are also individual. What a person learns depends upon his goals and needs, which are not always externally manipulatable" (p. 34).

Organized knowledge the fourth source, was viewed by Bruner in the 1960's as the basis of educational curriculum for all children. The development of curricula was based on knowledge. However problems arose in areas of individual learning rates, style and the task of finding relevant issues for children. Spodek (1985) argued that, "by itself it was inadequate for determining school curricula at any level, especially at the early childhood level" (p. 36).

The fifth source of early childhood curricula is the content of later schooling. A well-used phrase in this approach is "reading readiness." The content of curricula is seen in the Bereiter-Engelmann Program (1966) with the emphasis on reading, language and maths. Within this approach various views both promoting or criticising this approach can be found. Spodek (1985) argued "the pressures of later life and schooling are heaped upon the child in anticipation of what is to come" (p. 36). Despite the arguments for or against, this source of curricula is evident in a number of preprimary centres.

Various writers (N.A.E.Y.C., 1987; Spodek, 1985) presented their views on what they believed to be the proper source of curricula for early childhood educators.

These views ranged from the adoption of developmentally appropriate programs which encompass cognitive, social-emotional, language, physical and creative domains to the adoption of curricula which focus on the developmental, cultural and social dimensions. Writers such as Cullen (1994) outlined issues which need to be addressed when preprimary teachers adopt one source of curriculum. "The differing orientations of theories of development and practice suggest that knowledge of child development is an insufficient source of the early childhood curriculum" (p. 6). The adoption of other factors is reflected by Cullen (1994) "for example, in New Zealand the curriculum for Te Kohanga Reo, the early childhood programs for Maori children, incorporates knowledge, skills and values inherent in Maori Culture" (p. 8).

Principals are presented with curriculum originating from learning theories which adopt any of these sources. An analysis of preprimary programs reflects that, predominantly, they are based on different theoretical perspectives including the maturationist, the behavioural, the psychosexual or the interactionist.

The maturationist perspective (Gesell) sees intelligence and development as fixed at birth and the preprimary teacher allows the child to develop at his/her own pace. In this approach the teacher observes and organises the environment to suit the children within the group. This approach in Australia was influenced by studies in North America and according to Cullen (1994), "the normative data which accumulated became the basis of the maturationist theories of development (e.g. Gesell) which were to justify the informal nature of early childhood programs" (p. 3). Within this approach maturation is so important that learning is never permitted to exceed maturation.

The behavioural perspective (Thorndike, Skinner and Bandura) argued children have the ability to learn and emphasizes reinforcement. Within this approach the teacher transmits knowledge through direct instruction and learning can be observable and measurable in terms of behavior. Programs (preacademic/academic Distar for teaching arithmetic and reading and the Darcee programs) focus on preacademic skills and attitudes and may usually require children to learn to read before entering year one.

The psychosexual perspective (Freud) emphasizes social-emotional development. The teacher's role is to observe the child and continually structure experiences from these observations. The child is to explore the environment and self-direct any learning.

The interactionist perspective is child-centred and allows for self-teaching and discovery learning. The teacher structures the environment and then observes and questions children.

Kohlberg (1968) included cognitive development as another program focus and cites various curriculum models (Montessori, the Weikart Cognitively Oriented Curriculum the Nimmicht Response Model, and the British Primary/Open School Models) as characteristic to this approach. In each case the teacher structures the environment according to the interests and skills presented by each child.

At present principals in charge of preprimary centres are faced with a range of preprimary programs based on various early childhood theories, philosophies and approaches. Despite the arguments presented by writers, there is no justifiable evidence for the adoption of one of these approaches to the exclusion of others. Strong evidence is often presented for the adoption of a developmentally appropriate program. However Cullen (1994) reflected on this and outlined the choices

available to early childhood teachers arguing that, "at the same time, early childhood educators need to acknowledge that criteria other than developmental can, and should, be applied to early education" (p. 19). The choices available to preprimary teachers highlight the diversity of programmes in existence today. Decker & Decker (1989) further stated:

Theories are often psychological: that is, concerned with the investigation of human behavior and development, rather than pedagogical, concerned with content and methodology of the teaching/learning process. Adapting theoretical conceptions to program goals, objectives, and activities is a major problem. (p. 35)

Cullen (1994) reported on the issue of theory-practice discrepancies. She stated how the constructivist philosophy supported active learning yet on many occasions early childhood teachers revealed the implementation of learning experiences which do not permit this form of learning. Cullen stated:

In the United Kingdom, the introduction of the National Curriculum for 5 to 16 year olds has resulted in some preschool teachers adopting Attainment Targets for 5-year-olds which are incompatible with descriptors of a 'good' nursery curriculum, although it should be noted that compatible targets have also been recorded. (p. 7)

Anecdotal comments from Western Australian early childhood specialists sometimes reflect discrepancy between theory and practice evident in preprimary centres. Philosophies reflected in teacher programmes are often found to be mismatched in teaching practices. One example would be the emphases on children constructing identical windmills in a programme which encourages active creative learning. Principals as educational leaders of preprimary centres need to direct teachers when issues such as these present themselves. Identification of discrepancies between theory and practice can result when principals are knowledgeable about the theory and practice of preprimary education.

2.2.2 Developmentally appropriate programs and academic orientated programs.

In America, until the 1960's most early childhood education was privately run and curriculum geared towards developmentally appropriate practices. Appropriate practices existed even in kindergartens within public schools. This situation altered in the early 1960's when early childhood education changed its status and for the first time was funded by the federal government. Elkind (1986) stated "early childhood education became a ground on which to fight social battles that had little or nothing to do with what was good pedagogy for children" (p. 632). Reasons presented for the intervention of the federal government were first, criticism on American education as a result of the launching of Sputnik I in 1957 and publications of books such as "Why Johnny Can't Read". The view was held that children were not adequately prepared for school and emphasis should be placed on early academics within early childhood centres. Second, criticism of the American education system was voiced in respect to the unequal schooling of minorities. One solution saw the implementation of The Head Start legislation.

The push towards early academics brought with it advocates of a more formal academic orientated program in early childhood in contrast to educators who believed that early education should be informal and child-orientated. New concepts began emerging in contrast to old practices. One such concept was the emergence of 'the competent child' by Jerome Bruner, a person not trained in education or more specifically child development, who claimed any child can be taught any subject at any age as long as it was presented intellectually and honestly (Elkind, 1986). In a similar way Benjamin Bloom argued that by the age of four children have half of their intellectual ability.

Several educationists argued that young children do not learn in the same way as older children and based their argument not only on great educationists such as Froebel, Montessori, and Piaget, but also on research findings. "According to Piaget, intellectual growth follows a series of developmental stages which are invariant in sequence and consequently unresponsive to intellectual acceleration" (Elkind, 1976, cited by Goodrich, 1981, p. 8). However in terms of educational programming Cullen (1994) stated "...there is currently little research-based support for an educational program which is based on the assumption that all children pass through universal sequences of development" (p. 13).

American kindergartens reflected a greater number of principals and schools supporting formal academic achievement. This trend was evident in a survey conducted by Shepard & Smith (1989):

In a recent survey, 18% of principals reported that it is district policy to teach reading to all kindergartners; an additional 50% of schools teach reading to kindergartners who are 'ready and able'; 85% of elementary principals say that academic achievement in kindergarten has medium or high priority in their schools (Educational Research Service 1986). (p. 135)

Concerns were raised and expressed by organisations such as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, International Reading Association, and four other professional organizations who urged early childhood educators to resist the lure of formal academic instruction (Hitz & Wright, 1988; Sava, 1989). These pressures have been acknowledged by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which released a position statement on developmentally appropriate practice aimed at administrators, teachers, parents and policy makers:

Programs have changed in response to social, economic and political forces; however these changes have not always taken into account the

basic developmental needs of young children which have remained constant. The trend toward early academics, for example is antithetical to what we know about how young children learn. (NAEYC, 1987, p. 36)

An important issue being continually expressed by educational writers was the realisation that principals in charge of early childhood centres seldom held a theoretical and practical background in early childhood education. The swing towards early academics was expressed by many educationists as being the result of inappropriate background held by people in leadership roles:

Children are being forced to 'learn' things they cannot possibly master because teachers, administrators, and curriculum specialists do not have the appropriate background in child development: and many university professors do not help their students evaluate theory. (Kamii, cited in Decker & Decker, 1989, p. 36)

Principals need a deep knowledge, awareness and ownership of preprimary education if they are to fend off pressures for an academic curriculum. Kamii (1985) reflected on why such harmful practices were going on in early childhood education when she said, "One explanation is that administrators in education, who have the power to make decisions, are ignorant of child development" (p. 3).

Elkind (1988) opposed the trend towards academic curriculum and gives this reason for its existence: "It is because today's parents - and to some extent teachers and educational administrators - do not fully appreciate the nature and value of early childhood education that there is so much confusion in the field today" (p. 23).

With the push towards early academics, pressure has been placed on administrators and teachers for the adoption of academic programs (Roper, 1987). Cullen (1994) believed that, "many observers of today's early childhood centres and classrooms could argue convincingly that teachers are driven more by a perceived need to cover

curriculum content than by the developmental needs of the child" (pp. 3/4). Shepard & Smith (1989) concluded by stating their support for developmental programming and added that "it is the responsibility of the educational system to adjust to the developmental needs and levels of the children it serves; children should not be expected to adapt to an inappropriate system" (p. 143). This view is presented by Bredekamp & Shephard (1988) who argued that policies such as readiness testing, raising entrance ages should be resisted and are inappropriate. Blank (1985) supported this notion when she stated:

Programs for young children in public schools? Only if knowledge about early childhood development is required for all lead teachers in preprimary programs. Not if any teaching credential is the sole requirement for teachers of young children in these programs. (p. 54)

Critics of a formal approach contest that the trend towards formal early childhood education has resulted from a lack of understanding by principals, teachers and the strong pressures exerted by legislators and the community. Rowley (1991) stated:

These competing and contradictory agendas deeply divide early childhood educators and complicate the formulation of a coherent strategy for including young children in elementary schools. (p. 29)

In Western Australia prior to the mid 1970s kindergartens were privately run and curriculum geared towards developmentally appropriate practices. In the mid 1970s the involvement of government resulted in the incorporation of kindergartens into the public primary school sector. This situation is similar to the initial American involvement of kindergartens into the public school sector. Within Western Australia anecdotal comments from early childhood teachers and specialists have not indicated a push towards early academics in preprimary centres, but rather a reluctance of principals to undertake educational leadership in this area.

2.2.3 Differences between early childhood education and primary education.

Within early childhood education writers such as Elkind (1988), Fishhaut & Pastor (1977), Hitz & Wright (1988), and Seefeldt (1988), Tayler (1992) and Thurman (1970) outlined significant differences between kindergarten/preprimary and primary/elementary education which need to be understood by educational leaders.¹ Thurman (1970) described the uneasiness felt by a principal when entering a kindergarten class:

There are no reading groups; there seems to be continuous activity; all the children are not doing the same thing at the same time; and the teacher seemingly does little talking and even less in the way of visible teaching" (p. 205).

Elkind (1988) outlined the differences which exist between early childhood education and education in the upper levels of schooling:

Early childhood education has its own curriculum, its own programs of teacher training, its own method of evaluation of classroom management. These overlap curriculum, teacher training, evaluation and classroom management at upper levels of schooling, but they are far from being identical. (p. 27)

Fishhaut & Pastor (1977) argued the presence of differences between preprimary and primary education by comparing a preschool teacher with a fourth grade teacher. They state:

The only commonality is the field of education; the common factors are the 'working with people' factors. The differences in curriculum, classroom objectives, teaching methods and styles are extreme. (p. 43)

1. In the U.S.A. and Australia varying terminology is used in reference to different levels of education. Kindergarten corresponds with preprimary and elementary education corresponds with primary education.

Several studies undertaken by educationists have outlined significant differences between both fields. Hitz & Wright (1988) reported that respondents of their survey indicated: "Teaching kindergarten is sufficiently different from elementary instruction to warrant specialized training" (p. 29). Seefeldt (1988) further reported "the field of early childhood, however, maintains that teaching children under the age of 8 requires different skills and understanding than those required for teaching older children" (p. 248). Seefeldt (1988) focused on a study undertaken by Johnston:

One study demonstrated that the kinds of problems that early childhood teachers face, and thus the skills required of them, are different from those needed by teachers in K-12 schools. (p. 248)

These problems and skills, namely to do with the child, subject matter content, the need to work with and supervise staff such as assistant teachers, aides, volunteers, relating to directors, advisory boards, community associations, and extensive involvement with each child's family are what educational leaders should address if they are to assist teachers with in the normal running of a preprimary centre.

One essential difference between primary education and early childhood education is the emphasis and importance placed on play as a vehicle for learning (Chazan, Laing & Harper, 1987; Day, 1980; N.A.E.Y.C., 1987). Early childhood educators believe that a child must experience first hand and organise information through their own view of their surroundings. With the application of trial and error the child begins to develop strategies and problem solving skills to deal effectively with the environment. As a result the child literally 'learns how to learn'.

A greater emphasis in the preprimary curriculum is placed on "play" as a vehicle for learning as compared to primary education. Chazan, Laing & Harper (1987) reported:

Play, far from being a medium of learning, is seen as something that actively interferes with learning and is relegated to the edges of the school day to be indulged in when work is completed. (p. 54)

Tayler (1992) outlined further differences between preschool and primary education. Children in preschools were given unlimited choice of both indoor and outdoor activities with adult involvement taking a supervisory role. In year one classes the schedule usually involved whole class topics which were not selected by the children but undertaken by the whole class. Unlike the primary years the adult-child ratio in preschool was far better than that in the primary school with primary teachers mainly teaching alone. Tayler (1992) stated how programming within preschool reflected developmental goals (physical, creative, socio-emotional and cognitive) unlike primary which focused mainly on cognitive development with less emphasis on personal and social aspects.

Tayler (1992) argued "for any conflict in approach at preschool and early primary to be remedied principals who are knowledgeable about, and sensitive to, the needs of young children are critical" (p. 140).

Principals need to be provided with the means by which they can develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the differences between preprimary and primary education.

2.3 Educational Background, Experience And Perceived Needs Of Principals In Charge Of Preprimary Centres.

Educational writers within the United States of America have highlighted concerns regarding the theoretical and practical background of principals in charge of early childhood centres. These concerns have emerged as a result of government

intervention and the incorporation of kindergartens within primary school. Out of six studies located within the literature no studies were found which indicated principals in charge of kindergarten/preschool/elementary or preprimary centres, had a theoretical and practical background in this field. Studies showing principals' lack of knowledge or practical teaching experience in this field were those undertaken by Bell (1980), Bryant, Clifford, & Peisner (1989), Campbell (1987), Ferratier (1985), Goodrich (1981), Norton & Abramowitz (1981).

Campbell (1987) reported that, "several studies of principal's effectiveness arrived at the unsurprising conclusion that to be effective in administering programs, the principal needs to have acquired both knowledge about and experience with the area of program to be administered" (p. 91). These views were supported by several writers (Caldwell, 1973; Goodlad, 1976 cited in Campbell, 1987; Shane, 1971; and Thurman, 1970).

Campbell (1987) found "little in the past academic preparation or experience of most elementary school principals has prepared them for the challenges inherent in the incorporation of a quality kindergarten into an existing school program" (p. 91). Although some states have attempted to meet principals' needs through regular inservice training Campbell (1987) stated: "However, a search of the professional literature has yielded very little systematic effort to determine the areas in which principals themselves identified their needs concerning implimentation (sic) of early childhood education" (p. 91).

This study indicated that when principals were asked to record their level of teaching experience in pre-first grade, 26% of principals said "None", 5% of principals indicated one to four years, 1% of principals stated five to ten years, 1%

of principals responded over ten years and 67% of principals selected not to respond.

Results of the study showed:

A significant ($\sigma=.05$) number of these principals: have never taught kindergarten or primary classes but have extensive elementary administrative experience, prefer inservice, conferences and college courses as learning methods; prefer college and local system E.C.E. specialists but not professional association specialists as teachers; and indicate 17 areas of needed knowledge clustered around Developmental Needs of Young Children, Early Childhood Education, Curriculum and Instruction Needs; and the Principal's Management Responsibilities and Parent School Relations. (p.91)

Campbell (1987) found the first five topics rated "highest" by approximately three-quarters of respondents were planning the E.C.E. curriculum (80%), developmental needs & learning styles of young children (78%), language development of young children (77%), purpose and relationship of kindergarten to total elementary school (74%), principal's supervisory responsibilities (73%). Areas 1, 2, 4 and 5 are those identified as concerns by several writers within the literature and by E.C.E. specialists.

Bryant et al (1989) conducted a study and circulated a questionnaire which obtained information directly from principals about their knowledge, attitudes, and philosophies toward kindergarten. The researchers reported: "Most of the principals have taught upper elementary (56.4%) and/or secondary grades (71.6%) while many fewer have taught pre-primary and primary grade levels (3.7% - 24.3%)" (p. 77). The study undertaken by Bryant et al (1989) also showed that less than one percent of principals held certificates which were "pre-K-4" (from another state) while 20.6% of principals held certificates "K-4 Early Childhood".

Recommendations from the study included the provision of materials to each school outlining developmentally appropriate practices (DAP), the provision of training for principals in identifying and implementing DAP, and the provision of training for kindergarten teachers in implementing DAP. In addition the researchers recommended the training of teacher assistants, the establishment of exemplary teacher positions in every district for guidance, and as a motivation for improvement, provision of resource people knowledgeable about DAP.

Within Illinois in 1983 a task force of State Board of Education staff was responsible for researching the attitudes, experience and education of Illinois elementary principals concerning E.C.E. One of the reasons why Ferratier surveyed principals was that Section 10-21.4a of the "School Code of Illinois" specified: "The principal shall assume administrative responsibilities and instructional leadership,...for the planning, operation and evaluation of the educational program of the area to which he is assigned" (p. 2). The results of the study conducted by Ferratier (1985) showed that out of 3,492 principals surveyed, 13% reported teaching experience at the preprimary level. Ferratier (1985) stated "virtually one-third (33.5%) of all the principals indicated they had completed a formal course on the development of young children (i.e., children under age 8) within the past 10 years" (p. 6). Results of the study showed a 'typical' principal did not have teaching experience below fourth grade level; was unlikely to have undertaken formal coursework in this area; may have attended one or more workshops and, if no formal course work or attendance of a workshop had occurred, it was unlikely any interest would be expressed to do so.

Ferratier (1985) concluded:

If the provision of early childhood education programming in the public schools is to be expanded and improved, and if principals are to play an educational leadership role in the process, there is a need

for inservice training in early childhood education on a rather large scale for principals. (p. 26)

Ferratier (1985) warned "in either case, principals are unlikely to assume leadership in this area unless they are strongly convinced of the efficacy and practical feasibility of such programs" (p. 26).

A study conducted by Goodrich (1981) focused on the perceptions of elementary principals and kindergarten teachers on selected issues in kindergarten education so as to enhance "a cooperative and supportive relationship between the two groups" (p. v). The study identified the "typical" principal had seven years experience teaching in an elementary school. Corr (1980, cited by Goodrich 1981) stated "the majority of elementary principals' teaching experiences were limited to the upper elementary grades" (p. 29).

Goodrich (1981) reported principals felt the kindergarten curriculum was more cognitive-oriented unlike teachers who stated a whole-child orientation. Principals perceived their leadership role as being organisational and administrative unlike teachers who perceived it as support and involvement in the program. Principals reported the provision of training and preparation given to them had been inadequate and that there was a scarcity of professional literature on issues such as the role of the principal in regard to kindergarten programs. Recommendations made by Goodrich (1981) were that institutions who train principals "examine the type of preparation offered by their programs in training elementary principals to deal with the kindergarten as a part of the elementary school" (p. 56).

A further study undertaken by Norton & Abramowitz (1981) supported findings by other researchers on the significance of administrator's preparation and training when administering early childhood centres. The major thrust of the study focused

on problems faced by administrators and identified these concerns: insufficient time for staff supervision, evaluation and development, helping teachers plan quality programs, pressure by parents to teach 3 and 4 years olds how to read. The results of the study showed a need for courses, seminars and workshops in administration, staff development, staff supervision, curriculum development planning so that quality programs resulted, keeping up with new research and developments in early childhood. Norton & Abramowitz (1981) stated, "the findings of this study have demonstrated the need for comprehensive administrative training in order to ensure quality early childhood programming in the next decade" (p. 7).

A study undertaken by Bell (1980) identified a lack of awareness by administrators of the significance of preschool education (Anderson, 1971 and Deutsch, 1974, cited by Bell, 1980). Hymes 1976 (cited by Bell, 1980, p. 14) reported "that very few have taken courses on the education of children under six and consequently they feel unqualified to venture into programs in this area."

A number of early childhood programs exist which range from programs that insist that children learn to read before the first grade to programs based on child development. Porter, 1978 (cited by Bell, 1980, p. 24) stated, "the differing philosophies among the teaching staff at the Galveston Texas Early Childhood Centre has caused a great amount of friction, both in curriculum planning and in teaching strategies." Bryk's (1974, cited by Bell, 1980, p. 24) review of the Brookline, Massachusetts Early Education Project "indicates that this lack of agreement about philosophical issues was a major problem in planning for the curriculum." As leader of the school the principal's role is to lead, monitor and manage the curriculum, having worked with staff to forge an agreed philosophy for the program.

The need for continuity between early childhood centres and the primary school was raised as an issue within the literature by Caldwell, 1970 (cited by Bell, 1980, p. 26) who stated "the concern for continuity is one of the strong arguments for including early childhood centres in public schools, but this continuity has not occurred in the 34 years that California has had early childhood centres in their public schools." Continuity is important in linking curriculum content, methodology, teaching styles and evaluations within the school. Continuity links each part of the school together to make it workable and to achieve a high level of cohesiveness between staff members.

A further problem facing schools was finding an administrator trained both in administrative skills and knowledgeable in the field of early childhood. This has been a major problem in Galveston, Texas School District (Porter, 1978 cited by Bell, 1980). Bell (1980) found "securing administrators who are trained in administrative skills and early childhood education was rated with highest importance by the child development specialists" (p. vi). Bell (1980) stated, "the child development specialist group perceived problems related to instruction more important than did either of the other two groups" (p. 125). Bell found courses in early childhood education were taken because of an interest as the courses were not part of the compulsory curriculum for administrators. Demographic data for chief school administrators college hours in early childhood education showed "the larger group (78.9%) had from zero to six hours. The smaller group (21.3%) had seven hours and over" (p. 52).

Bell (1980) concluded that administrators need at least seven or more hours in early childhood education to fulfil their role; problems in instruction may be fewer if training in early childhood education was provided for key players; certification requirements for administrators of early childhood programs be established.

Colleges and universities should participate in structuring these; establishing curriculum for the instructional program.

Within the literature several principals have raised concerns and dilemmas regarding the inclusion of early childhood education within public schools. Rowley (1991) is a former elementary school principal who in 1985 was faced with the incorporation of kindergarten within his elementary school. He stated "my foremost initial problem was my lack of knowledge about early childhood education." (p. 29) Thurman (1970) acknowledged this issue when he stated: "Indeed he can and should admit, with no fear of damaging his image that he is no expert in the field" (p. 205). Very few principals had attended courses specifically for the early childhood years and as a result felt unqualified to give assistance to teachers. In a study undertaken by Anselmo, 1975 (cited by Bell, 1980, p. 15) "Elementary school principals who had fewer than ten years experience as principals were more knowledgeable in the area of early childhood programs than were their more experienced counterparts." Bell (1980) further stated "this may be partially explained by the added emphasis on the early childhood field in colleges and universities within the past decade" (p. 15).

Rowley (1991) reported that after combating a lack of knowledge about early childhood education he is a staunch advocate of its inclusion in every school. Rowley identifies a problem facing early childhood education which he believes must be resolved, namely the debate over what form early childhood education should take in a public school. He outlined the competing, contradictory philosophies on how young children learn best, which need to be resolved if coherency is to be the case in schools. These philosophies in turn advocate an academic curriculum or what is commonly referred to as developmentally appropriate curriculum. The greatest risk in the inclusion of early childhood education within the school is the temptation to begin formal schooling too early.

(Rowley, 1991). Rowley stated "in the long run, the pedagogy of the model early childhood program may affect the very structure of elementary education. Many school districts throughout the nation have already organized schools in K-1, K-2, and K-3 configurations" (p. 31).

The willingness and acceptance of principals and administrators to receive professional development assistance when fulfilling their roles is another important issue (Chapman, 1987; Johnson & Snyder, 1986). A study undertaken by Chapman (1987) within Australia showed that principals acknowledged the need for professional development which stemmed from administrative and educational needs necessary for leadership. Johnson & Snyder (1986) outlined that principals within their study found "knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership are either fragmented and piecemeal or lacking altogether in inservice training programs" (p. 246). However, Goodrich (1981) focused on another issue - that of principal/teacher relations in the kindergarten sector. "A great deal of literature exists on the topic of teacher-principal relations, but there is a scarcity of material on the topic of teacher-principal relations as it pertains to the kindergarten teacher and the elementary principal" (p. 2). Goodrich expressed concern that there was a scarcity in the professional literature which dealt with kindergarten programs in relation to the role of principals. Sources of information are vital if principals are to learn about early childhood education. A study undertaken by Orlich, Ruff & Hansen (1976) found "publishers were still the single most frequently mentioned 'best source' of information for principals who responded to the survey" (p. 620).

The U.S.A. literature revealed several studies which clearly reflect a lack of understanding by principals of early childhood education with a subsequent trend towards academically orientated programs within the kindergarten field. A search of the literature has failed to locate studies within Western Australia which examine

the educational background experience and perceived needs of principals in charge of preprimary centres.

2.4 Summary of Chapter 2

In Western Australian government primary schools the Education Department delegates leadership responsibility for administration, management and education to the principal. As school's re-organise and greater powers and areas of responsibility are handed to principals there is a need to continue reviewing these changes and ensuring appropriate training and guidance be given to people affected by that re-organisation. Directions to principals outlining the nature and extent of their leadership role needs to be clearly outlined and well-documented in respect to preprimary education. If mandating preprimary training for principals is not seen as an option then the provision of professional development assistance to principals is important when dealing with the implementation of new areas within schools or the re-organisation of existing areas. Although preprimary education is not a compulsory unit of schooling in Western Australia it still attracts very high enrolment (over 95%). With the push towards efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and excellence within education public attention is focused on the principal.

When working in the field of E.C.E. principals are often faced with a diversity of opinion among experts on the most appropriate education for young children with no one kind of early childhood program earning supremacy over others. As educational leaders of preprimary centres principals require a knowledge of the various early childhood theories, philosophies and approaches which may be selected by their preprimary teachers, so principals can provide guidance and assistance at this level. In particular consideration of the differences between early

childhood and primary education is necessary so that coherent practices can be fostered and problems of discontinuity across these areas addressed.

According to several educationists certain dilemmas have emerged in the U.S.A. such as "miseducation" in which children are presented with academic programs in preference to developmental programs. In the past early childhood programs have been developmentally based and the swing towards early academics has seen disagreement amongst many educational writers. Several educationists blamed the emergence of academic orientated programs on politicians, administrators, principals and teachers who lacked knowledge of the early childhood field and theories on how young children learn.

A search of the literature in Western Australia failed to locate studies which examined the perceptions of principals as to how adequately they performed a leadership role in administration, management and education at the preprimary level.

CHAPTER THREE. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines and describes the conceptual framework, purpose, design, procedure of the pilot and main studies implemented within this research program. Details are given of the subjects who participated, and the reliability and validity processes adopted.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework is derived from the literature and research and forms the basis of the research questions (See Figure 3.1).

The three main areas considered pertinent to this study are outlined in the Conceptual Framework in Figure 3.1. The first area examines the professional background of the principal in the field of preprimary education. The second area investigates leadership in preprimary education. The third area investigates the kinds of perceptions principals have with respect to their administrative, managerial and educational leadership role in preprimary centres and the professional development needs principals perceive they have in contending with issues which may arise.

With respect to the professional background of the principal, studies undertaken in the U.S.A. identify that a "typical" primary principal has experience in middle to upper primary grades.

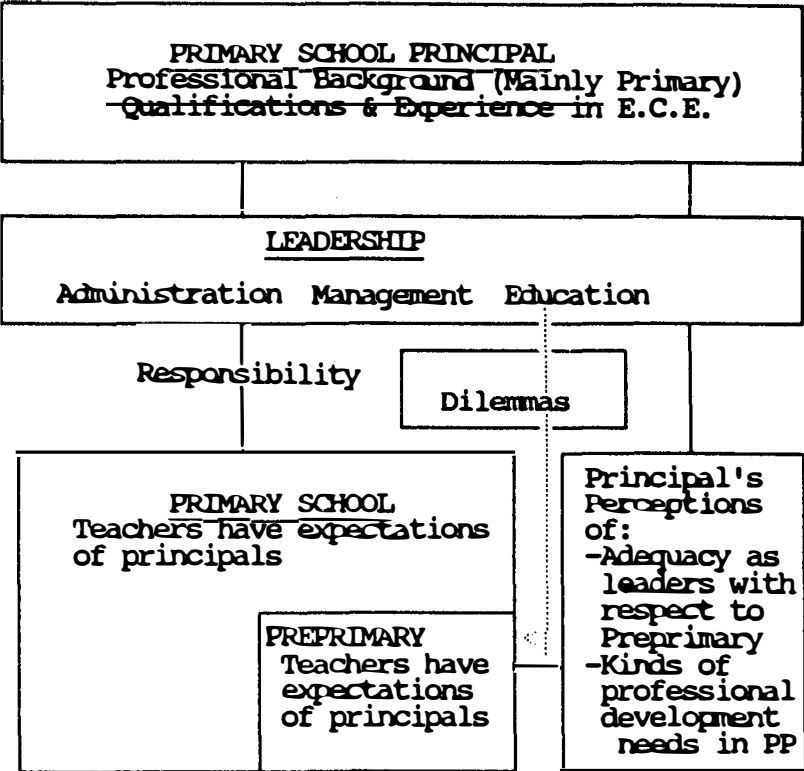


Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework.

The primary school principal as a leader is responsible for the administrative, managerial and educational aspects of the primary school. The incorporation of preprimary centres within the primary school in Western Australia has brought preprimary education under the leadership of the principal. Within the U.S.A. the literature focuses on dilemmas which have arisen over leadership in preprimary education within the school. Issues raised have included the leadership role of the principal and the lack of necessary professional background in preprimary education held by principals. In Western Australia anecdotal comments from preprimary teachers and early childhood specialists highlight apparent inadequacies in the leadership role taken by principals in regard to preprimary. Teachers have expectations of principals and failure to fulfil the roles expected results in potential points of tension between all parties. Literature from the U.S.A. reported how a

lack of knowledge in E.C.E. by administrators, politicians and principals has resulted in the adoption of academically orientated programmes within kindergartens which are contrary to traditional early childhood philosophy. These issues are found to be significant when principals hold responsibility for the appraisal of preprimary teachers' work.

The third area is an important component of this research and revolves around the principal's personal perceptions about their administrative, managerial and educational role in relation to preprimary. Anecdotal comments from specialists in E.C.E. and preprimary teachers have focused on a lack of theoretical and practical background in preprimary education held by principals in charge of preprimary centres. A strong concern is shown by preprimary teachers when appraisal and evaluation of their work is undertaken by principals. A search of the literature has found several studies undertaken overseas which identified a lack of theoretical and practical background in E.C.E. held by principals in charge of kindergartens. Several of these studies investigated the perceptions of principals when faced with certain preprimary issues and showed a willingness by principals to identify areas of concern. A search of the literature has failed to locate studies within Western Australia which focus on principal's perceptions on how well they fulfilled their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre.

3.2 The Design of the Study

The researcher found no instrument specifically designed to measure principal's perceptions on how they fulfilled their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre. Therefore it became necessary to develop an instrument which would address these issues. Because principals have multiple roles, observing them over extended periods to extract those points related to

preprimary was seen as impractical. A questionnaire and interview design was deemed most appropriate to gathering principal's perceptions. Use of a questionnaire designed around pertinent issues from the literature enabled the researcher to cover a greater number of participants than would have been possible with observations. The interviews enabled principals to clarify and elaborate on selected questionnaire findings, whereas observations would determine whether activities listed were reflective of the principals' daily functioning rather than addressing their perceptions on presented issues. The inclusion of early childhood teachers from the schools of the principals in this study enabled comparison of principal's perceptions of their managerial, administrative and educational leadership with teacher's views.

The Pilot Study was designed to identify the degree of responsibility taken by administrators and early childhood teachers in the establishment of policies, philosophy, and programming. The degree of knowledge and experience held by early childhood administrators in the field of E.C.E. was also sought. In this study instruments were updated and interview skills refined. Data from the Pilot Study were collated, and used in the construction of a revised questionnaire and interview schedule for the main study. The main study sought to identify how principals perceived they fulfilled their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary. The study was designed to probe participants' views regarding certain preprimary issues which had emerged from the literature.

3.3 The Pilot Study

3.3.1 Introduction.

The Pilot Study was undertaken to validate instrumentation and trial interview skills and methodology. The Pilot Study permitted the researcher to become familiar with the study and investigate the degree of responsibility taken by an administrator and his/her early childhood teachers in the establishment of policies, the philosophy of the program and the planning implementation and evaluation of the program. The degree of knowledge and experience held by early childhood administrators and their early childhood teachers in the field of E.C.E. was examined so that content for the Main Study could be derived from data from the Pilot Study.

3.3.2 Methodology.

Subjects.

The Pilot Study comprised fifteen administrators (principals) and their fifteen early childhood teachers who were randomly selected and drawn from state schools under the Ministry of Education Western Australia and not from the private school sector. Schools were geographically dispersed and spread across various socio-economic levels. Within this district there were 13 preprimary centres which were not located on the school site and were considered "off-site" centres.

Instrument.

Given the limited information available on the topic, a questionnaire schedule was designed and formulated to gather demographic information about administrators

and to ascertain the degree of responsibility taken by administrators and early childhood teachers in the specified areas.

Questionnaires were sent out to the 30 participants. (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire was structured into three parts. Part A outlined the general background of each participant while Part B described Policy, Philosophy, Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation. Within the category of "Policy", four areas were selected for investigation - Staff, Children, Parental Involvement and Finances. The study acknowledged that a broad range of policies related to Staff, Children, Health, Finance Management, Record Keeping, Parents and Public Relations existed. All of these areas could not be included due to restriction in size of this study. Areas chosen to investigate were those seen as most pertinent to early childhood administration. Part C included questions relating to the educational background of the participants and their perceived needs in E.C.E.

Administrators were asked to complete all three sections of the questionnaire while early childhood teachers were required to complete Part A and Part B. The substance of items contained in the questionnaire was drawn from "Guidelines, Pre-primary, Pre-school Administration" (1989), interviews with Ministry of Education personnel, university lecturers, principals, early childhood teachers and the available literature.

3.3.3 Procedure.

Administrators and early childhood teachers were telephoned and informed of the Pilot Study and permission was sought for their participation. Participants' anonymity was guaranteed. The questionnaires were mailed to the participants who were then asked to complete them and post them back in an enclosed reply paid envelope. The data were collected and analysed. When the participant's response

was not clear and self-explanatory then an interview time was arranged for the purpose of checking responses. In the six instances in which responses needed elaboration or clarification, an interview time was arranged.

3.3.4 Analysis.

Data were analysed and an external audit of the sets of categories was conducted to test for content validity and interrater reliability. A content analysis of the questionnaire had been undertaken prior to implementation. Part A of the questionnaire was analysed, divided into two categories and data was reported in Table Form. Category one reported the responses of administrators and category two the responses of early childhood teachers. Part B of the questionnaire displayed data in the form of tables which highlighted the responses of administrators and early childhood teacher's responses to the degrees of responsibility in stipulated areas. Part C of the questionnaire provided demographic data on administrators and addressed any needs they felt they had in early childhood education. Data reduction took the form of selecting, abstracting and transforming the raw data that appeared in the participants' responses. Meaning was then drawn from the data - noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, propositions. Finally an external audit of the sets of categories was conducted so that there was verification that the researcher's categories made sense of the data and that each incident had been placed in an appropriate category. Particular attention was paid to studying the way participants answered the questions in their current form. The purpose of this was to ensure design of the questionnaire for the main study was clear and unambiguous.

3.3.5 Results.

Data from the Pilot Study showed that principals within this study held limited theoretical and practical training in E.C.E. There was a reluctance by four principals to participate in the study after they were informed of the content of the questionnaire. Of the respondents who were principals one had taught kindergarten, this being in a country town and for a very short time. (Approximately four hours in the year). No principal who responded to the survey held formal degrees in E.C.E. No principal indicated the provision of courses by the Ministry of Education Western Australia. The only provision to principals had been the 1989 Guidelines.

Data pertaining to the degree of responsibility held by administrators and their teachers in the specified areas indicated approximately two-thirds of the time there was a lack of consensus between both parties on who was expected to take responsibility in each area. Subsequent to consideration of the results and process of the pilot study instruments and procedures were refined for the main study which is outlined below.

3.4 The Main Study

3.4.1 Purpose.

The purpose of study two was to answer the research question:

How do principals perceive they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre?

In order to answer this question the study was based around four subsidiary questions.

1. What is the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals, as reported by the principal and the preprimary teacher, in the preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership?
2. What is the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals responsible for preprimary centres?
3. What are principals' perceptions about their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres?
4. What kinds of professional development needs do principals perceive they have in contending with any problems related to preprimary?

3.4.2 Design.

Subjects.

The main study comprised twenty four principals and thirty preprimary teachers within one metropolitan district of the Western Australian Department of Education. The district selected was determined on two grounds. First, selection of this district provided a relatively large population. Second, travel to schools within one district was achievable for the researcher whereas travel to schools spread across widespread districts would not have been possible.

There was a 100% response rate by participants in each form of the questionnaires for the Main Study. This result may be explained by the personal approach taken in the delivery of questionnaires and attempts made by the researcher to deal with considerations of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity.

Six ethical issues outlined by Deschamp & Tognolini (1983) were considered when designing the questionnaire. First, anonymity was promised. Second, participation in the survey had been reported accurately as 24/30 so the reader was informed of the response rate. Third requests were made only for data which were not available elsewhere. Fourth, the questionnaire was given to a colleague to check for bias in its construction. Fifth, the questionnaire was trialled so participants could be informed of the approximate duration of time necessary to complete it. Finally, the results were based solely on the information gathered and a conscious effort was made not to speculate about matters about which there were no data. A colleague was asked to check the results so that the data matched the categories (Interrater reliability). In this way a content analysis of the questionnaire was undertaken prior to implementation.

Instruments.

Questionnaire. (Forms One and Two)

The substance of items contained in the second questionnaire (principal and teacher forms) was drawn from data reported in the Pilot Study. Limited written documentation from the Ministry of Education of Western Australia was available so "Guidelines, Pre-primary, Pre-school Administration" (1989), The Education Circular job descriptions, a review of the literature, interviews with Ministry of Education personnel, university lecturers, principals, early childhood teachers formed the basis for the questionnaire content.

The questionnaires were revised and referred to Heads of Departments and lecturers within the university (See Appendix 2 & 3). The questionnaires were also referred to people within the Ministry of Education Western Australia for their feedback. Staff within another university were also asked for feedback. Colleagues were asked to test the suitability of the questions before the revised questionnaires were piloted on two principals and two preprimary teachers. Modifications were then made to the questionnaires and these changes were once again shown to both university and Ministry of Education staff before full implementation in the metropolitan district. The researcher also implemented a trial in which interview skills were practiced before the commencement of the second study. The Ministry of Education Western Australia was notified and principals and preprimary teachers were telephoned and consent sought for their participation in the study. In accordance with the University Ethics Committee written consent from all participants was gathered. (See Appendix 4).

The questionnaire was structured in four parts. Part A addressed the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals (Research Question 1) as reported by the principal and the preprimary teacher in the preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership. This part comprised 7 questions. Part B comprised 3 questions dealing with principals' perceptions of their leadership role in preprimary centres. This section addressed Research Question 3. Part C dealt with principal's perceptions of own professional development needs in relation to preprimary and was comprised of 6 questions addressing the dimensions of Research Question 4. Part D consisted of four questions regarding background on the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals. Data from this Part were collected in response to Research Question 2. The questionnaire was constructed so that both forced-choice questions and open-ended questions were used.

Interview Schedule.


During the Main Study an interview schedule was developed to help clarify and highlight aspects of the questionnaire data. (See Appendix 5) Unlike the written questionnaire it involved the researcher directly communicating with the participants. Hook (1981) stated: "The value of the 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" (p. 136). An interview was arranged for six principals who were selected by systematic random sampling. Data from the questionnaire responses were analysed and used in formulating and designing the interview questions. These questions further collected data for Research Questions 1, 3 and 4. The questions were designed to probe more deeply into principal's responses, to gain insights into reasoning of principals about reported behaviour and deeper explanations of their administrative, managerial and leadership role.

The researcher maintained focus on the topic in an interview by using the strategies of silent probe, encouragement, immediate elaboration, immediate clarification, retrospective elaboration and retrospective clarification and mutation. An interview provided me with the opportunity to take various points into consideration e.g. the individual characteristics of a person, the way they interacted, non-verbal behavior and physical surroundings. In addition, information was immediate in an interview and one did not need to wait for replies to be mailed in. An interview also allowed me the opportunity to develop empathy with the person. Wilson (1977) stated: "The participant observer cultivates an empathetic understanding with the participant that is nearly impossible with quantitative methods" (p. 25).

3.4.3 Procedure.

The researcher telephoned the schools and spoke to principals and preprimary teachers. Two forms of the questionnaire designed to answer the primary research question and four subsidiary questions were distributed. The first form (Appendix 2) was distributed to 24 principals to identify how principals felt they fulfilled their administrative, managerial and educational role in preprimary centres. The second form (Appendix 3) was distributed to 30 preprimary teachers to gain another perspective regarding who was involved in administrative, managerial and educational issues pertaining to the preprimary year and in so doing to gain data for subsidiary question 1. A reason for the involvement of preprimary teachers was the mismatch of responses between principals and preprimary teachers in the Pilot Study.

An appointment time was made in which the researcher personally delivered the questionnaires and answered any queries. The establishment of a positive rapport between the researcher and participants was considered vital to a study of this type as principals and teachers were being asked to share their thoughts, plans, perceptions and intentions with the researcher. The willingness and honesty of participants was considered vital to the study. Issues of confidentiality were addressed by participants in a signed agreement. Participants were then asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks and return it in a provided stamped addressed envelope.

 The data collection phase occurred across a twelve week period. Two weeks were allowed for the researcher to deliver each questionnaire to each participant. The majority of the questionnaires were then completed within the two week period and returned. Three principals sought an extension of time which stretched this data

collection phase to five weeks. Data were then analysed and compiled and 6 principals were selected by systematic random sampling for the subsequent interview which was completed within a three week period. The length of interviews ranged from 45 - 90 minutes. All principals approached agreed to the interview. The principals were then asked to select whether interviews were to be tape-recorded or notes taken by the researcher.

	PRINCIPALS	PRE-PRIMARY TEACHERS
PART A Res.Q1	QUESTIONNAIRE (Data on nature & extent of involvement of principals in preprimary centres) SELECTED INTERVIEWS	QUESTIONNAIRE (Data on nature & extent of involvement of principals in preprimary centres)
PART B Res.Q3	QUESTIONNAIRE (Data on principal's perceptions about their adequacy as leaders) SELECTED INTERVIEWS	
PART C Res.Q4	QUESTIONNAIRE (Data on kinds of professional development needs principals have) SELECTED INTERVIEWS	
PART D Res.Q2	QUESTIONNAIRE (Data on nature & extent of formal education & experience of ECE held by principals)	

Figure 3.2. Kinds of data & relationship to the research questions.

One principal showed preference for tape-recorded notes and five principals selected notes taken by the researcher during the interview. All notes were read back to the participant at the time of the interview to ensure each response had been recorded accurately.

Figure 3.2 shows the types of data which were collected and their relevance to the research questions. As illustrated in Figure 3.2 preprimary teachers were only involved in the collection of data for Research Question 1.

3.4.4 Analysis.

The questionnaires and selected interviews were analysed by the researcher. A content analysis of the questionnaires had been undertaken within the Pilot Study and was again undertaken with the revised questionnaire. An external audit of the data was conducted by a colleague to test for content validity and interrater reliability.

Part A of the questionnaire was displayed in the form of graphs which categorize separately the responses of both principals and preprimary teachers. Question 6 of Part A had been analysed by sifting through categories and data themes identified by the participants. Part B of the questionnaire was displayed in the form of graphs which showed the responses of principals to the questions. Part C of the questionnaire was partly displayed in the form of graphs and Questions 3 and 4 were analysed by sifting through categories and data themes identified by participants. Part D of the questionnaire was analysed by the researcher and use made of frequency tables in displaying the results. The questionnaires and interviews were analysed by what Miles & Huberman (1984) refer to as data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing verification.

Data reduction took the form of selecting, abstracting and transforming the raw data that appeared in the participants' responses. Data reduction had already been undertaken within this study by what Miles & Huberman (1984) term "anticipatory data reduction". This occurred in the formulation of the conceptual framework, research questions and the choice of instrumentation to be used in the study. Within this study collection and analysis were intertwined. As the person was being interviewed and the researcher probed and asks for clarification, this process lead to analysis of what was taken down. In order to sift through the data, themes or categories were derived. The interview data were grouped according to responses of each principal and preprimary teacher.

The second part of data analysis was Data Display in which information was organized using frequency tables and graphs. Principal's responses were tabled separately from those of teachers and then compared so that the organized assembly of information permitted conclusion-drawing and action taking.

The third stream of analysis activity involved drawing meaning from displayed, reduced data - noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, propositions. Finally an external audit of the sets of categories was conducted so that there was verification that the researcher's categories made sense of the data and that each incident had been placed in an appropriate category.

3.5 Reliability & Validity.

The researcher adopted a number of measures to increase 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 subsequent to field testing in which the questionnaire and

interview schedule were submitted to numerous people whose suggestions were then incorporated into the revised schedules. Pilot interviews and questionnaires were conducted with university staff, Education Department representatives, principals and teachers to test the appropriateness of the questions and the way the data were to be recorded. Second, principals' and teachers' responses were checked and compared within each school as a check of concurrence. The way in which this was achieved was that all principals' responses were compared to all the responses of preprimary teachers. After this was undertaken the responses of each principal and their respective preprimary teacher/s were compared so that data were compiled on involvement of principals and teachers within their own school setting. Third, the researcher was careful to maintain framing interview questions and relied on a previously calculated interview schedule. Fourth, principals and teachers were chosen having given consideration to the fact that they were present at the school for the duration of the study.

The researcher adopted a number of measures to increase reliability. First, provision had been made for audio-recording of interview data although this eventuated with only one interview. For those participants who selected not to be taped each response was read back to each participant to check accuracy of the recording. Second, the researcher tested the categories derived from notes and tape-recordings with a colleague. This ensured interrater reliability as the rater was asked to place the data into categories which were compared to those of the researcher. The interrater reliability was 100% so that the results did not have to be further checked for consistency. Third, the researcher minimized bias in the interpretation of the data by confirming with principals the accuracy of summaries. Fourth, every strategy used to collect data was described and outlined in detail. The researcher in this study was unfamiliar to the interviewees thus addressing researcher status position, important in ensuring external reliability. Fifth, to

further ensure reliability of data the setting in which the interviews were conducted was stated. According to Wilson (1977) "The research must be conducted in settings similar to those that the researchers hope to generalize about, where those same forces that will one day act are not interrupted" (p. 247). In order to generalize, this study recognizes that generalizability will rest with the reader. The description of data and the process was detailed and rich and assumptions stated. Quotes of primary data were used so that the reader has a detailed description describing the research and participants, and views of other people which allows the reader to generalize the extent to which the findings apply to their situation. LeCompte & Goetz (1982) stated "Replicability is impossible without precise identification and thorough description of the strategies used to collect data" (p. 40).

3.6 Limitations of the Study.

Certain limitations applied to the study. The first limitation concerns the issue of sample size. Questionnaire data in the main study were collected from one metropolitan government district within Western Australia and interviews were undertaken with six principals within this same district. The population was Western Australian and the study is framed within a Western Australian context, one metropolitan district. The results may have some limited generalizability for principals and preprimary teachers in other Western Australian areas although an attempt was made to address this issue in the construction of an interview question which asked principals if the questionnaire was taken to another district if the pattern of results would be similar. All principals concurred the results should be similar for the reasons that results are not affected by district as the issues don't change with area and Ministry policy and guidelines are the same for all principals.

The second limitation addressed honesty of participants to report their actual perceptions within the study. Honesty cannot be guaranteed as participants may be slanting their views to comply with what they understand is Education Department policy or informing the interviewer only of those parts of their opinion they wish to discuss. An attempt was made to address this issue within the study by asking both principals and their preprimary teachers to respond to Part A of the questionnaire and by analysing and comparing their responses both as two whole groups and then by individual schools.

Thirdly the results will apply to the period of time in which this study was undertaken. A repetition of this study at a later date may produce different results if issues such as those raised in the data have been addressed by the Education Department.

The fourth limitation addresses the scope of the Questionnaire as not all areas could be focused upon within the time restraints of this thesis. Principals have administrative, managerial and educational leadership roles outside of the preprimary centre context. In some schools other areas (e.g. upper primary) may have needed special additional attention. This would not become clear within the bounds of this Study.

The fifth issue addressed the principals' willingness to divulge information to the researcher. The follow-up interviews were used to present data analysed from questionnaire responses and to seek principals' reactions and feelings about the findings and the degree to which these findings were seen as typical. This process allowed for a frankness from the principal because he or she was able to set aside personal behaviours and comment on the way "principals" see their work with respect to preprimary.

3.7 Summary of Chapter 3

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

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Questionnaire Data

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected from the questionnaire and interview schedule. The questionnaire data represent responses from 24 principals and 30 preprimary teachers within the one metropolitan district of the Education Department of Western Australia. In order to analyse the data from Part A of the questionnaire and give equal emphasis to teacher and principal responses those schools which had two or three preprimary teachers per principal, were treated carefully to ensure that the sum response of the teachers was matched against the school. The treatment recognised that one principal with one preprimary centre as opposed to one principal with three preprimary centres would have different proportions of time available for each preprimary class. In the case where two schools equally shared one preprimary centre which employed two teachers, one preprimary teacher's response was linked to each principal. It should be noted that all principals also had responsibility for Years 1 - 7 of the school so interpretation of data must be made with this in mind.

Within this chapter the questionnaire findings are presented in four parts, which are identical to the format used in the Questionnaire. Each section is linked directly to the research questions.

PART A : This part provides data which relates to Research Question 1. *What is the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals, as reported by the principals and the preprimary teacher, in the*

preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership? Data from Part A is presented in 4.1 below.

PART B : This part provides data which relates to Research Question 3. *What are principals' perceptions about their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres?* Data from Part B is presented in 4.2 below.

PART C : This part provides data which relates to Research Question 4. *What kinds of professional development needs do principals perceive they have in contending with any problems related to preprimary?* Data from Part C is presented in 4.3 below.

PART D : This part provides data which relates to Research Question 2. *What is the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals responsible for preprimary centres?* Data from Part D is presented in 4.4 below.

Within this chapter the results of the questionnaire are presented separately, followed by six case interviews representing responses from the interview schedule.

4.1 Nature & Extent of Principal Involvement

The nature and extent of principal involvement was tracked through seven areas:

1. Administrative and Managerial Issues.
2. Educational Issues.
3. Theoretical and practical background of person undertaking appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teachers.
4. Average number of visits by principals to preprimary centres.
5. The length of stay of these visits.
6. The purpose of these visits.

7. Percentage of time visits are due to administrative/managerial or educational issues.

4.1.1 Administrative & managerial issues.

The responses of both principals and preprimary teachers to issues related to administration and management have been outlined in Figures 4.1 - 4.7 displayed below. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest 2% and participants of the study were permitted to indicate the involvement of more than one person.

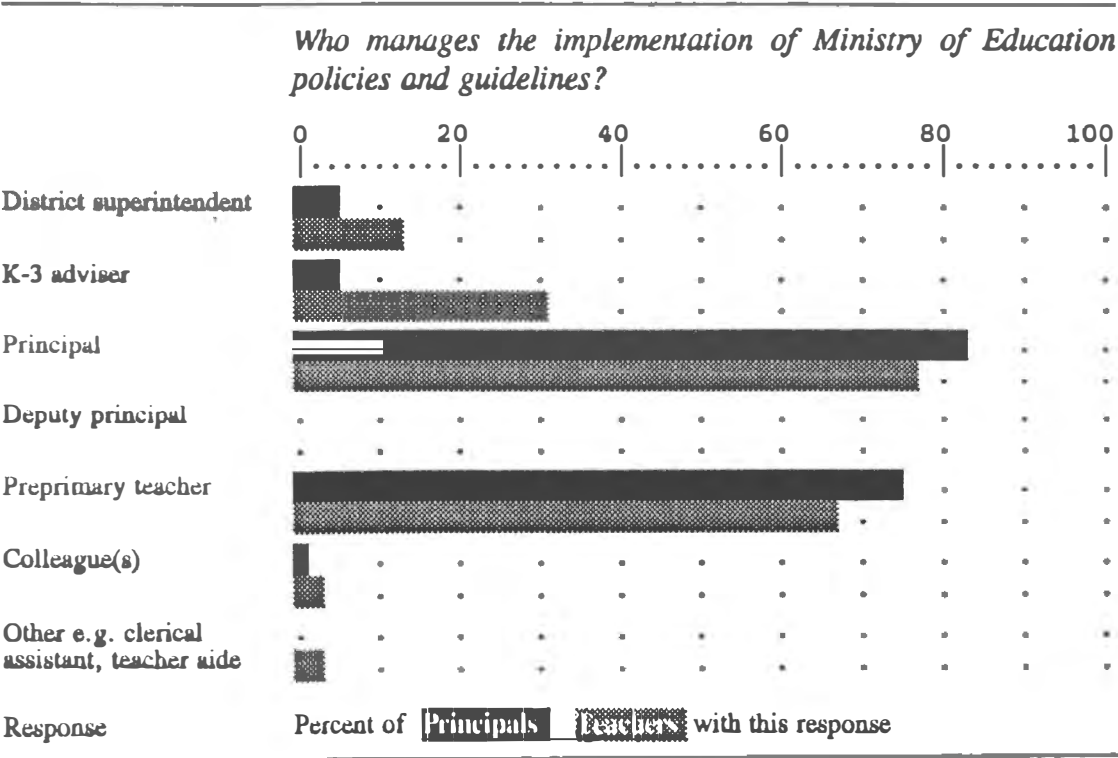


Figure 4.1 Managing the implementation of Ministry policy and guidelines.

The majority of principals (83%) and preprimary teachers (77%) stated the principal managed the implementation of Ministry of Education policies and guidelines. Seventy five percent of principals and 67% of preprimary teachers stated that

preprimary teachers managed this issue. The principals and preprimary teachers were in agreement that the Deputy-principal played no part, with 3% of preprimary teachers stating the involvement of "Other" people such as Senior Assistants. This indicates that the majority of principals and preprimary teachers agreed that management of policies and guidelines was conducted by the principal and the preprimary teachers.

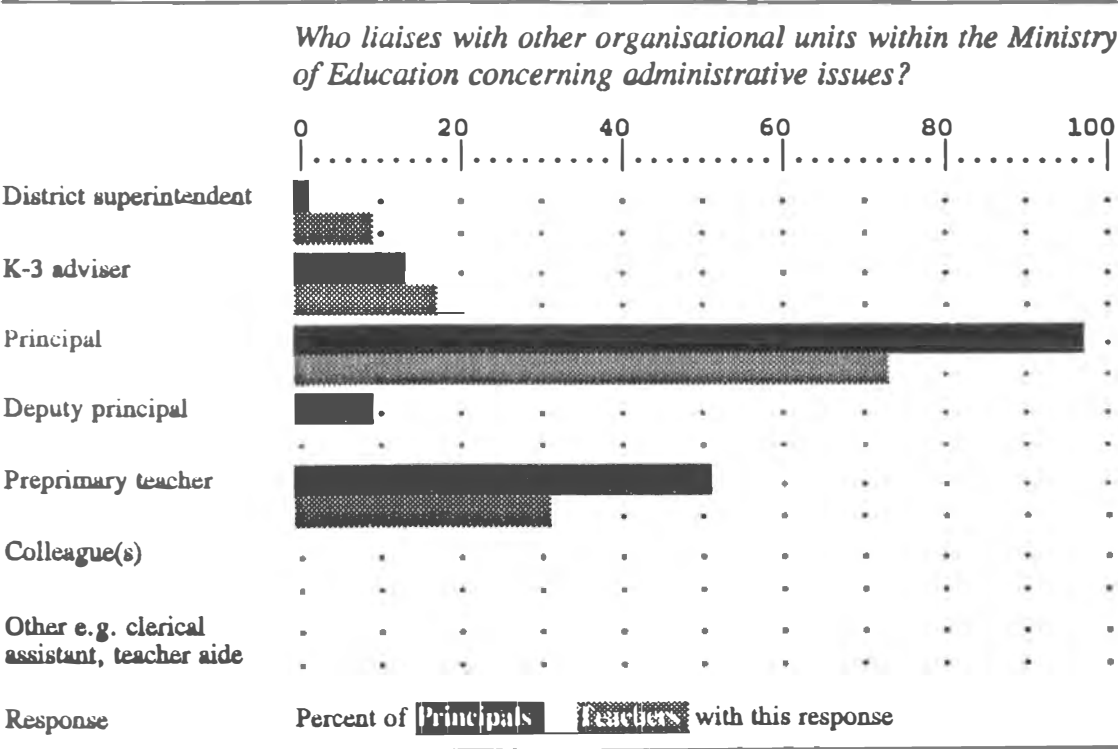


Figure 4.2 Liaising with other organisational units concerning administrative issues.

The majority of principals (96%) and preprimary teachers (73%) reported that the principal liaised with other organisational units within the Ministry of Education concerning administrative issues. Fifty percent of principals and 31% of preprimary teachers stated the preprimary teacher liaised in this issue. Consensus was reached by both principals and preprimary teachers in the areas of "Colleagues" and "Others" where both parties stated there was no involvement by these people.

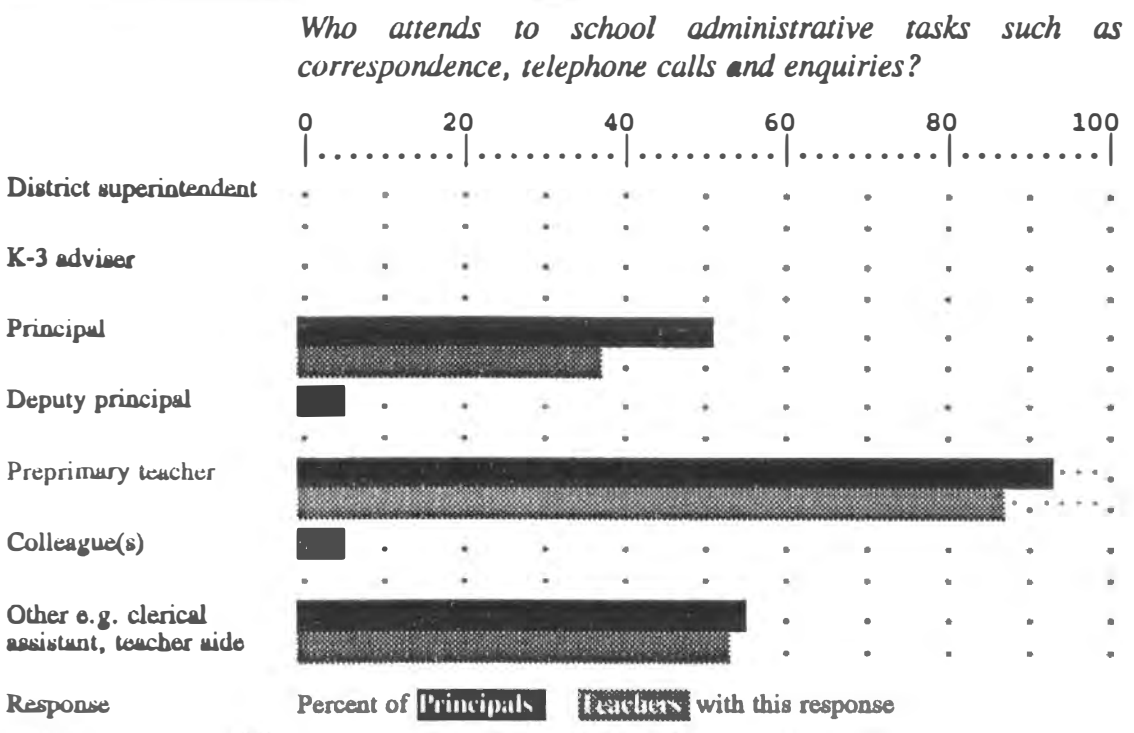


Figure 4.3 Attending to school administrative tasks
(correspondence, telephone calls and enquiries)

The majority of principals (92%) and preprimary teachers (87%) stated the preprimary teacher attended to school administrative tasks such as correspondence, telephone calls and enquiries. Fifty percent of principals and 37% of preprimary teachers responded that principals attended this issue. Fifty four percent of principals and 47% of preprimary teachers stated "Others" were involved. Both principals and preprimary teachers identified others as being the registrar, school officer, clerical assistant and teacher aide. Preprimary teachers also mentioned that the secretary attended to school administrative tasks such as correspondence, telephone calls and enquiries.

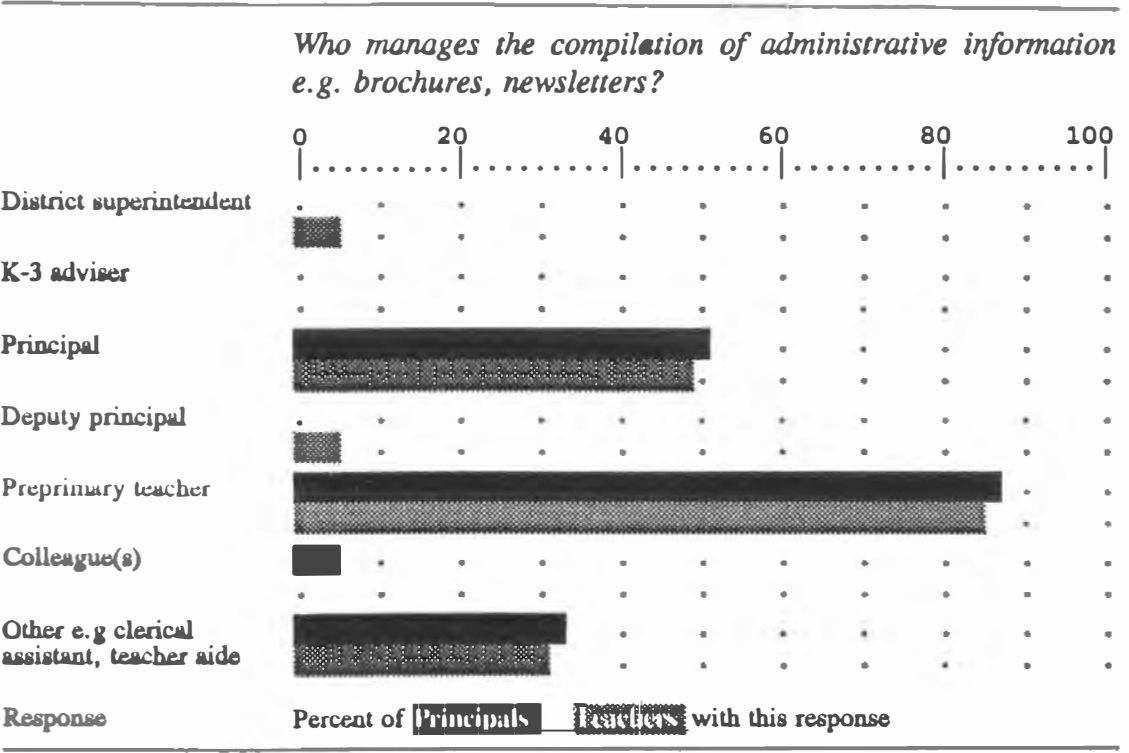


Figure 4.4 Compiling administrative information.

The majority of principals and preprimary teachers reported the teacher as managing the compilation of administrative information with the principals and "Others" also reported as taking this function. Thirty three percent of principals identified "Others" as the registrar, school officer, school assistant, clerical, preprimary committee while thirty one percent of teachers identified "Others" as clerical assistants, registrars, secretary/committee and teacher aide.

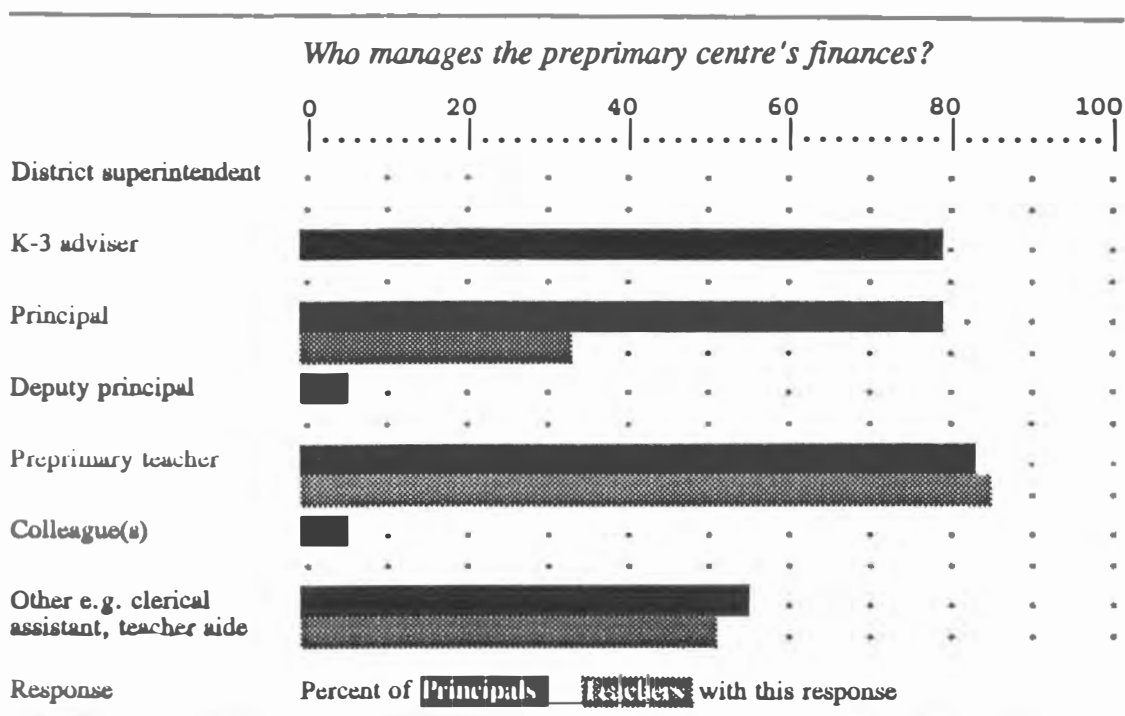


Figure 4.5 Managing preprimary centres finances.

The majority of principals and preprimary teachers reported the teacher as managing the preprimary centre's finances although the principal and others had significant input. Fifty percent of preprimary teachers stated the involvement of "Others" such as clerical assistant, preprimary treasurer, registrar, committee, secretary and the bursar held responsibility. Fifty four percent of principals stated this issue was managed by "Others" such as registrar, school assistant, committee and clerical. There is a striking difference of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers on whether the K-3 adviser managed finances. Seventy eight percent of principals compared to 0% of preprimary teachers stated the K-3 adviser was involved in this area. Seventy eight percent of principals compared to 32% of preprimary teachers stated the principal as managing the preprimary centre's finances.

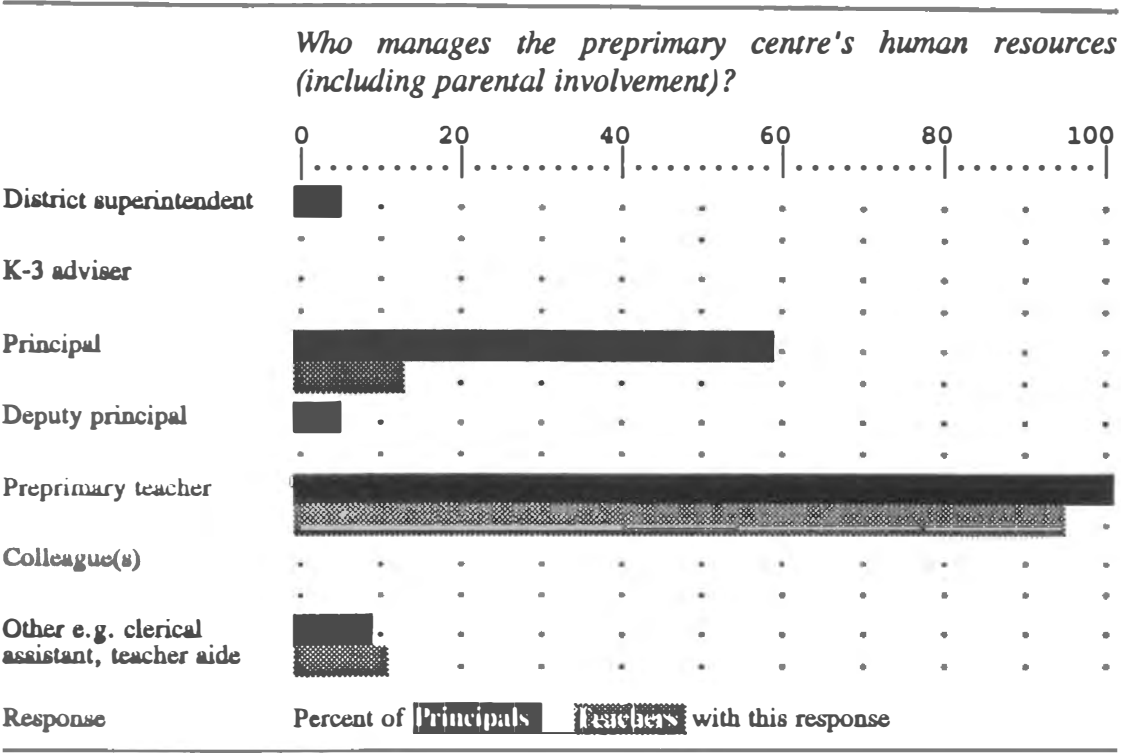


Figure 4.6 Managing preprimary centres human resources (including parental involvement)

All principals and almost all preprimary teachers (94%) stated the preprimary teacher manages the preprimary centre's human resources (including parental involvement). More than half (58%) of principals also indicated their own role in this area whereas very few preprimary teachers (12%) indicated that the principal had a role in this area. Eight percent of principals stated "Others" such as the registrar and 10% of preprimary teachers stated "Others" such as senior assistant and teacher-aide.

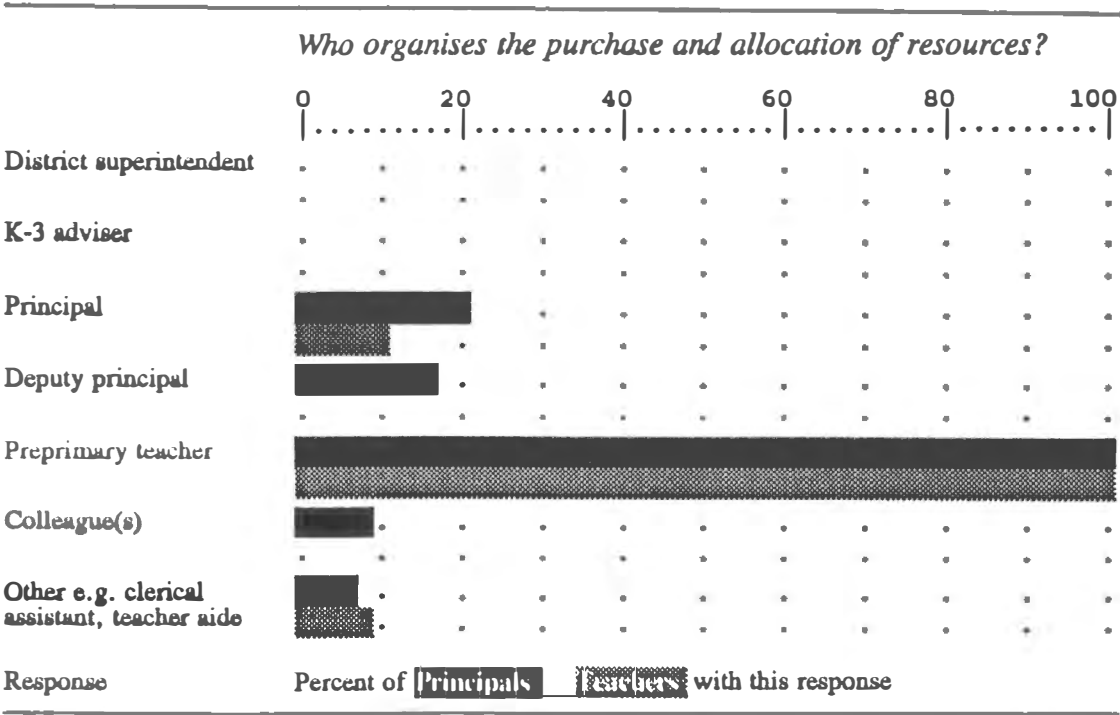


Figure 4.7 Organising the purchase and allocation of resources.

In response to Question 1G, all principals and all preprimary teachers stated the preprimary teacher organised the purchase and allocation of resources. Twenty one percent of principals and 10% of preprimary teachers indicated the principal organised the purchase and allocation of resources. A few principals (7%) indicated "Others" such as the registrar, preprimary committee and registrar aide organised this issue. Similarly a few preprimary teachers (8%) indicated "Others" such as the teacher-aide and secretary.

4.1.2 Educational issues.

In order to determine the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals in educational leadership of centre programs, principals and preprimary teachers were asked to respond to ten preprimary educational issues. These responses have been outlined in Figures 8-17. Percentages have been rounded to

the nearest 2% and participants of the study were permitted to indicate the involvement of more than one person per issue, if this was deemed appropriate.

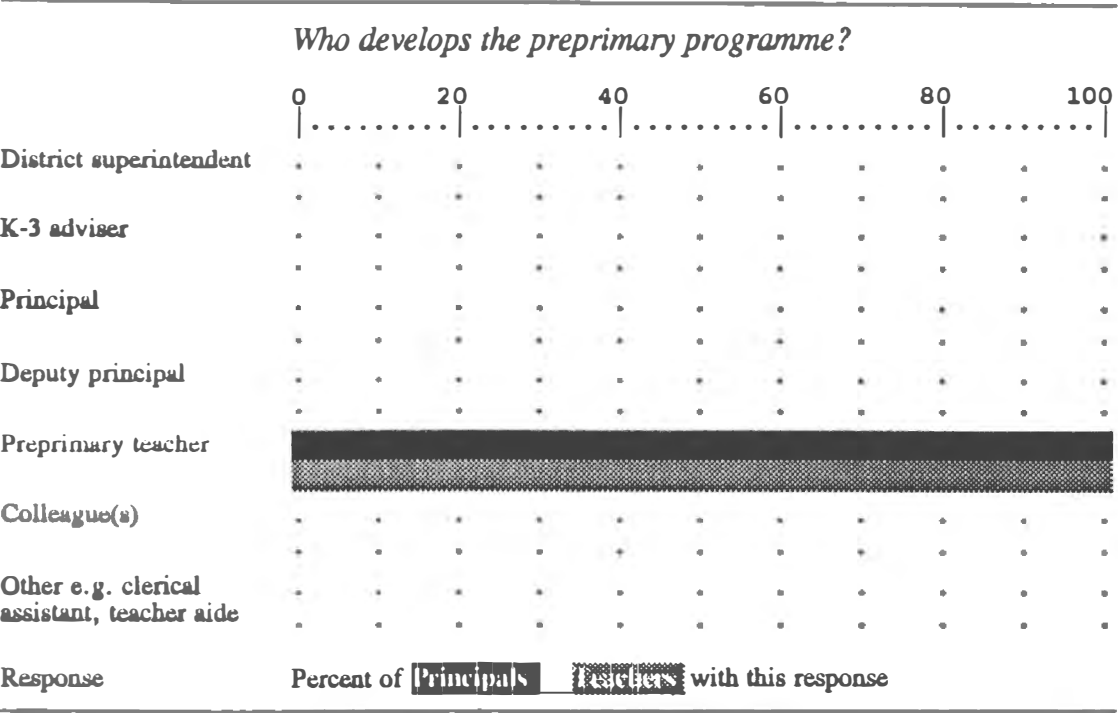


Figure 4.8 Developing the preprimary programme.

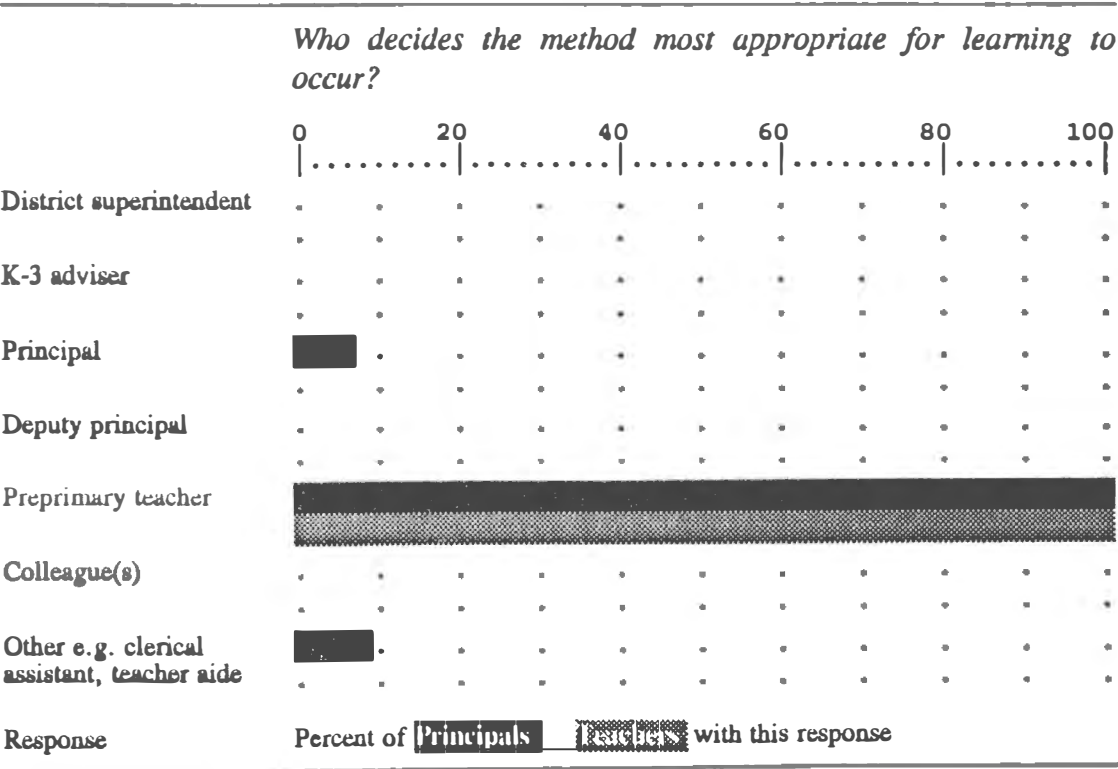


Figure 4.9 Deciding appropriate methods for learning.

All principals and all preprimary teachers were in agreement that the preprimary teacher developed the preprimary program and decided the method most appropriate for learning to occur. A smaller number of principals (8%) stated they also had decided appropriate methods for learning and a few principals (8%) also noted "Others" such as the Committee with the Principal and the School Plan.

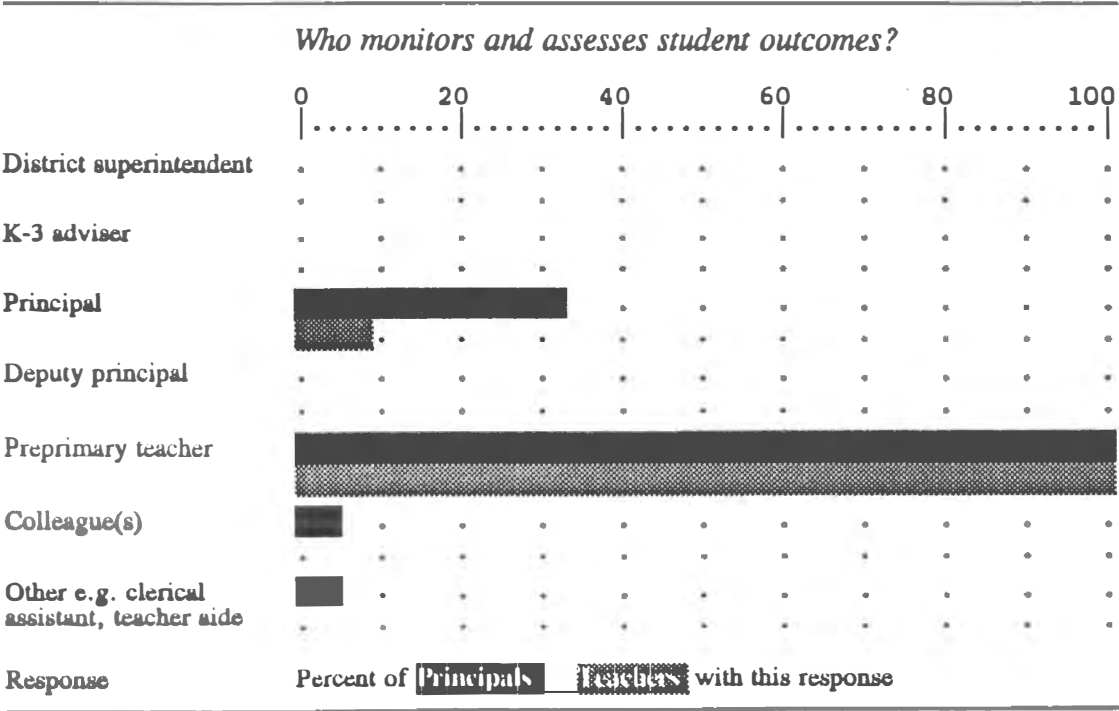


Figure 4.10 Monitoring and assessing student outcomes.

All principals and all preprimary teachers stated the preprimary teacher monitored and assessed student outcomes. In addition one third of the principals compared to a small number of preprimary teachers (8%) stated the principal also monitored and assessed outcomes. A few principals (4%) also identified "Others" as being committee with the principal involved as did some preprimary teachers (7%) who stated "Others" included colleagues and K-3 teachers.

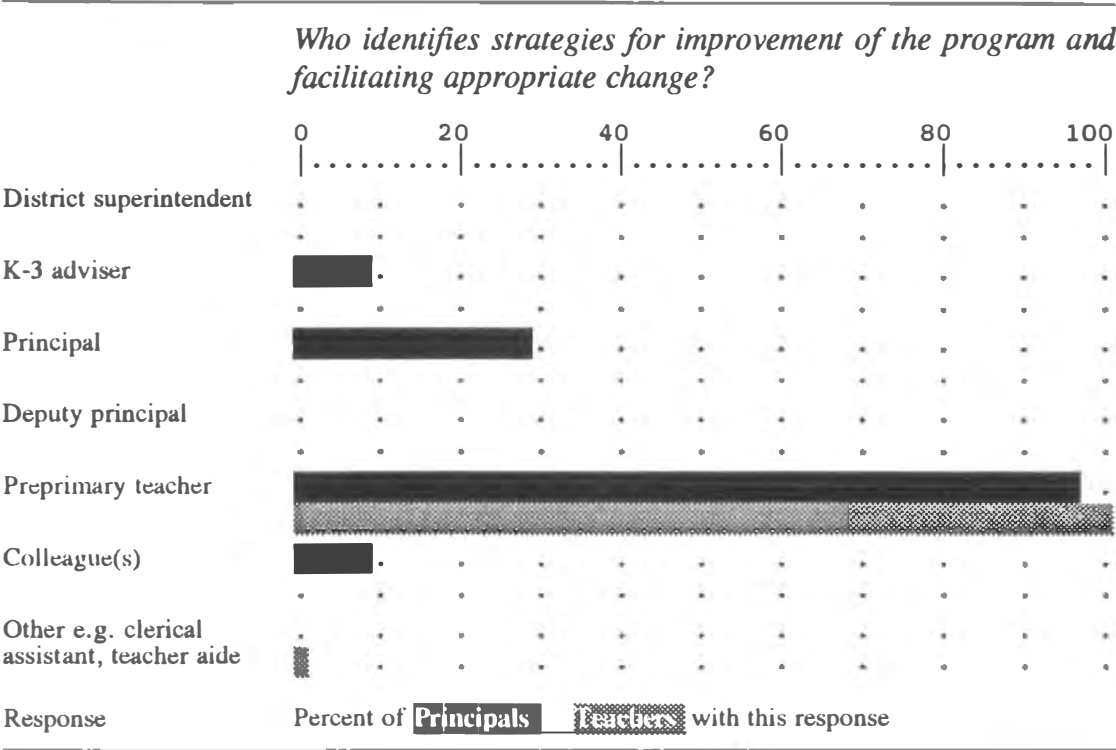


Figure 4.11 Identifying strategies for improvement and facilitating change.

All preprimary teachers and nearly all of the principals (96%) stated the preprimary teacher identified strategies for improvement of the program and facilitated appropriate change. Furthermore 29% of principals stated they also completed this function which was in contrast to the response of preprimary teachers who stated there was no involvement by principals in this matter. No principal stated the involvement of "Others" whereas 3% of preprimary teachers stated "Others" such as teacher-aide.

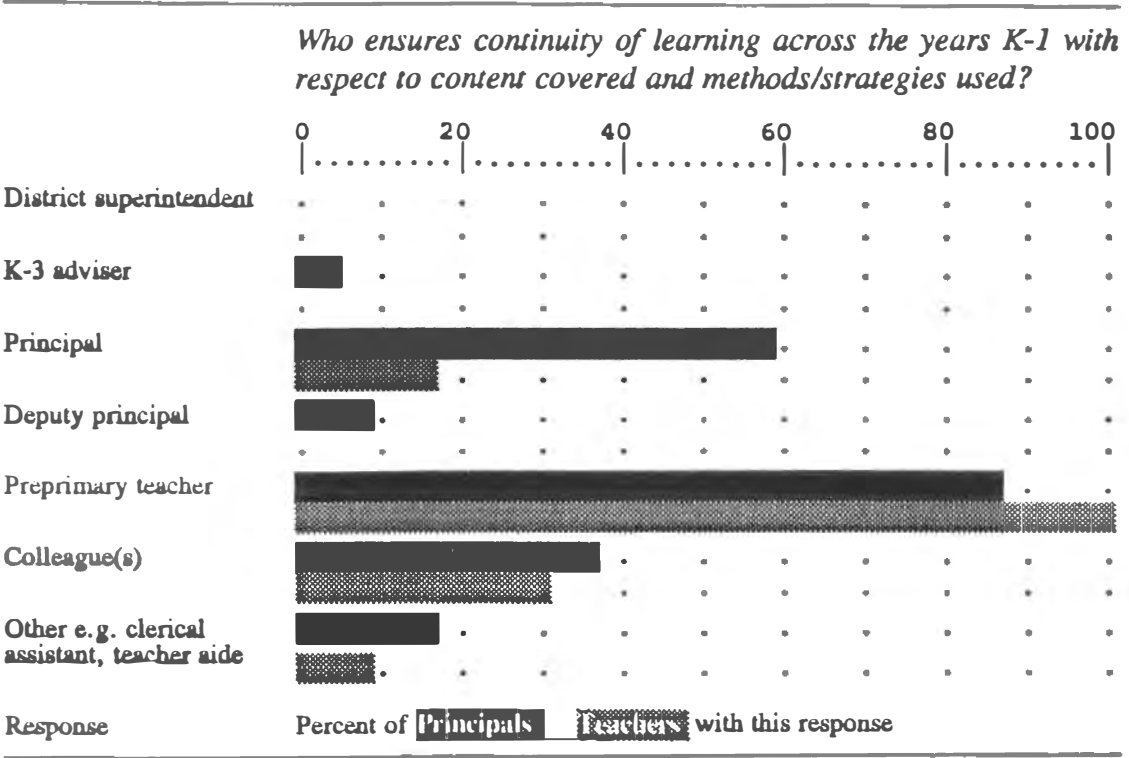


Figure 4.12 Ensuring continuity of learning across the years K-1.

All preprimary teachers and nearly all of principals (87%) stated the preprimary teacher ensured continuity of learning across the years K-1 with respect to content covered and methods/strategies used. More than half the principals (58%) and only a few preprimary teachers (17%) indicated that the principal ensured continuity of learning. Seventeen percent of principals and 8% of preprimary teachers stated "Others" were involved and these others were identified as the Year 1 teachers.

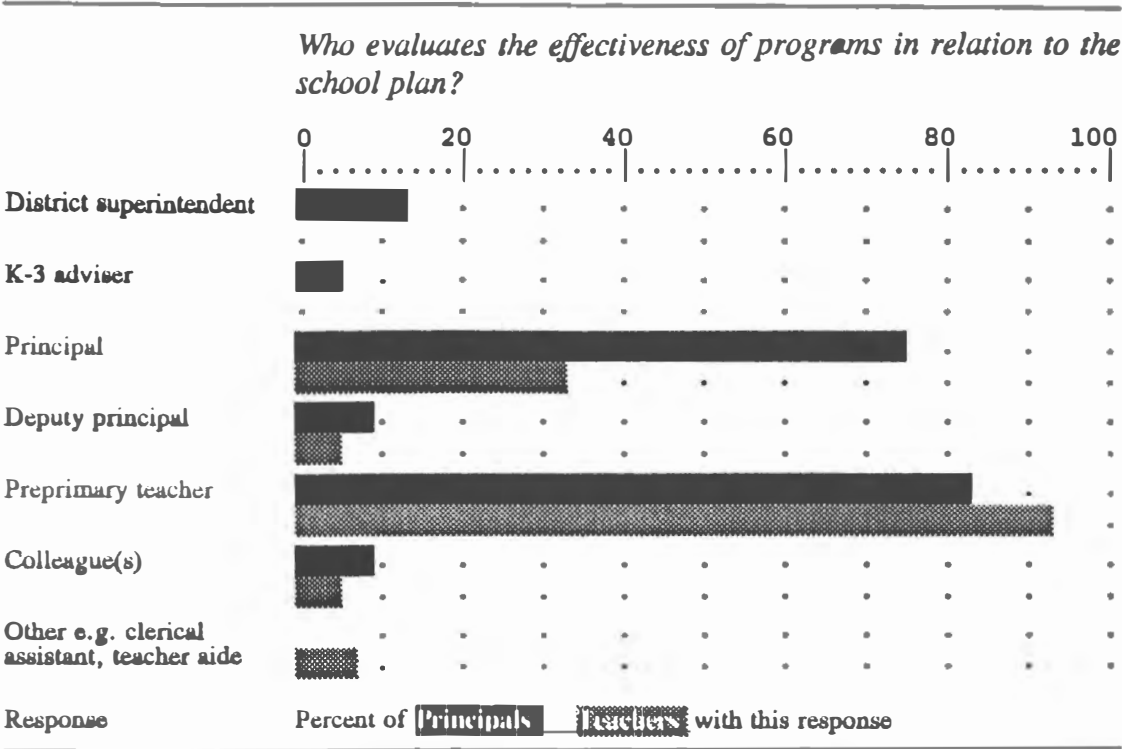


Figure 4.13 Evaluating the effectiveness of programs in relation to the school plan.

The majority of principals (83%) and preprimary teachers (92%) stated the preprimary teacher evaluated the effectiveness of programs in relation to the school plan. Three quarters of the principals (75%) and approximately one third of the preprimary teachers (32%) stated the principal evaluated effectiveness of programs in relation to the school plan. No principals stated the involvement of "Others" unlike preprimary teachers who identified "Others" as being Senior Assistant and in one case "Principal presumably."

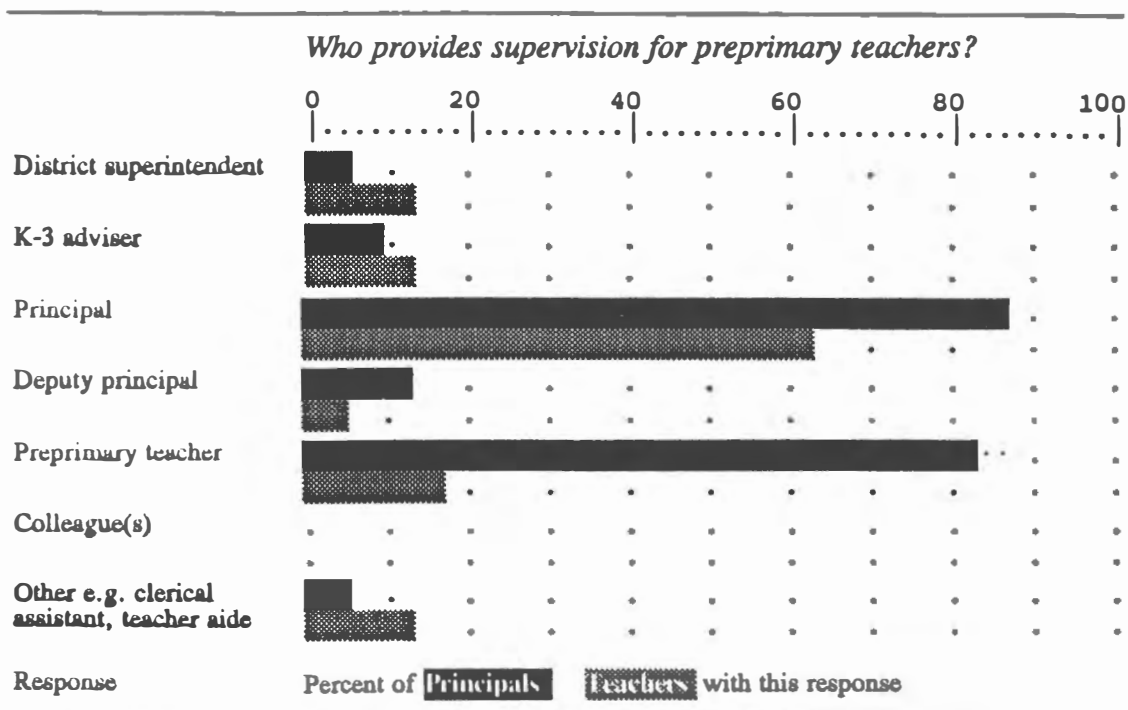


Figure 4.14 Providing supervision for preprimary teachers.

The majority of principals (87%) and preprimary teachers (62%) stated the principal provided supervision for preprimary teachers. A large number of principals (83%) as compared to a small number of preprimary teachers (17%) stated the preprimary teacher provided supervision. Both principals and teachers agreed colleagues played no part. Few principals (4%) identified "Others" as being aide and parents and slightly more preprimary teachers (12%) identified "Others" as being teacher assistant and teacher aide. One preprimary teacher responded "None" and selected not to circle any specified category.

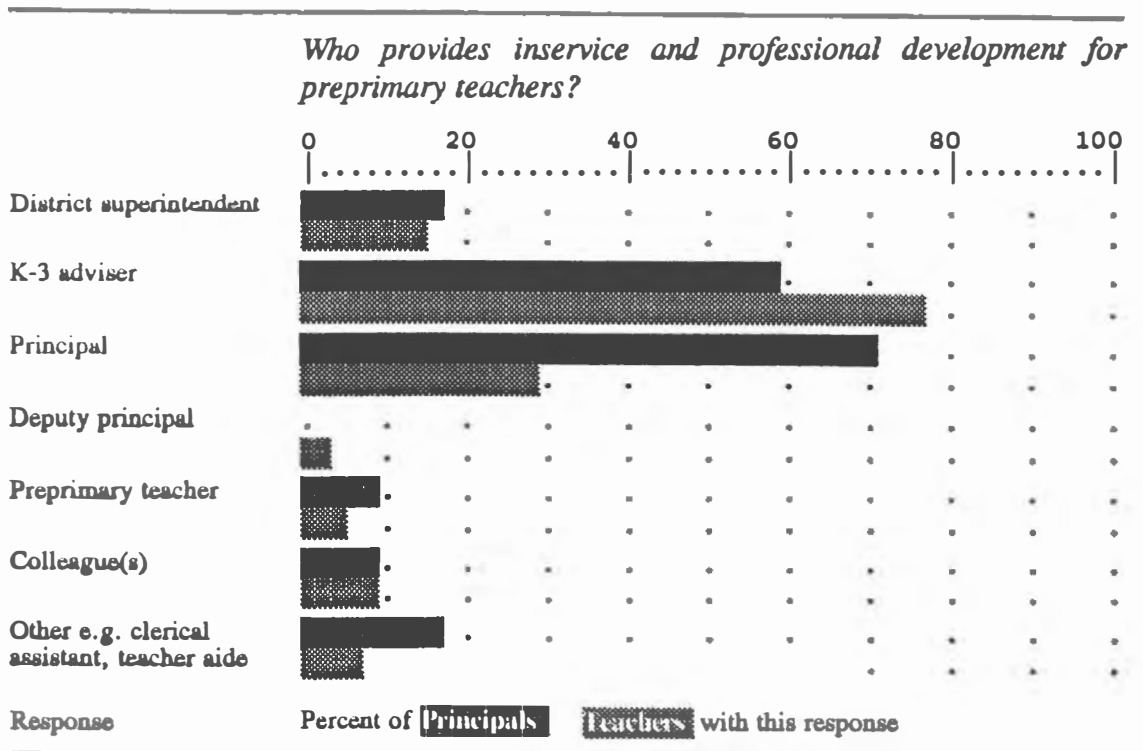


Figure 4.15 Providing inservice and professional development for preprimary teachers.

The majority of principals (71%) and preprimary teachers (28%) stated the principal provided inservice and professional development for preprimary teachers. A small number of principals (8%) and preprimary teachers (4%) stated the involvement of the preprimary teacher. Fifty eight percent of principals and 78% of preprimary teachers reported the K-3 adviser provided inservice and professional development. A larger number of principals (17%) identified "Others" as being district adviser, district office, D.O of Ed. compared to 6% of preprimary teachers who stated "Others" as being district officer and key teacher.

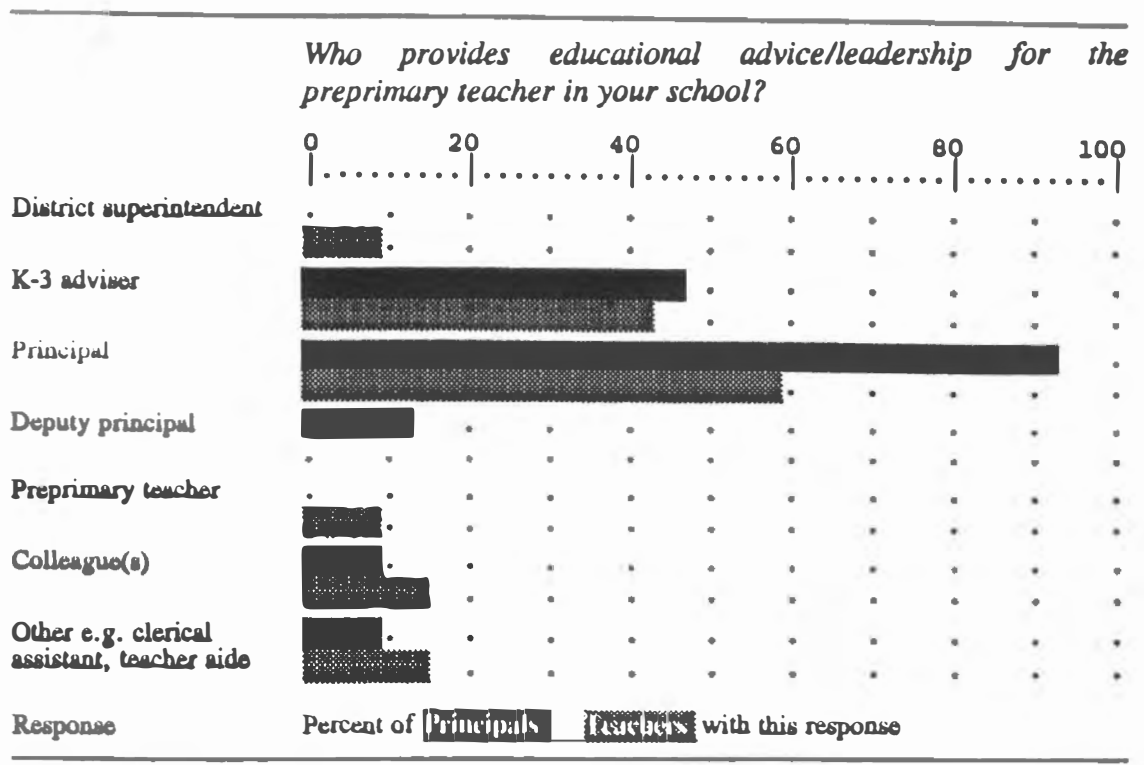


Figure 4.16 Providing educational advice/leadership for preprimary teachers.

Nearly all principals (92%) and over half the preprimary teachers (58%) stated the principal provided educational advice/leadership for the preprimary teacher in the school. No principals felt the preprimary teacher provided education advice/leadership, unlike 8% of preprimary teachers who reported they did. A small number of principals (8%) identified "Others" as being district office staff and the D. O. of Education. Fifteen percent of preprimary teachers stated "Others" as being senior assistant, Year 1 teacher, K-3 adviser, colleague and two teachers replied "Nobody".

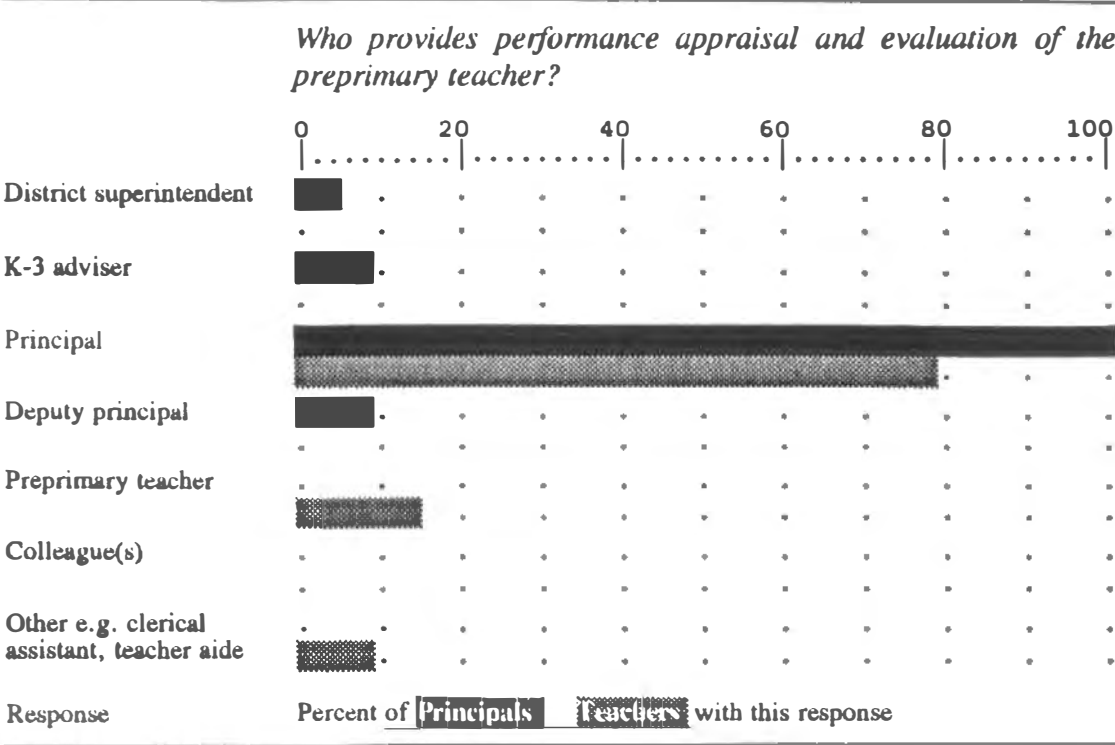


Figure 4.17 Performance appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher.

All principals and the majority of preprimary teachers (79%) said the principal provided performance appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher. No principal stated the preprimary teacher provided this unlike 15% of preprimary teachers identifying themselves as doing so. A small number of preprimary teachers (8%) identified "Others" such as senior assistant and parents while no principals identified "Others" as providing performance appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher.

4.1.3 Comparison of responses of principal & their preprimary teacher/s within the schools.

The responses of the total group of 24 principals and the total group of 30 preprimary teachers on the nature and extent of involvement of principals in administration, management and education were compared and are outlined in Appendices 6 & 7. The data showed the only issue in which all 24 principals and their 30 preprimary teachers agreed was *"who develops the preprimary program?"* Consensus of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers was reached 11 out of 49 times (approximately 25%) in the area of administration and management and 23 out of 70 times (approximately 1/3) in education.

On educational issues the majority of principals and preprimary teachers agreed that principals were primarily engaged in three of the ten areas considered. Six of the ten areas were found to be undertaken by preprimary teachers. There was no consensus in response to the provision of inservice and professional development. More principals stated they provided this service unlike most preprimary teachers who stated the K-3 Adviser was the provider. Of these 23 occasions approximately one quarter of these responses were related to the involvement of the district superintendent, with a further 4/22 responses stating no involvement by the deputy principal and 3/22 responses stating no involvement by the K-3 adviser. There was only one occasion whereby principals and preprimary teachers were in consensus on the input of the principal and three occasions where consensus was reached by all principals and preprimary teachers on the input of the preprimary teacher. (See Appendix 7)

In order to come to an understanding of this pattern the responses of each principal and their own preprimary teacher/s within each individual schools were compared and are outlined below in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Responses of Principals and Preprimary Teachers

Level of Agreement	Mean	Range
Complete agreement	39%	12-71
Partial agreement	51%	12-88
Complete disagreement	13%	0-41

Within the first section of Part A of the questionnaire, there were 17 questions presented to both principals and preprimary teachers relating to the nature and extent of their involvement in the preprimary centre. As participants were permitted to indicate more than one person this had to be accounted for when analysing the data and the category "partial agreement" was constructed to indicate such responses. In 39% of those items the preprimary teacher(s) and principal were in complete agreement. Partial agreement was found within 51% of responses and complete disagreement in 13% (The mean percentages have been rounded).

4.1.4 Theoretical & practical background of appraiser/evaluator.

All principals in the survey reported that they appraised and evaluated the performance of the preprimary teacher.

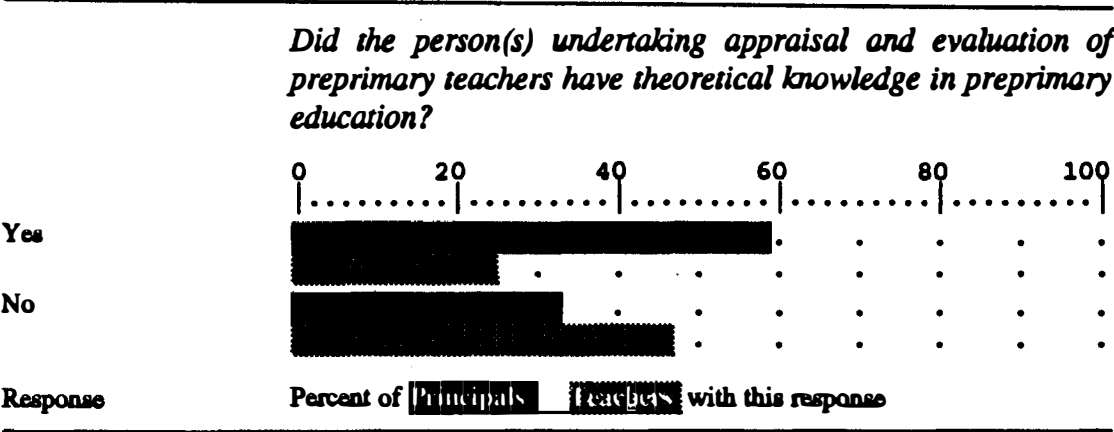


Figure 4.18 Theoretical background of person(s) appraising and evaluating preprimary teachers.

More than half (58%) of principals compared to a quarter of preprimary teachers stated the person did hold a theoretical background in preprimary education, and some (12%) of principals and some preprimary teachers (29%) did not respond to this question. One third (33%) of principals and almost half (46%) of preprimary teachers stated that the person undertaking appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers did not have a theoretical background in preprimary education.

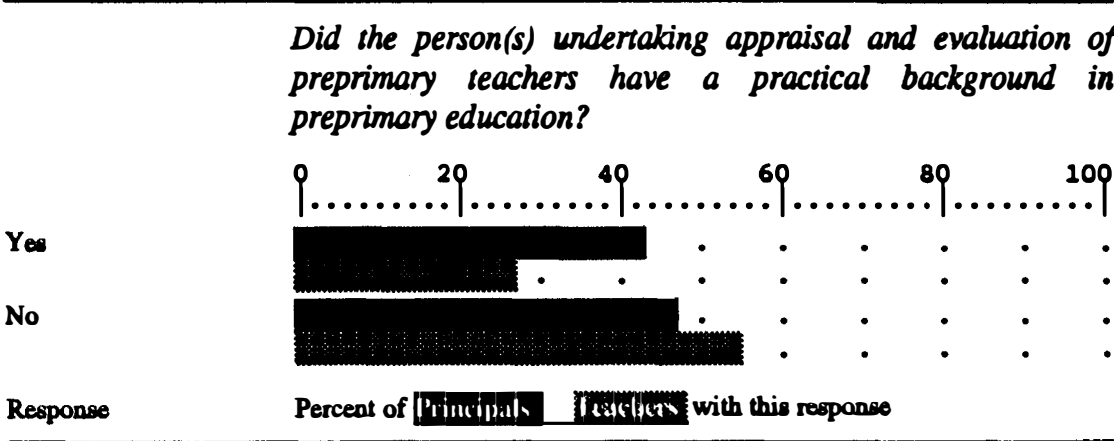


Figure 4.19 Practical background of person(s) appraising and evaluating preprimary teachers.

In regard to practical background of the appraiser and evaluator, principals were almost evenly split whereas the majority of preprimary teachers (55%) stated no practical background was held. Again some principals (12%) and preprimary teachers (19%) did not respond to this question.

In summary, a greater number of principals (58%) than preprimary teachers (25%) reported the person undertaking appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers as having a theoretical knowledge of preprimary education.

4.1.5 Average number of visits by principal to preprimary centre.

Figure 4.20 outlines the reported frequency of the principal's visits to the preprimary centre.

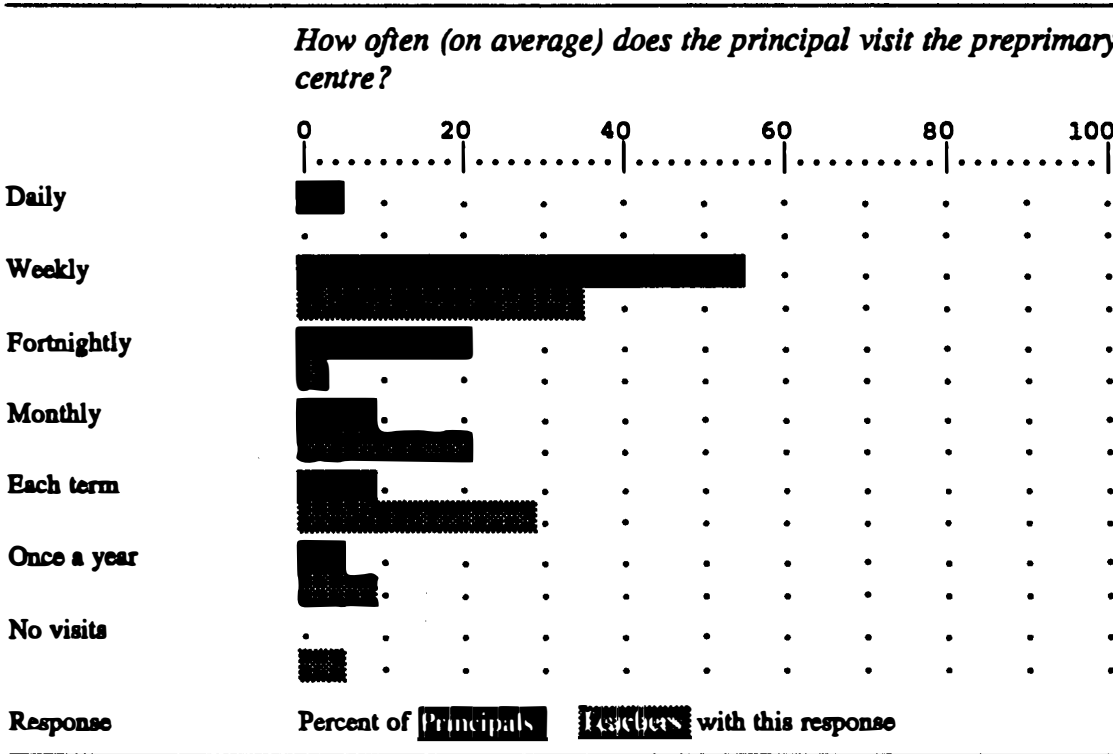


Figure 4.20 Frequency of principal visits to preprimary.

Most respondents reported weekly visits with other responses ranging from no visits at all to once a year.

The response of each principal and his or her individual preprimary teacher/s were compared, and the results showed that there were nine schools in which principals and preprimary teachers were in consensus on how often, on average, the principal visited the preprimary centre. Fourteen schools reported a lack of consensus between the responses of principals and their preprimary teachers. The one school without its own preprimary centre was not included in this analysis. In each instance in which principals disagreed with their preprimary teachers, principals felt they visited their preprimary centre more frequently than what had been stated by their preprimary teachers. One principal stated visits were weekly unlike the three preprimary teachers who unanimously agreed visits were once a term. Another preprimary teacher disagreed with the principal and stated there were no visits.

4.1.6 Approximate length of stay by principals.

Figure 4.21 illustrates that the majority of principals (62%) and preprimary teachers (79%) stated that visits were up to 15 minutes in duration. Over one third of principals (37%) and fewer preprimary teachers (17%) stated visits were up to 30 minutes duration.

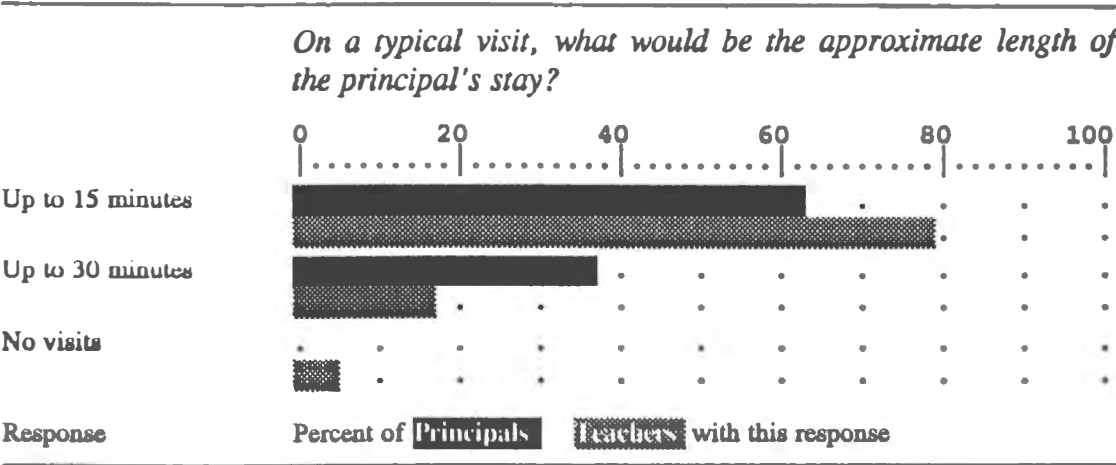


Figure 4.21 Length of principals visits to preprimary.

The responses of principals and their individual preprimary teachers were compared, and principals were in agreement in seventeen schools. There were six schools in which the responses of principals and preprimary teachers were different. A marked difference of response was seen in one case where the principal stated visits were up to 30 minutes, unlike the preprimary teacher who stated there were no visits during the year.

4.1.7 Purpose of these visits.

Responses recorded by both principals and preprimary teachers regarding the purpose of visits have been grouped under five main areas:

1. Administration/management: 11(46%) principals and 28(93%) preprimary teachers stated visits were due to these issues.

A few principals and preprimary teachers chose to record comments on these issues. One principal wrote the purpose of visits was to "Deliver the weekly newsletter" while another principal stated "Administrative" (sic). Of the two preprimary teachers who recorded comments one stated "Only if he wants to tell me something on Admin. This term he came to tell me the results of something I had applied to through the P&C." The second preprimary teacher stated "My principal came to visit me once last year in 1992 to discuss the gardners (sic) duties. He came today to deliver your questionnaire and stayed 20 mins."

2. Human Relations (To show a presence/interest in the work of staff/children and parents and act as a host to visitors). Sixteen principals (67%) and 16 preprimary teachers (67%) stated visits were due to these issues.

Of the respondents who added comments on these issues, one principal responded to "show my presence/interest". Another principal stated "Make contact with pupils and staff." One preprimary teacher stated "Friendly, social, make sure we (preprimary teacher & aide) are OK. Do we need anything?" Another teacher stated "Getting to know children (singing with them)"

3. Problems (Concerns, queries or problems expressed by parents, teachers or children): 7(29%) principals and 6(20%) preprimary teachers stated visits were due to these issues.

Additional comments came from one principal who stated "Parent queries/concerns etc." Another said "Problem solving". One preprimary teacher stated "Usually for any negative aspect that may concern me or the preprimary" and another preprimary teacher stated "To show a `united front' when dealing with serious problems involving a parent/child." One preprimary teacher stated "Discuss furniture needs and to generally ask "How's it going. Seems generally uncomfortable with situation."

4. Educational Issues: 5(21%) principals and 4(13%) preprimary teachers stated visits were due to these issues.

Three participants reported additional comments. One principal stated "Check on programmes/strategies/standards etc." One principal stated "Facilitate performance appraisal - during longer visits."

5. Parent Committee Meetings: 4(17%) principals and 4(13%) preprimary teachers stated visits were due to these issues.

Several principals and preprimary teachers chose to record additional comments. One preprimary teacher stated "Parent meeting - full day for 5 issue." The teacher was referring to full day five year old preprimary programs which were being implemented in some schools during this study. Another preprimary teacher stated "More for administrative purposes - or as a guest at a parent meeting when committee has invited him for a special purpose." One principal stated "Much of the interaction between Principal and Pre Pri. staff takes place at Primary School on a Friday & Staff Meetings (monthly)." One preprimary teacher stated "Visits to supervise prac. students - 1/2 hour. Visits to attend Parent Committee Meetings - 1 hour."

4.1.8 Percentage of time visits due to administration/management & education.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 outline principals and teachers responses respectively giving the percentage of time visits by the principal to the preprimary centre, were due to administration/management and educational issues. The mean, standard deviation and range of responses are reported. All principals responded to this question, whereas 26 of the 30 preprimary teachers responded.

Table 4.2 Responses of Principals in Percentage

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range
Administration/Management	67.00	25.00	2.00 - 95.00
Education	25.00	17.00	2.00 - 75.00

Table 4.3 Responses of Preprimary Teachers in Percentage

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range
Administration/Management	58.00	37.00	0.00 - 100.00
Education	17.00	17.00	0.00 - 50.00

Table 4.2 illustrates that on average according to principals, principals visited the preprimary centre for educational issues 25% of times and 67% of times for administrative/managerial issues. Responses of preprimary teachers as illustrated in Table 4.3 showed that on average according to preprimary teachers 17% of the time, visits to the preprimary by the principal were due to educational issues, while approximately 59% of the time visits were related to administrative/managerial issues.

Not all principals and preprimary teachers responded to this question by recording time spent in percentages. Two principals chose to respond by stating administration/management (A/M) totalled "2" and Education (E) "2". A third

principal stated (A/M) was "5" and (E) "5". In a similar way six preprimary teachers responded by stating (A/M) "50/50" Parent Committee and (E) "100" prac. visits. A second preprimary teacher reported (A/M) "10" and (E) "5". The third preprimary teacher reported (A/M) "5" and (E) "40" while the fourth stated (A/M) "60" and (E) "5". The fifth preprimary teacher reported (A/M) "10" and (E) "10" with the last teacher stating (A/M) "10" and (E) "25". The nine participants who selected to respond in this way may have felt that there were issues other than Administration/Management and Education which resulted in visits by the principal to the Centre, such as those listed in response to Part A Question 6 of the questionnaire (Human Relations Problems).

Nineteen out of 24 principals (79%) stated a greater number of visits were due to administrative/managerial Issues. One principal reported visits were primarily due to educational issues with four principals giving equal weighting to both administration/management and education. One principal outlined that 90% of time was necessary for administration/management with a remaining 10% of time available for education. This principal stated that these figures should be reversed for the Deputy.

Twenty six out of the 30 (87%) preprimary teachers responded to this question. Twenty one (70%) preprimary teachers reported a greater number of visits were due to administrative/managerial issues with three preprimary teachers stating educational issues were of primary concern. The three responses to educational issues were the responses of teachers who chose not to total their response to 100%.

4.1.9 Summary.

The nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals in the preprimary centre in areas of administration, management and educational leadership, as reported by the principal and preprimary teacher has been described in this section.

On preprimary administration/managerial issues, the majority of principals and preprimary teachers agreed that principals were primarily engaged in two of the seven areas in question, namely managing the implementation of Ministry of Education policies and guidelines and liaising with other organisational units within the Ministry of Education concerning administrative issues. The remaining areas were found to be mainly covered by the preprimary teachers.

There were 11 occasions out of 49 where principals and preprimary teachers agreed on who held responsibility for administrative/managerial issues. Of these 11 occasions there was no one occasion where both principals and preprimary teachers were in consensus on the role of the principal (See Appendix 6). There were 23 out of 70 occasions in which principals and preprimary teachers agreed on educational issues.

All of the principals stated they provided performance appraisal and evaluation with approximately three quarters of preprimary teachers (77%) agreeing. A majority of principals (58%) stated the person undertaking appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers has a theoretical knowledge of preprimary education compared to 46% of preprimary teachers who stated the person did not have a theoretical background. Figure 19 clearly outlines that in regard to practical background in preprimary education a larger number of principals (46%) and preprimary teachers (55%) stated no practical background was evident by the people engaged in performing appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers.

The majority of principals and preprimary teachers felt principals visited the preprimary centre on a weekly basis. A greater number of preprimary teachers than principals stated visits occurred monthly, each term and once a year, with one preprimary teacher stating none at all. The approximate length of stay by principals to the preprimary centre was stated by the majority "up to 15 minutes duration."

Data collected on the purpose of these visits outlines that few principals (21%) and preprimary teachers (13%) stated visits were due to educational issues. A greater number of principals (67%) stated visits were due to "Human Relations" issues such as showing presence and interest. An equal number of preprimary teachers (67%) agreed with principals that this was the case. Over one quarter (28%) of preprimary teachers stated visits were due to administration/management with 46% of principals agreeing. The remainder of the responses highlighted areas such as problems (29% of principals, 30% of preprimary teachers) and parent committee meetings (17% of principals, 13% of preprimary teachers.)

Most principals (79%) stated that visits were mainly due to administrative/managerial issues. One principal reported visits were primarily due to educational issues with four principals giving equal weighting to both administration/management and education.

Of the twenty six preprimary teachers who responded, twenty one reported that more visits were due to administrative/managerial issues with three preprimary teachers stating educational issues were of primary concern. One teacher responded by stating (A/M) as 5% and (E) as 40%. The second teacher stated (A/M) as 10% and (E) as 25% and the third teacher reported (A/M) as 50/50 parent committee and (E) 100% prac visits. These three teachers chose not to total their response to 100%.

4.2 Principals' Perceptions of Adequacy as Leaders

Principal's perceptions about their adequacy as leaders was obtained in Part B of the questionnaire. Figure 4.22 shows the response of principals when asked to identify what they felt was the most important part of their role with respect to preprimary centres.

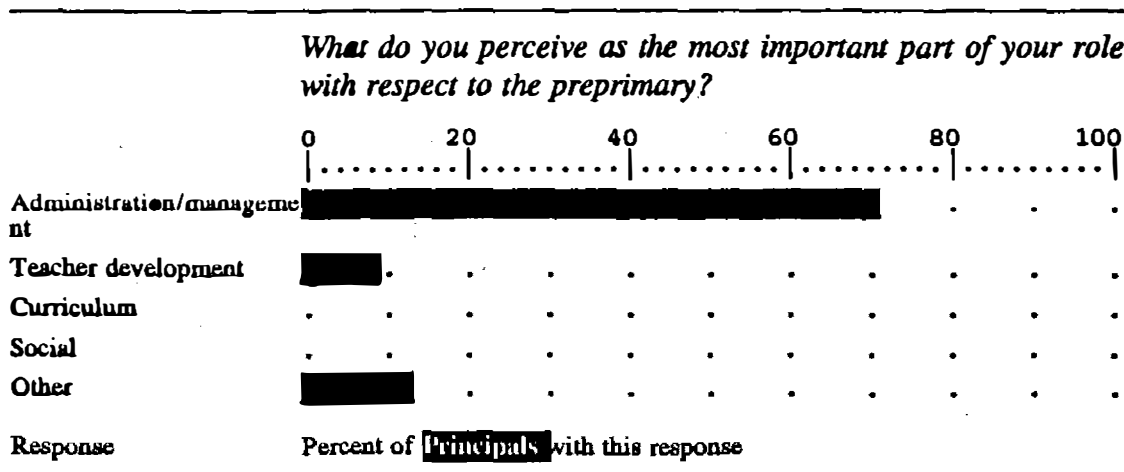


Figure 4.22 Perceptions of principals' main role at preprimary level.

Eight percent of principals did not respond to this particular question. The majority of principals (71%) indicated administration/management was their most important role, with a few (8%) indicating teacher development. Other responses principals (12%) included support and liaison with parents and preprimary committee.

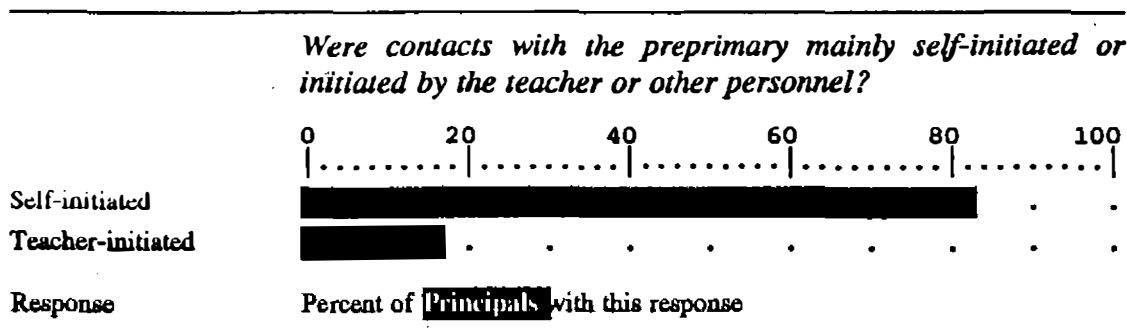


Figure 4.23 Initiating principals' contacts with preprimary.

All principals responded to this question and 83% of principals indicated that contact was self-initiated while 17% stated contact was initiated by the teacher or other personnel.

Principals were asked to indicate how well they felt they fulfilled their leadership role in the preprimary centre, by using a code 1-5 covering six specified areas. The response of principals to these six areas is outlined in Figure 4.24.

4.2.1 Preprimary administration & management.

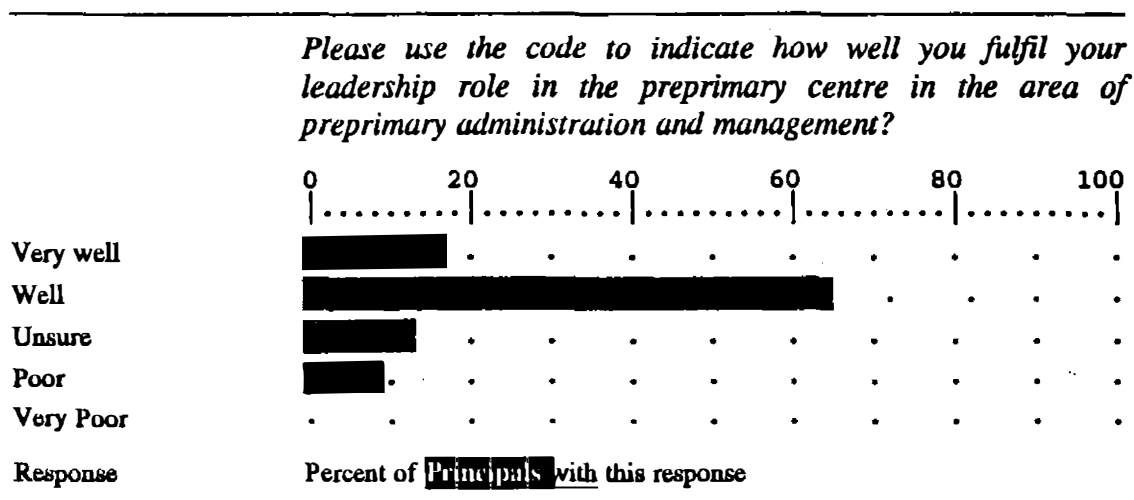


Figure 4.24 Administering and managing preprimary.

Approximately three quarters of principals (79%) rated their adequacy as leaders in this area between "very well" and "well" compared to fewer principals (8%) who indicated their performance had been "poor." Twelve percent stated they were "unsure".

4.2.2 Advice & support to preprimary teachers.

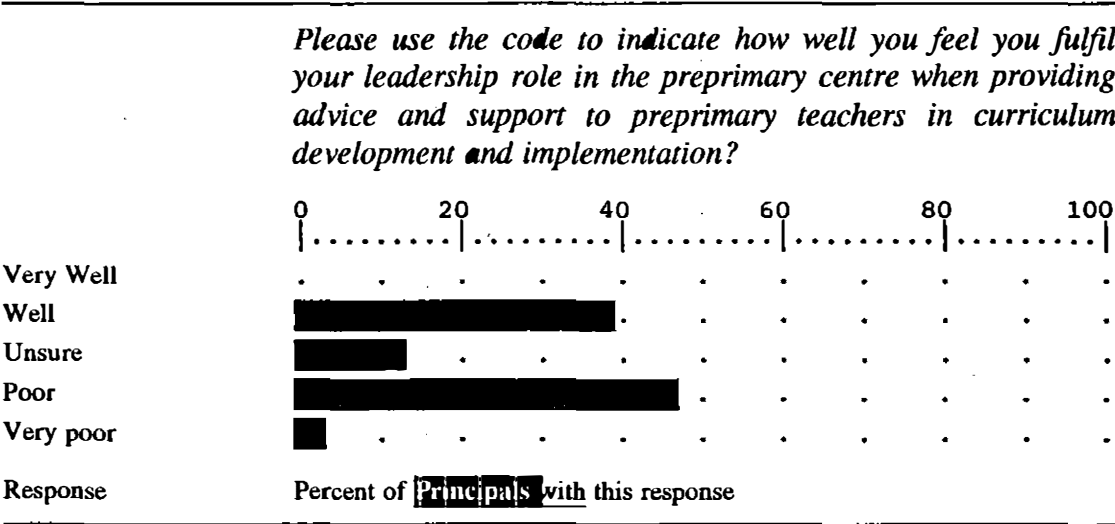


Figure 4.25 Advising and supporting preprimary teachers.

Approximately one third of principals (37%) reported they performed well when providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in curriculum development and implementation while twelve percent remained "unsure" of the effectiveness of their leadership role. Nearly half of the principals (46%) indicated they offered "poor" leadership in this area with a further 4% stating their leadership was "very poor". This gives a rating of 50% of principals indicating performance in the category of "poor" to "very poor". One principal stated "lack of expertise/knowledge of principals - tend to let ECE teacher do their own educational programme."

4.2.3 Professional & work-related areas.

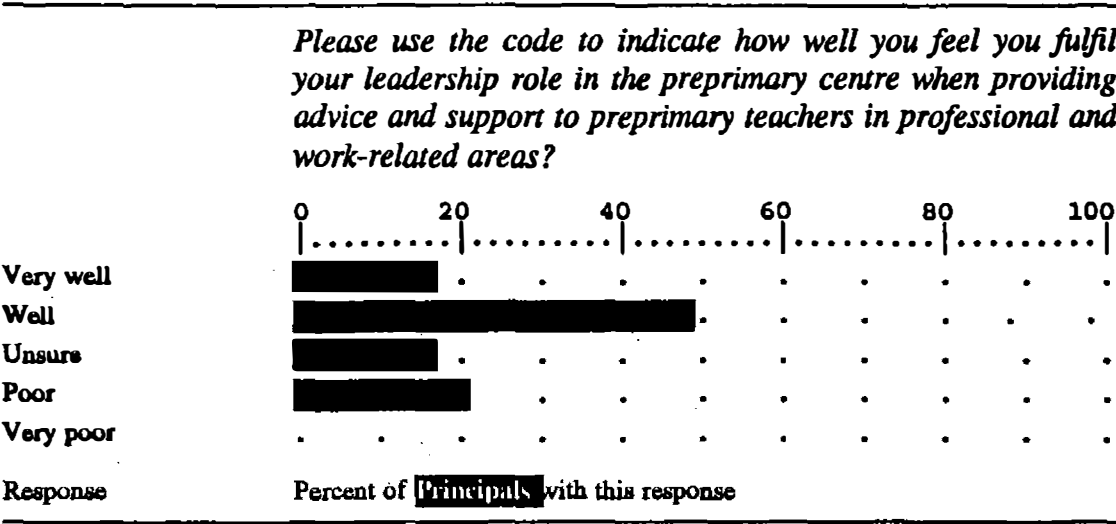


Figure 4.26 Professional and work-related areas.

The majority of principals (63%) reported "well" to "very well" (17% of principals "Very well" and 46% "well"). Twenty one percent of principals felt their performance was poor with a further 17% remaining "unsure".

4.2.4 Diagnosing educational problems.

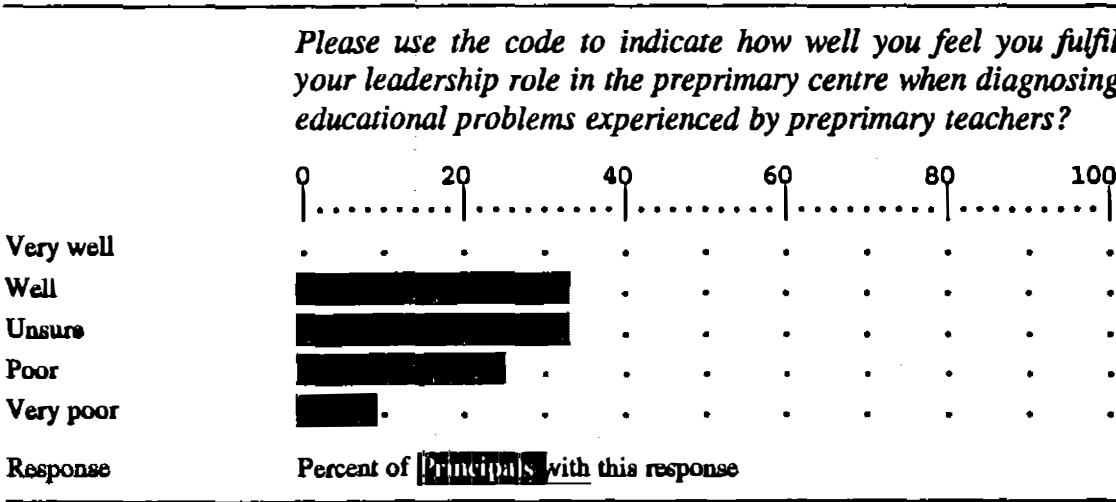


Figure 4.27 Diagnosing educational problems.

One third of principals (33%) stated "well", one third of principals stated "poor" to "very poor" (25% of principals said "poor" and 8% said "very poor") and one third of principals stated they were "unsure". An even distribution of responses is evident in this section - 33% "well", 33% "unsure" and 33% "poor - very poor".

4.2.5 Supervision.

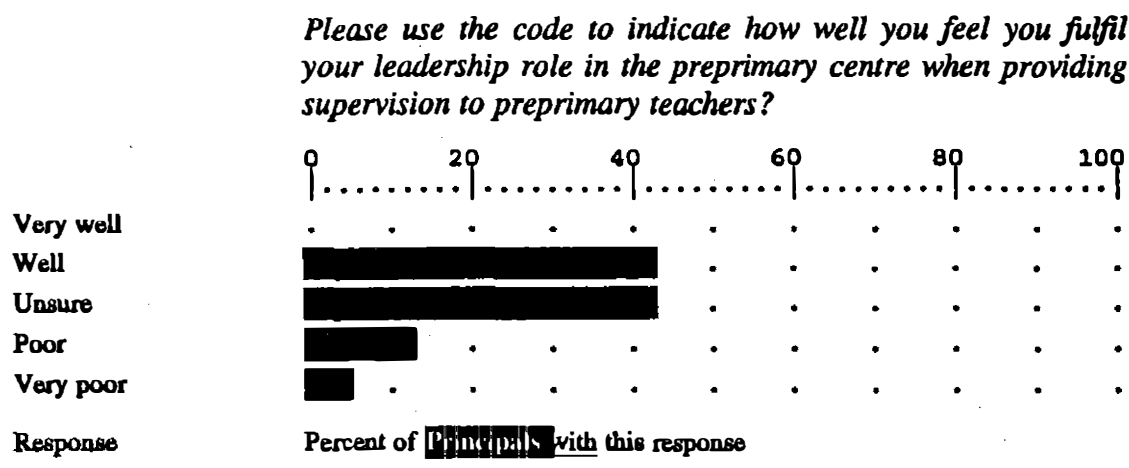


Figure 4.28 Supervising in preprimary.

No principals stated "very well" while 42% stated "well". Nearly half of the principals (42%) stated they were "unsure", Twelve percent stated "poor" and 4% "very poor". Under half the number of principals (42%) responded positively to this section.

4.2.6 Appraisal & evaluation.

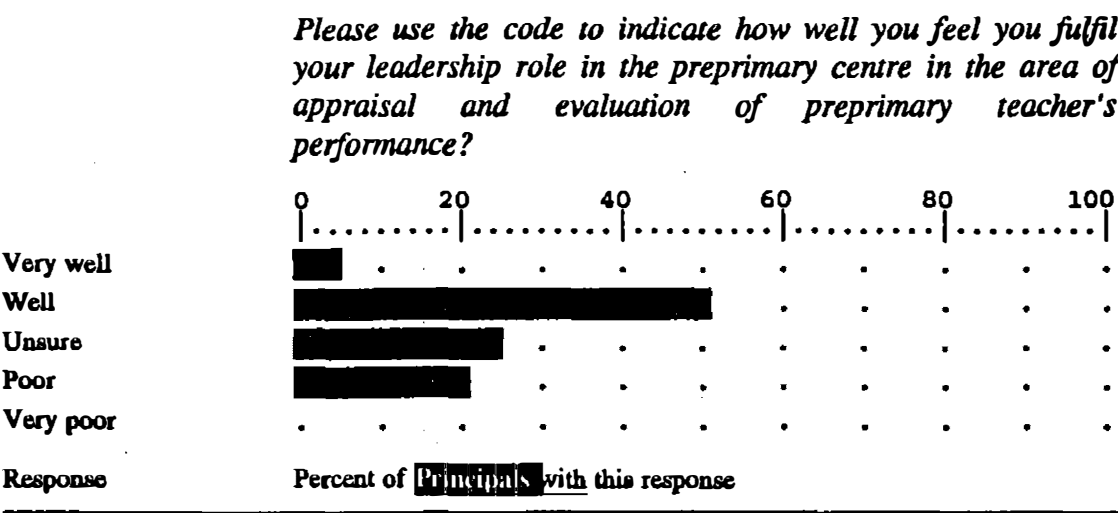


Figure 4.29 Appraising and evaluating teacher performance.

Half of the principals (50%) stated they felt they fulfilled their leadership role in the preprimary centre in the appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teacher's performance "well", with 4% stating "very well", 25% said "unsure", and 21% "poor."

4.2.7 Other.

This area of the questionnaire asked principals to indicate "Other" issues not related to those specified by the questionnaire. Five of 24 principals responded to this area and their comments included reference to:

1. Providing "social/personal support and reassurance re. the job."
2. "Overall management of Centre tends to be by teacher as offsite, so I am unsure of how my overall admin/control rates."
3. Performing "very well" in "conflict resolution with parents."
4. Performing "poor" when "looking for ways to make teacher and aide feel part of whole staff."

5. Performing "well" when "ensuring that this is a K-7 school."

4.2.8 Summary.

These data indicate that a greater number of principals appear to be content with issues related to administration and management than other preprimary issues. A majority of principals (71%) indicated administration/management as their most important role in the preprimary centre. Eighty three percent of principals indicated interaction with the preprimary centre was self-initiated by the principals.

The introduction of educational issues resulted in a greater number of principals responding "unsure" or indicating performance which was not as adequate as that seen with administrative/managerial issues. The results indicate that over three quarters of principals (79%) stated they were satisfied with their adequacy as leaders when faced with administrative/managerial issues. Slightly less than three quarters (63%) of principals responded a rating between "well" and "very well" to providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in work related areas. Appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers resulted in over half the principals (54%) stating between "well" and "very well". Supervision of preprimary teachers resulted in under half of principals (42%) responding "well", while advice and support to preprimary teachers in curriculum development and implementation responded in slightly over one third (38%) of principals being satisfied with their performance. The diagnosis of educational problems resulted in one third (33%) of principals rating their performance and leadership in this area as adequate.

Responses of principals to their inadequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres indicated in Area 2 (providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in curriculum development and implementation) that half of the principals (50%) responded between "poor" and "very poor" with 12% remaining "unsure". When

asked to rank their adequacy in diagnosing educational problems experienced by preprimary teachers one third of principals (33%) ranked their performance as falling between the categories "poor" to "very poor" with one third of principals (33%) remaining "unsure". Appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher's performance resulted in one quarter of principals (25%) stating "poor" to "very poor" with a further quarter of principals (25%) stating they were "unsure". Providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in professional and work-related areas resulted in 21% of principals stating their performance was "poor" with 17% remaining "unsure". Providing supervision to preprimary teachers resulted in 16% of principals stating their performance was "poor" and slightly under half of the principals (42%) stating they were "unsure" of their adequacies as leaders in this area.

4.3 Professional Development Needs of Principals

The kinds of professional development needs principals perceived they had when contending with any problems related to preprimary were tracked through Section C of the questionnaire. Six questions were asked and results are presented under these 6 areas.

4.3.1 Administrative/managerial needs.

The response of principals to the question about their professional development needs in the area of administration and management are outlined in Figure 4.30.

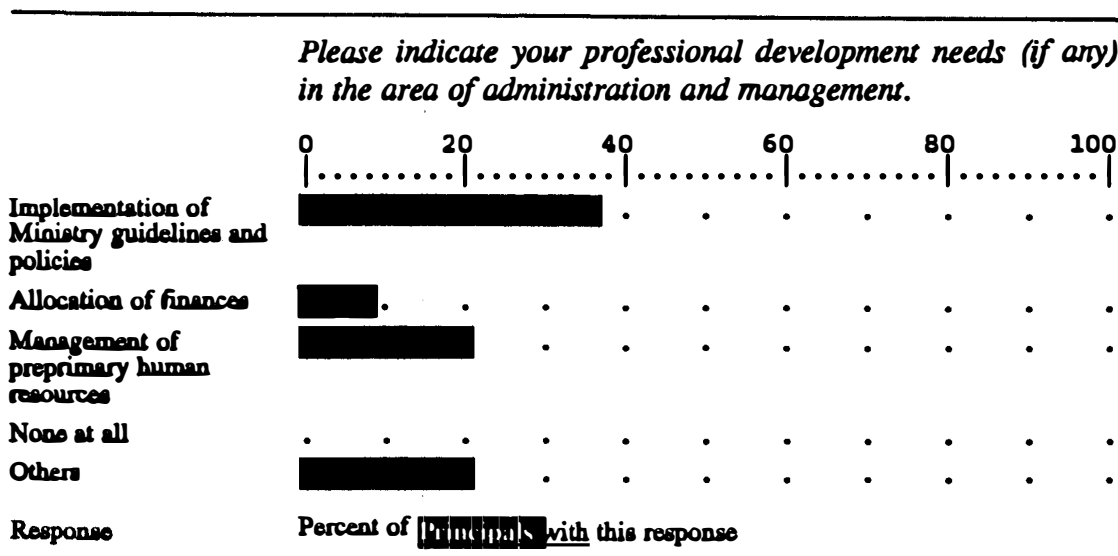


Figure 4.30 Administrative/managerial needs of principals.

The greatest area of need as identified by over one third of principals (37%) was in knowing how to implement Ministry guidelines and policies at the preprimary level. In addition 21% of principals selected management of preprimary human resources as a need. Eight percent of principals stated needs related to allocation of finances to preprimary centres. Slightly under one quarter of principals (21%) who stated "Others" responded with 4 needs which relate more to educational issues than administration/management. They were:-

1. Development of preprimary curriculum areas. (2 principals)
2. "Student Outcome Statements." (1 principal)
3. "I need to know and understand a lot more about the preprimary curriculum." (1 principal).

4.3.2 Educational needs.

The second question sought to identify the kinds of professional development needs principals had with respect to educational issues. Results are seen outlined in Figure 4.31.

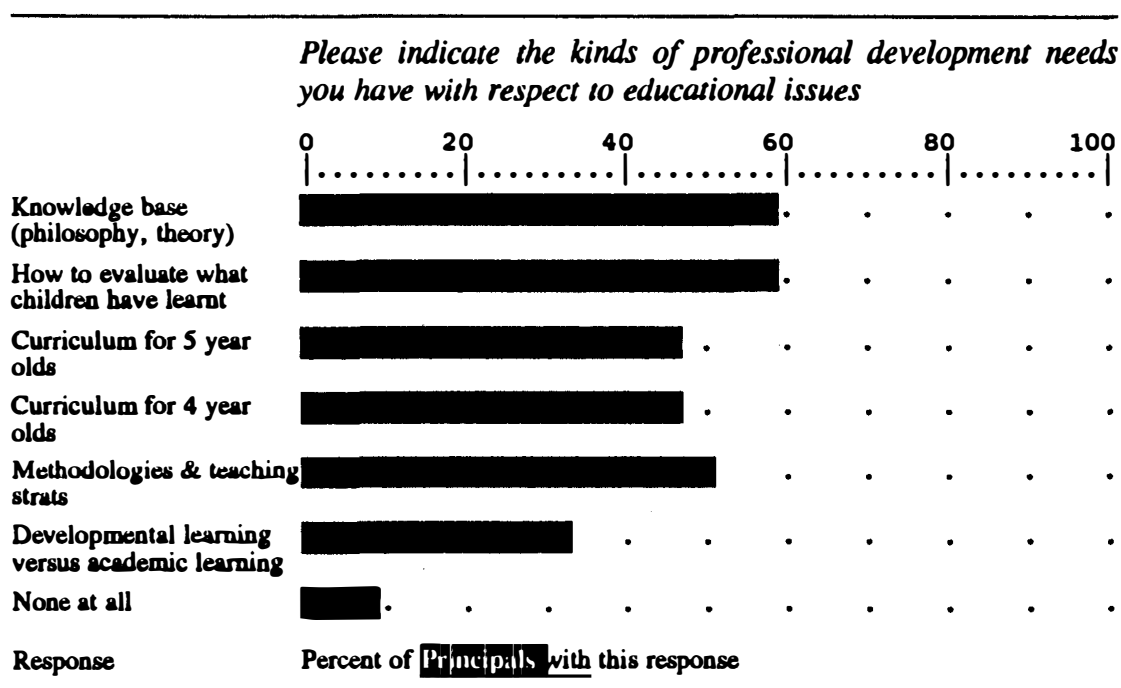


Figure 4.31 Educational needs of principals.

Eight percent of principals indicated no professional development needs in this area. No principals included needs other than those listed in the questionnaire. Equal numbers of principals (58%) identified needs in two areas: first, a knowledge base (philosophy, theory) of preprimary education and second, how to evaluate what children have learnt. The other areas identified by 46% of principals were curriculum for 5 year olds and curriculum for 4 year olds. Pre-primary methodologies and teaching strategies were considered important by 50% of principals. Thirty three percent of principals identified development learning versus academic learning as a professional development need.

4.3.3 Specific problems arising from leadership role.

When asked what specific problems had arisen from their leadership role in preprimary centres half of the principals (50%) stated no problems had occurred.

The remaining principals identified problems which are listed below. In parenthesis next to each statement is the number of principals who responded in that way.

- "Adequately supervising less experienced staff." (2)
- "Need to recognise the educational value of preprimary education from social, physical and behavioural aspects." (1)
- "Centre is off-site." (1)
- "Preprimary community still not used to being part of school." (1).
- "Personality clashes with K and Year 1 teachers." (1)
- "Government 5 year old policy." (1)
- "Teaching style of preprimary teacher." (1)
- "Inability to see that preprimary teacher offers advice to unwilling parents about delicate matters." (1)
- "Complaints by parents about preprimary teacher's teaching methods." (1)
- "Lack of knowledge of base (philosophy & theory) of Pre-Primary Education & a lack of knowledge of the curriculum for 5 yr. olds & 4 yr. olds." (2)

4.3.4 Dealing better with problems.

When principals were asked what in their opinion would help them to deal better with these problems the responses were:-

- "None" (8).
- Regular meetings with parents/teachers. (5).
- Inservice/professional development. (3).
- More time less other duties. (3).
- Having an on-site centre rather than off-site. (2)
- "Dedicated time for administration/preprimary interaction." (1).
- "Greater choice in selection of preprimary teacher." (1)
- "Easier ways to implement unsatisfactory performance reviews." (1)

- "Power to transfer - easier ways to implement unsatisfactory performance reviews." (1)
- "Understanding of philosophy of preprimary." (1)
- "Flexible staffing." (1)
- "Clear understanding of what the preprimary curriculum is about." (1)
- "Courses or workshops." (1)
- "Unsure that I want to be involved in getting help in this area due to other priorities - probably need help though." (1)

4.3.5 Seminars, courses, workshops.

Principals were asked to select from the list and rank from 1-9 (highest to lowest preference) areas they felt they would like to see offered in the form of seminars, courses or workshops. Space was then made available for principals to add any areas they felt were not covered and were of need. Figure 4.32 outlines the responses of principals to these issues. In order to record accurately the responses of principals to these issues analysis was undertaken using a weighted scale which recorded principal's preference scores by counting how many principals gave a seminar or course topic a particular ranking. For example, principals ranked the topic *'Learning styles of young children'* eighth priority in their choice of courses they would like to see offered. To score the priority given to *'Learning styles of young children'* as a topic of interest data were analysed as follows:

Table 4.4: A Weighted Scale of Learning Styles of Young Children

No of Principals	Ranking Given	Weighting	Total
1	1	9	9
1	2	8	8
1	3	7	7
1	4	6	6
0	5	5	0
3	6	4	12
5	7	3	15
3	8	2	6
1	9	1	1
Total			64

Principal's responses were recorded and they received a total rating of points which indicated their preference score for each issue raised. The mean for each score was calculated with the highest possible score being "9".

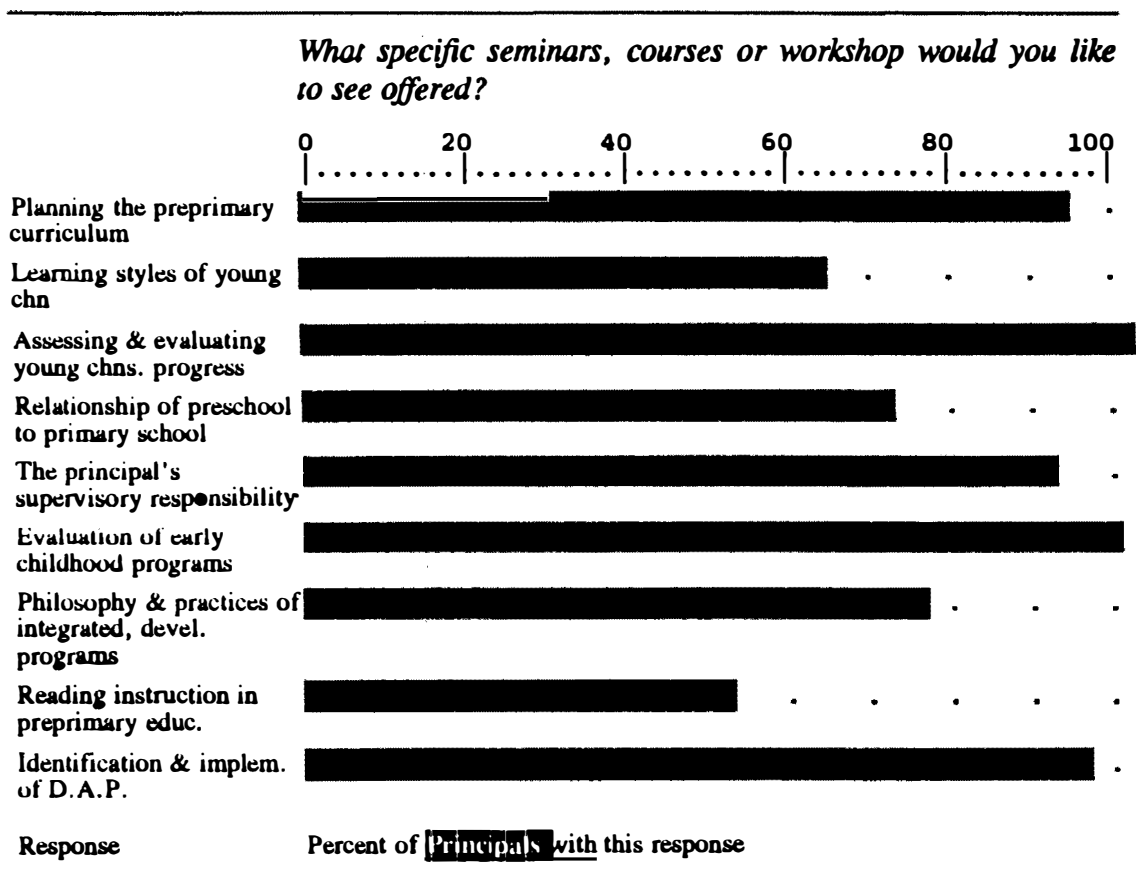


Figure 4.32 Seminars, courses or workshops desired by principals.

Seven principals did not respond to the areas above. Six principals did not respond when asked about "assessing and evaluating young children's progress" and eight principals failed to respond to "identification and implementation of developmentally appropriate practices for preprimary children".

Principals were then asked to respond to "Other" issues and this section was utilised by three principals. One stated "'Repeat' pre-primaries-appropriate practices" with a second principal stating "how to deal with support type children -physically-mentally handicapped & (changing dirty nappies! sorry)." The principal further added "Providing support for teacher with disadvantaged disabled children." The same principal's response was "This is what the P.P. teacher should be doing - e (sic) be trained in over 3 yrs. at Uni."

4.3.6 Priority of needs.

Principals were asked to rank their priorities in three areas: mandating preprimary training for principals; providing each school with a set of materials which outline developmentally appropriate practices; and providing professional development courses (ECE) for principals. The majority of principals in each case gave each issue "medium priority" with 83% of principals stating providing professional development courses for principals was of "medium" to "very high priority". Mandating preprimary training was rated as unsure or lower than Figures 4.34 and 4.35. The responses of principals are outlined in Figures 4.33, 4.34 and 4.35.

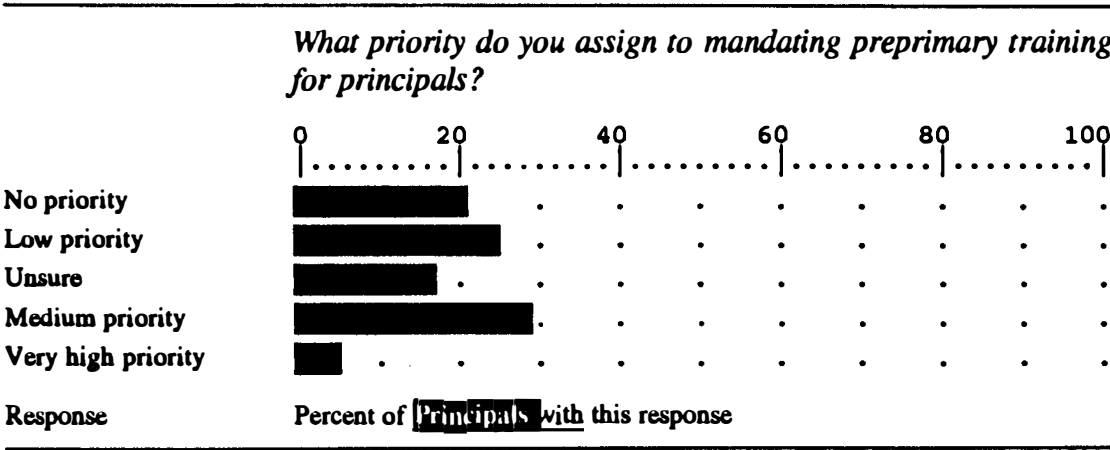


Figure 4.33 Mandating preprimary training for principals.

Twenty three principals selected not to register an opinion on this issue. The majority of principals 29% stated this was an issue of "medium priority" with 4% stating "very high priority". Seventeen percent of principals stated they were "unsure" with 21% of principals ranked this as "no priority" and 25% as "low priority".

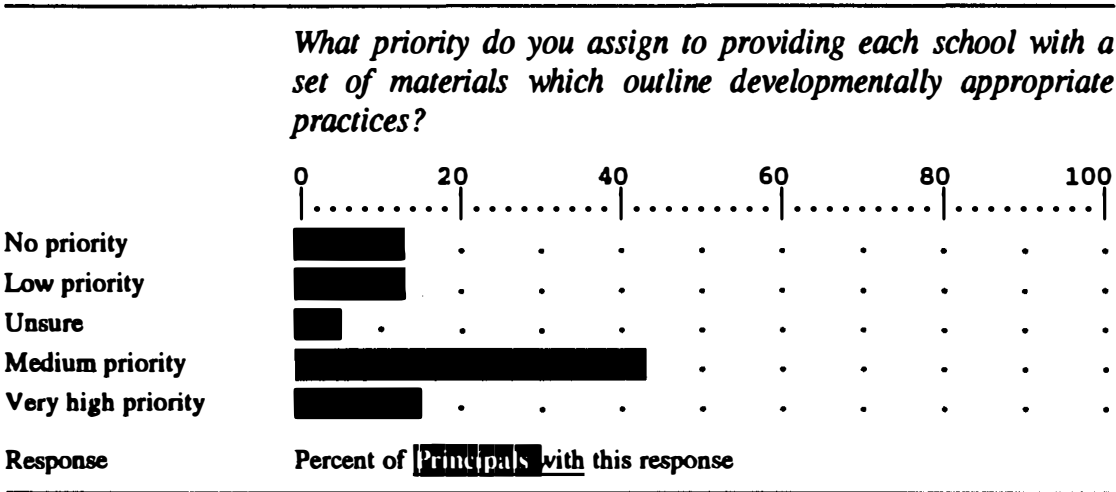


Figure 4.34 Providing school with materials outlining developmentally appropriate practices.

Twenty three principals responded to this question and one principal who had responded to the questionnaire selected to not register an opinion on this issue. A higher number of principals 42% stated this was of "medium priority" and 25% of principals responded "very high priority". 4% of principals were "unsure" and 12% stated this was an area in which they saw both "no priority" and "low priority".

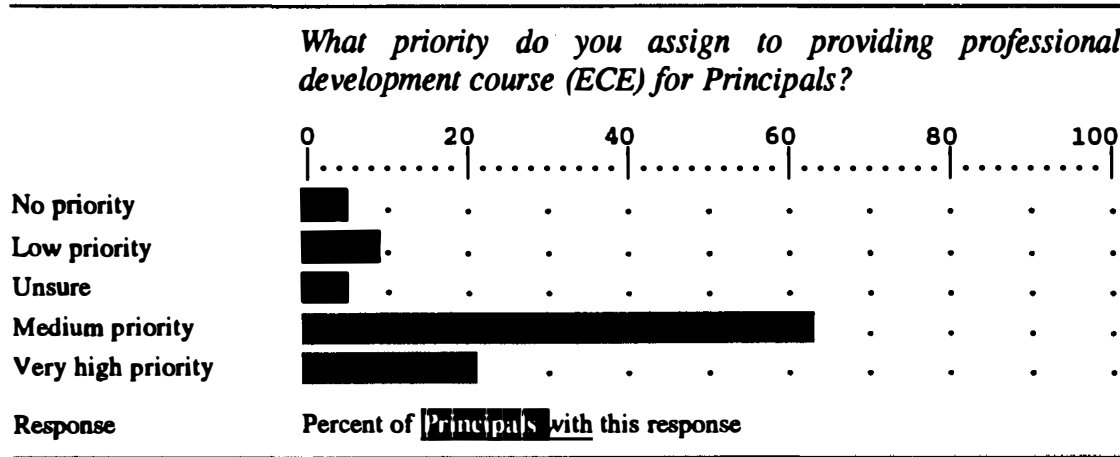


Figure 4.35 Providing professional development (ECE) for principals.

All principals (24) responded to this question with 62% stating this was an area of "medium priority" and 21% stating "very high priority" therefore registering a response rate of 83% of principals stating this issue was of priority. The remaining principals stated "unsure" 4%, "low priority" 8% and "no priority" 4%.

4.3.7 Summary.

The responses of principals to questions in Part C of the questionnaire deal with the perceptions by principals of professional development needs in relation to the preprimary centre. Principals identified needs in the areas of administration/management and educational issues. Only 8% of principals stated they had no professional development needs in the area of preprimary education.

When asked to respond to specific problems which have arisen as a result of their leadership role within the preprimary centre half of the principals (50%) stated they had no problems while the remainder of principals (50%) stated problems had arisen and listed them. Issues raised by them revolve around administrative/managerial and educational issues. Often the human factor is involved with personality clashes reported as one issue. These issues are focused upon in response to Question 4 which asks principals to state what in their opinion would help them to deal better with these problems.

In response to specific seminars, courses or workshops principals reported interest in assessing and evaluating young children's progress, which received the highest ranking, and evaluation of early childhood programs. The area that recorded the lowest ranking by principals was reading instruction in preprimary education.

In response to the priority principals assigned to mandating preprimary training for principals, providing each school with a set of materials which outline

developmentally appropriate practices, and providing professional development courses (ECE) for principals, the majority of principals felt each issue was of "medium priority." Eighty three percent of principals considered the provision of professional development courses for principals to be "medium to very high priority"

4.4 Background Information on Principals

Part D of the questionnaire gathered data necessary to respond to Research Question 2: "What is the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals responsible for preprimary centres?" Four questions were asked of principals and results are outlined below:

4.4.1 Teaching experience.

Question 1 sought to identify the number of years each principal had taught at each year level. In order to record accurately the responses of principals, a weighted scale (as illustrated in Figure 4.32) of principal years at each level had been used which resulted in the principals experience score. Figure 4.36 illustrates the mean for each score, the highest possible being "9".

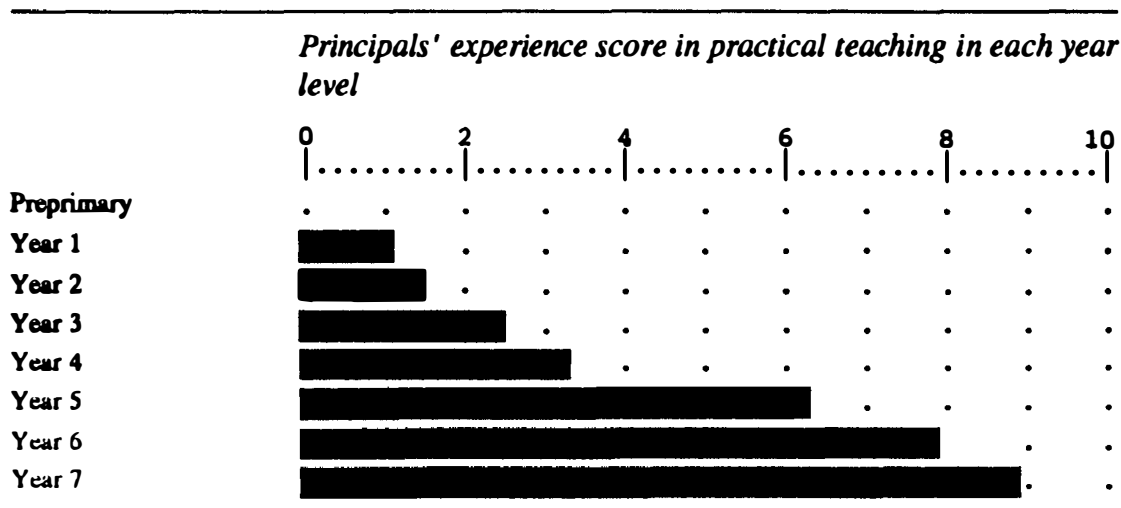


Figure 4.36 Principals' experience in practical teaching in each year level.

Within the preprimary year the principals' experience score was 2 with 4 principals failing to respond to this question. The one principal who stated experience was held in this year level responded "1 session a week P/P." (0.08)

The data show that only one principal had ever taught preprimary and this was for one session a week. As this question did not accommodate space for split classes several principals indicated that they had recorded these year levels separately.

4.4.2 Academic qualifications in early childhood.

Principals were asked to indicate their formal academic qualifications in ECE and when these courses had been undertaken.

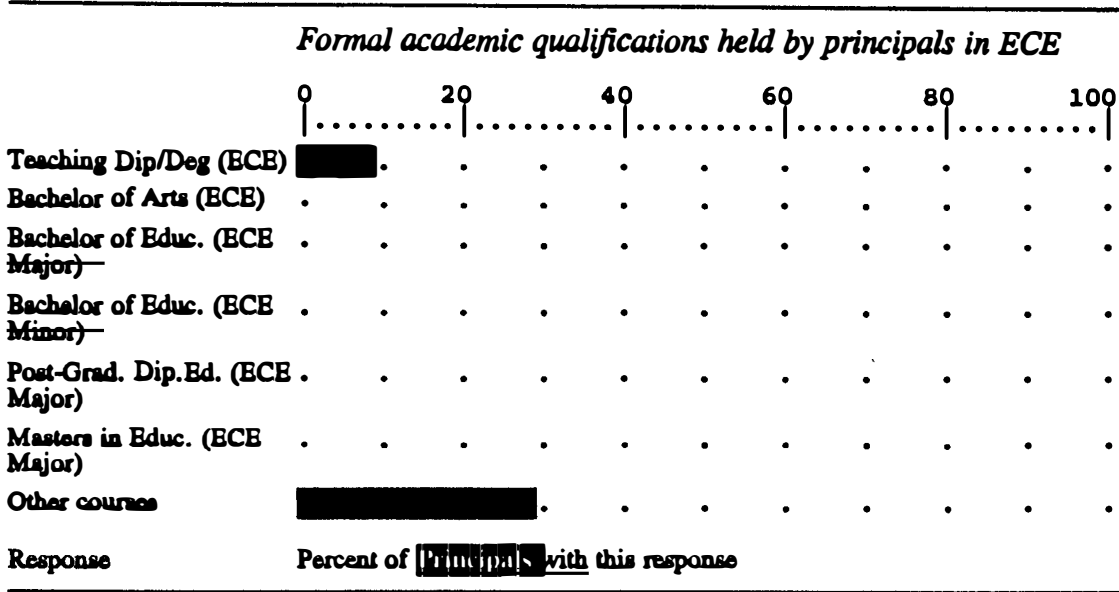


Figure 4.37 Formal academic qualifications of principals in ECE.

Eight percent (2) principals stated they held a teaching diploma/degree ECE. One principal stated this was completed in 1966 but the second principal ticked this box without stating the year of its completion.

Twenty nine percent of principals stated the completion of "Other Courses." Principals who stated other courses listed the following:

- Teachers Higher Certificate. 1975. (1)
- Post-Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Studies 1982-3 or 1981-82. (Churchlands 1st year of course) Diploma Ed. University of W.A. - a major study was on the history of preprimary-pre-school in W.A. Initial teaching qualification (Teachers Cert., Claremont T.C. had Junior Primary Major. (1)
- Junior primary method - way back.(1)
- No formal qualifications in ECE. My college course involved compulsory units in early education - "Infant Method". Teachers H.C. (1970) and Dip Ed and B. Ed units also contained units that looked at theoretical/practical ed. K-12. (1)
- B.A.; THC; 2 Year Primary Course (Including "Infant Method") (1)

4.4.3 Early childhood workshops, inservices, seminars, mini-weekend courses attended by principals.

Principals were asked to list any Early Childhood workshops, inservices, seminars, mini-weekend courses attended. The responses of principals to this question have been listed below:-

- None. (12)
- Full-time 5 year old mixed. 1 day 1992. (2)
- ELIC Workshops 9 x 1 hr. 1985/86. (2)
- 1st. Steps programmes in Language. 4 days (1993) (1)
- Pre-primary teaching lecture/workshop. 40 mins. 1988?. (1)
- Several workshops 1982-86 (1)
- Many workshops ELIC, Mitey, Language, Science, Social Studies etc. K-3. Impossible to remember them all. (1)
- 1st. steps 20 weeks 1993. (1)
- Early literacy in Education 12 weeks 1982. (1)
- Information sessions re Full-time 5 y.o. education. (1)
- Speech pathology workshop 1/2 day '91. (1)

4.4.4 Other early childhood experience.

The final question asked principals to record any other relevant Early Childhood experience they held which had assisted them in carrying out their role as principal of a preprimary centre. The responses of principals are outlined below:-

- None. (5) One principal further expanded by stating: "In 19 years as a Principal in a variety of schools, I have had direct involvement with a preprimary for only 5 years. My experiences are therefore limited due to the progress path I have taken - this is just a result of "the system"- albeit an unusual one!"

- Long interest and supervisory roles in the area.(2)
- Father of 2 children/own children. (2)
- Principal of preprimary. (2)
- Inducting a teacher into Rural Integration Program scheme in a small country school. (2)
- "Principal of Junior Primary school 5 years." (1)
- "Have been involved with preprimary Centres since they commenced in 1976 (approx) Have been involved as a parent, deputy-principal and principal." (1)
- "12 years direct supervision of a pre-primary centre including transfer of preschool to preprimary. Setting up new preprimary facility." (1)
- "Relief teaching in various pre-primary centres."(1)
- "Acting/supt. visited many preprimary centres and discussed programs, strategies etc with teachers." (1)
- "Teaching in small country school. Occasional relief."
- "Only lengthy experience in having on-site P/P centres as part of my school." (1)
- "Discussion and observation of preprimary teachers." (1)
- "Talking to District Office staff." (1)
- "Being involved in RIP and have preprimary attached to school 15 years." The principal added "There is always more to learn". (1).
- "Visits to preprimary centres in my own school and other schools over last 18 years (1976 onwards)." (1)

4.4.5 Summary.

These data outline that principals had many years experience in the upper primary years. Two principals stated that a Teaching Diploma/Degree (ECE) was held by them. One of the two principals did not state when these qualifications were taken.

Twenty nine percent of principals stated they had undertaken courses other than those illustrated, with the exception of one principal, who stated courses not specifically ECE.

Fifty percent of principals stated they had not attended any early childhood workshops, inservices, seminars or mini-weekend courses. Courses which had been undertaken ranged in time from 40 minutes duration to 20 weeks. Many of the course were not specifically E.C.E. When asked to record any other relevant early childhood experience principals presented a wide range of responses.

4.5 Further Reporting by Principals & Preprimary Teachers

4.5.1 Principals.

On completion of the questionnaire participants were invited to include additional comments. Of 24 principals and 30 preprimary teachers, 3 principals and 10 preprimary teachers chose to comment.

Two of the three principals who responded to this section informed the researcher of the type of background experience they held in the preprimary field. One principal stated - "I was superintendent of Early Childhood Education from 1977-1981 and visited, supported, advised & assessed PPT's in seven different regions.." The second principal stated - "As classroom teacher I have involved my classes in Pre Prim integration sessions with other Pre Prim teachers & I am always a keen observer in what goes on. Also have an excellent understanding of how children learn."

The last principal focussed on many relevant issues to do with preprimary education. This principal identified many important issues both historical and administrative, managerial and educational:-

"In my experience the ECE Teachers have tended to be given more control & autonomy of their centre than a classroom teacher (Both admin & education). This I feel is due to a number of factors 1. Historical - separation of kindergartens/pre-school from the former, Education System. That independence continues until former teachers of that system have retired - (strong in country still). 2. Separate site tends to necessitate greater control to on site teacher & parents. 3. Lack of expertise/knowl of Principals - tend to let ECE teacher do their own educational programme." This principal further tells of the difficulty faced by a person who is not flexible in changing within different systems: "I have seen graduate ECE's run an off-site P/P each morning - with almost sole control of their centre, switch each afternoon to teach classes in the primary school where they did not share the same independence."

4.5.2 Preprimary teachers.

The teacher responses covered four main areas and results are presented within these areas.

(a) Administration/Management

Three preprimary teachers responded to administrative/managerial issues with one teacher stating "I think that as long as the administration side runs smoothly and there are no parent complaints, the P/P can be left alone."

Another preprimary teacher highlighted the problems occurring with an off-site centre. "...as ours is an off-site centre, it has been difficult for him to visit the P/P, except for the above reasons." Reasons this teacher gave were visits to supervise prac students for 1/2 hour and visits to attend parent committee meetings for 1 hour.

One preprimary teacher commended the assistance and support given to her by the principal: - "After moving from secondary teaching to this area after re-training, I find the principal has shown me much support & assistance in dealing with administrative matters.

(b) Educational Issues

Six preprimary teachers responded on educational issues. Each of the responses focused on a principal's knowledge of preprimary education.

One preprimary teacher highlighted concerns by stating: "I think radical re-education of principals and classrooms teachers, Yr. 1-7 is necessary before there will be any improvement." The same teacher expanded by stating "The principal does not value the P/P as a legitimate "class" i.e. its learning is less valuable than that done Yrs 1-7".

One preprimary teacher stated she was a temporary teacher who worked in a different school each year. This teacher stated: "Some principals read a great deal about P/P ed & therefore are able to advise & discuss things with you. They are also in a better position to do the assessments that temp. teachers have to undergo each year!"

Another preprimary teacher highlighted concerns related to a principal's knowledge of preprimary education: "I feel there should be regular workshops for discussion of this relationship over the next few years because there are so many different "shades of grey" of a principal's understanding of P.P work." The views of this preprimary teacher are further supported by a colleague: "I feel that the majority of principals have little understanding or knowledge about Pre-primary education programmes. They are not trained in this area & because the majority of principals are male they do not easily see the value of play & exploratory learning in early childhood education."

Further comments by preprimary teachers were: "I feel that the principals that I have had contact with have no idea of how developmental learning occurs in the P/P. The impression that I get from Principals is that learning in P/P should be formal & subject-based, compared to informal, integrated & developmental." Another teacher wrote: "Since ECE is such a specialised area, I feel that principals need to be thoroughly inserviced on the philosophies of early childhood education, the importance of developm. learning & of `play'! Their ignorance of these educational aspects shows clearly when there is a growing demand for accountability, assessment & results from the ECE area, especially K-1, knowledge & experience in the ECE area should be made a key component of a principal's promotional merit."

(c) Human Issues

The following comments of teachers reflect human issues:

"As we are largely left to our own devices, it is easier to plan and implement in isolation than to push for a change which results in defensiveness & ill feeling from the other staff."

"My principal is much too polite to express his views overtly & knows such attitudes are not acceptable. However it is glaringly obvious that he does not see the importance of pre-primary education & how it provides the 'scaffolding' for later formal education."

"He is extremely supportive with our inclusion into the school. I am on the SBMG, (School Based Management Group) we go to school for morning tea every Friday, take part in assemblies & visit the school library once a week. He is a super boss!"

"Do principals really value P/P's or are they something that has to be tolerated because we are under their jurisdiction? I have found that the most prevalent attitude of principals is that preprimary's have so much - resources, finance, student - teacher ratio, space etc & the primary school has so little."

(d) Other Issues

Teachers also commented on the issue of recency in working with a particular principal:

"Have only worked with current principal for 13 weeks & so find some of this difficult to answer accurately."

4.6 Summary of questionnaire data.

The questionnaire data represented responses from 24 principals and 30 preprimary teachers within the one metropolitan district of the Ministry of Education, Perth, Western Australia.

The nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals, as reported by the principal and the preprimary teacher in the preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership were outlined in the chapter. In the area of administration/management principals were primarily involved in 2 out of the 7 areas. The remaining five areas were found to involve preprimary teachers. On educational issues the principal was primarily involved in 3 out of 10 areas and 6 out of 10 areas were found to be undertaken by preprimary teachers. In the remaining 1 area (Who provides inservice and professional development for preprimary teachers?) the majority of preprimary teachers responded the K-3 adviser while the majority of principals stated the principal was involved.

Crosstabulation undertaken outlined the percentage of schools in which the principal and preprimary teacher agreed to the specified issues. Within administrative/managerial issues there were only 13 out of 49 instances when both the principal and the preprimary teacher were in agreement. Educational issues brought a similar response with principals and their preprimary teacher agreeing 23 out of 70 times.

All principals stated they were involved in teacher appraisal with 58% of principals stating theoretical knowledge of E.C.E. was held by the appraiser and 46% stating no practical background was held.

The majority of principals and preprimary teachers felt principals visited the preprimary centre on a weekly basis, although some responses indicated a wider range of monthly, each term, once a year and none at all. There was agreement overall by the majority of participants that the length of these visits was "up to 15 minutes duration." The majority of principals and preprimary teachers stated a greater number of visits were due to administrative/managerial issues.

The data indicated that a greater number of principals appear to be content with issues related to administration and management. The introduction of educational issues resulted in a greater number of principals responding "unsure" or indicating performance which was not as adequate as that seen with administrative/managerial issues. Principals identified needs in the areas of administration/management and education.

When asked to respond to specific problems which have arisen as a result of their leadership role within the preprimary centre half of the principals stated none while the remainder stated problems had arisen and listed them.

In response to the types of workshops or seminars principals would like to see offered, assessing and evaluating young children's progress received highest priority. The area assigned lowest priority was reading instruction in preprimary education. The majority of principals ranked mandating preprimary training, providing each school with a set of materials which outline developmentally appropriate practices and providing professional development courses for principals, by giving each a ranking of "medium priority" with 83% of principals stating providing professional development courses was of "medium to very high priority."

Principals held a greater number of years experience in the upper primary years, with one principal stating experience was held in the preprimary year, although this was limited to one session per week. There were only two out of 24 principals who stated they held ECE qualifications with one principal failing to state when these qualifications were taken. Fifty percent of principals stated they had not attended any courses relevant to preprimary education and the principals who stated they had, reported that courses ranged from 40 minutes duration to 20 weeks.

Responses given willingly by three principals and ten preprimary teachers at the completion of the questionnaire provided data which focused on administrative/managerial and educational issues. Human issues were also interwoven into the data.

Interview Data

Six principals were asked to provide feedback on selected findings highlighted by the recently completed questionnaire.

The interview schedule was comprised of 10 questions which provided further data of value to the study. Three questions focused on the nature and extent of involvement of primary school principals, as reported by the principal and the preprimary teacher, in the preprimary centre in the areas of administrative, managerial and educational leadership. One question focused on principals' perceptions about their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres and three questions provided further data relevant to the kinds of professional development needs principals perceive they have in contending with preprimary. There were no questions pertaining to the nature and extent of formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals responsible for preprimary centres, as data from the questionnaire had provided this information. The remaining three questions reflected on issues relevant to the research questions and future replicability of the study.

4.7.1 Interviews with six principals

When presented with the finding that the majority of principals and preprimary teachers stated the principal was primarily involved in 2 out of 7

administrative/managerial issues and 3 out of 10 educational issues, all principals' concurred that the results were not surprising. Reasons offered by principals are presented. (The number in parenthesis indicates the total number of principals concurring with each statement).

The areas stipulated by the questionnaire were the responsibility of the principal under the direction of the Ministry of Education, despite questionnaire data illustrating that these areas did not always indicate principal involvement. (2) The view was also held that in theory principals are meant to become Ministry of Education managers but in practice this would only happen with inexperienced teachers and often principals hesitated to get involved when faced with a preprimary teacher from the old preschool system where things were done differently. (2) According to one principal preprimary teachers working independently when managing the Centre has always been seen as a natural course of events. (1)

One reason outlined was when a preprimary teacher was experienced and able to articulate clearly to the principal how each child was going there was a tendency to leave it to him or her rather than becoming involved. (1)

The location of a preprimary centre was seen as a significant issue in that it was felt that "When a preprimary centre is off-site the preprimary teacher is used to managing own responsibilities. (1)

When principals were asked to comment on why the other areas indicated little involvement by principals, five out of the six principals presented reasons.

Each principal's lack of experience and understanding of preprimary programs made it difficult for him/her to become involved in all the areas stipulated by the Ministry of Education. (1) Generally principals viewed the preprimary teacher as

more knowledgeable in preprimary and therefore the best person to guide some of the issues listed in the questionnaire. (3) A view expressed by one principal was "Organisationally the preprimary is the only classroom with a telephone so issues of welfare are best handled by the person there." (1)

The questionnaire data also showed that 19 out of 24 principals said they visited the preprimary centre solely for "administrative/managerial issues" with 1 principal stating visits were due to "educational issues" and 4 principals stating "administrative/managerial and educational issues." When principals were asked whether the results came as a surprise the six principals responded "No". When asked what reasons might be given for this pattern, the following views were presented by principals:

The physical placement of a preprimary centre determined the degree of involvement. (3) "If the centre is on the school grounds there is better involvement." (1) The principal's busy work load often necessitated communication with the preprimary through the use of a telephone rather than through personal visits. (1) Two principals stated a lack of knowledge about preprimary educational syllabus issues as a reason for the lack of involvement of principals in educational issues. One principal said the lack of accountability in preprimary as compared to the primary school resulted in greater involvement of principals in the primary school. The attitude towards some principals towards preprimary was suggested by one principal as being an important reason. "Principals see preprimary as a socialisation process or as preparation for primary school, which was judged less critically than primary school."

Principals were informed that within Part A of the questionnaire consensus of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers was reached 11 out of 49 times

(approx. 25%) in the area of administration and management and 23 out of 70 times (approx. 1/3) in education. Two of the six principals concurred that the results were not surprising, one principal did not comment, while three principals reported surprise. Reasons given by principals for this occurrence are outlined below:

"As long as the preprimary centre ran according to Ministry Guidelines principals allowed preprimary teachers to carry on with their work. Principals have always acknowledged a divergence of opinion between themselves and preprimary teachers on the matters found within the questionnaire." (1) According to another principal "This divergence of opinion has arisen in the past as a result of preschools having run their own administrative, managerial and educational issues and then converted to preprimary centres. This situation exists today in government centres." (1)

One principal called for clear definitions of principals and preprimary teachers' roles in written form or through inservices. "It is obviously apparent there is a great lack of understanding and confusion." (1) The clarity to the principal of what are the roles and responsibilities expected of them in preprimary centres is often not clearly depicted in the data. Data from one principal indicates despite an awareness of what role principals should be taking in practical sense this role is not always implemented. "Theoretically this is what the principal should be doing and practically this is what the preprimary teachers are doing. Perhaps the preprimary teachers feel responsible because they actually do the duties but principals feel responsible for these duties because it is their responsibility." (1)

A reason offered for principals' lack of involvement in certain issues appeared to focus on a lack of preprimary understanding. "A lot of principals are not preprimary trained so we feel out of our depth on educational syllabus issues." (1) In addition a further issue which often emerged in the study data was the physical

position of the preprimary centre. "The placement of a centre is important. If it is on site you become more involved." (1) A new issue was seen to emerge as a result of the interview question which was the practicality of transition between the preprimary and primary school which may affect continuity between K and Year 1. "Interaction between preprimary teachers, Year 1 teachers and the primary school is not practical due to session hours and the different nature of each program. Transition is seen at the end of the year only. Preprimary is viewed as informal learning unlike Year 1 which is formal." (1)

Principals were presented with data from the questionnaire which indicated that principals were more comfortable when dealing with administrative/managerial issues rather than educational. Educational issues resulted in a greater number of principals responding "unsure" or indicating performance which was not as adequate as that seen with administration and management. All principals concurred that the results were not surprising. Reasons offered for the data centred around three main issues.

First administration/management are issues principals are well-versed in and do not require regular visits to the preprimary centre. "Administration is an area and issue principals do all the time but not many principals if any have trained in preprimary." (1) "Preprimary administration can be done behind the principal's desk without going to the centre so there is not as much physical involvement with the preprimary." (1)

Second principals need a deeper understanding of preprimary education. "Most principals are familiar with Years 1-7 but far less sure of what should be going on in preprimary. We have less confidence. Most male principals are conversant with middle and upper primary classes, less so with Junior Primary and even less so in

preprimary, as we haven't taught in it and it's relatively new - 10 years".(1) Three principals further reported a lack of inservices and understanding of preprimary philosophical issues.

Third principals do not appear to have an avenue in which they are comfortable with, in which they can seek and gain information about preprimary education. There may be a reluctance by some principals to approach the Ministry of Education. One principal stated "In contrast with the primary school, principals with problems in preprimary cannot go to each other for assistance as they know they probably won't get that help as few if any principals hold expertise in preprimary. People don't like ringing the Ministry all the time. Providing professional development courses is one way out without others realising how ignorant one is on the field. You realise how ignorant one is on the preprimary field when something gets a high profile like all day 5 year olds." (1)

Fourth an acknowledgement by one principal that "There is definitely something lacking when principals are happy to let preprimary teachers run alone."

When it came to professional development, Principals were informed that over one-third of principals stated they needed professional development assistance when faced with implementing Ministry guidelines and policies into the preprimary centre. Principal's were asked how effective the present Ministry of Education Guidelines have been in adequately outlining the principal's leadership role within the preprimary centre.

One principal "refused" to comment on this issue. The remaining three principals reported the guidelines were inadequate "Guidelines were not very adequate and principals when faced with an educational problem have not been provided with a solution." (1) A second principal responded "We have not had clear cut guidelines.

I've been a principal 15 years and haven't had inservices on what goes on in preprimary and I have always had a preprimary; right through the 15 years. The only thing provided within that time were the Ministry Guidelines, but definitely no inservices." (1) One principal criticised the Ministry of Education for its lack of effectiveness in providing direction to principals. "The Ministry had not given principals a lot of direction in preprimary levels and in response to my specific question not a lot at all." (1) A further principal stated "The Ministry of Education did not do a good job when transferring independent preschools or kindergartens to schools." (1) When asked to elaborate on this the principal would only respond "Issues are many and varied."

The six principals were then asked how the Guidelines could be improved. Responses clustered into three main areas.

First a defined syllabus with detail to educational issues and written answers for issues raised by principals. "The Ministry of Education had to make a defined syllabus of what the expectations are across the whole system and help solve the "philosophy battle" where one preprimary teacher allowed a lot of freedom within the program to children while another teacher was stricter and saw preprimary as giving children a head start for school." (1) A second principal stated a need for written answers to what he termed the "finance dilemma." The principal stated "A written resolution of the finance dilemma in that preprimary centres are acting independently of the school in fundraising and fee collection which can be counterproductive to fund raising for the rest of the school and cause some conflict over the amount of money that is consumed in preprimary centres."(1)

Second one principal highlighted a need for inservices "A need for inservices with principals, preprimary teachers and aides aimed at developing ways of

evaluating preprimary programmes as they fit the school development plan K-7. The principal preferred involvement of at least Year 1 teachers at these inservices.(1) A second principal stated "The provision of sessions which would have principals a greater understanding of preprimary developments."

Third conflict between the preschool and preprimary systems which needs to be addressed. "Improvement is seen as difficult while there is conflict between the preschool and preprimary system. Teachers hired by the Ministry were seen to take on different roles when assigned to preschools. There was always conflict within the preprimary syllabus." (1)

Fourth one principal responded "Not having looked at them for quite a while and not being familiar with them I cannot comment." (1)

Principals were informed that the majority of principals had given "medium priority" to mandating preprimary training for principals, providing each school with a set of materials which outline developmentally appropriate practice and "medium" to "very high priority" to providing professional development courses.

All principals concurred that the results were not surprising and presented their views. One principal felt "While there was an unwillingness by principals to mandate professional development, there was a necessity to provide it." Two principals further presented their views by warning that mandating preprimary training will place an air of "compulsion" and will not necessarily guarantee "ownership" and "belief" in this area. These two components are vital for successful implementation. A further principal saw no need for preprimary training for principals as "they would not be teaching in the area."

One principal felt "there was a need for a clear set of materials which inform principals about student outcome of preprimary children." However another principal cautioned "The provision for each school of a clear set of materials is inadequate on its own as often these materials are left on the shelf or misinterpreted differently by different principals." A further principal felt professional development courses were "a better way of raising principal's awareness and identifying materials they should have in the school." A further issue was addressed by one principal - conflict of roles. The principal stated "Experts in the field need to explain programs in the presence of both preprimary teachers and principals so each persons' point of view can be understood. There's a conflict of roles as the Ministry states preprimary centres are under the school but in reality it doesn't happen."

One principal further added a solution was necessary for the dilemma caused by preprimary children crossing boundaries as a result of the full-time five year old centres. "Preprimary children who chose to go to another district and come back seeking Year 1 entrance to the school, were causing big administrative problems. The principal stated the whole preprimary five year old issue was "hotchpotch" and stated a need for professional development and an overall policy for the early childhood system, which would include points for and against preprimary."

Whatever the direction taken by the Ministry of Education the four principals interviewed added a need for preprimary knowledge and understanding, with the remaining two principals stating there was an evident lack of principals confidence in the preprimary areas.

The six principals when asked if there were areas other than the ones noted which would/should be priorities, responded by stating:

1. "The concept of K-7 is needed in a school development plan to involve K in everything that is happening in the school." The principal felt although all staff have been involved in First Steps this only allowed for a continuum in Language and Maths areas to be passed on to Year 1 as useful information.(1)
2. Providing principals with a solution for getting K-2 people to see themselves as a unit so principals can convince teachers it can work. K-2 teachers need to be involved in professional development in this area. The principal felt despite the best efforts of everyone preprimary is very much an appendage of what goes on in this school. The principals see the need for an honest appraisal of K-2 as a continuing educational procedure.(1)
3. "No, the issues were covered fairly well." (5)

Principals were then provided with a summary list of the professional development needs most principals identified and asked whether they had attended any Ministry of Education professional development courses this year which were focused on the early years. One principal had attended a professional development course, unlike the remaining five principals. Comments given by principals are outlined below:

1. No comment could be made on how valuable any such courses had been, as none had been provided.(2)
2. An inservice course on 22/10/1993 had been attended and was found to be of value. However, it had not covered the areas of need stipulated by principals within this study. The principal recommended strongly the involvement of the Year 1 teachers at future meetings.(1)
3. "First Steps helped in a small way in putting little children on a continuum but that a small amount of professional development was found and there was a need for a wider far reaching professional development package." (1)

4. First Steps may have placed preprimary on a continuum but the structure was seen as relevant for Year 1 upwards not preprimary. "If anything it makes preprimary teachers aware of educational structure of programs in schools, that is all. It does not teach any preprimary techniques." (2)

Principals were informed that the questionnaire had surveyed one regional district and were asked if this district was different to other metropolitan districts in any particular way. Two principals stated that administrative, managerial and educational issues were the same in all government schools. One principal thought there would be greater involvement in preprimary by principals in country areas where there was "a higher profile in community/family issues." An issue raised by one principal focused on the district in which the study was conducted. "This district was different to others as the district contained many long serving principals and teachers and was a hard district to get into. The principal felt there was a lower changeover in staff when compared to other districts." Two principals added that this area had a stronger socio-economic base than others with parent expectations that principals were more involved in preprimary as with other sectors of the school. However one of the two principals added "Educational issues were the same and that all districts under the Ministry were educational districts and should be comparable in meeting their own competence." The second principal added "the issues and results of this study would be fairly accurate anywhere."

When asked if the questionnaire was taken to another district if the pattern of results would be similar all principals concurred that the results should be similar. Reasons given by principals were:

1. The results are not affected by district.(4)

2. "You have presented this information to me as a principal and principals would have a similar concern no matter where they are. These issues don't change with area." (1)
3. "At the base of it are the Ministry policy and guidelines which are the same for all principals." (1)

Principals were informed that the questionnaire had focused on preprimary and that the researcher was aware that their role was much broader being K-7. Principals were asked to comment on how the administrative, managerial and educational role was balanced across the different parts of the school.

The six principals agreed that less time is spent with preprimary when compared to other years within the school. The principals suggested various reasons which included a lack of confidence and understanding of preprimary by principals which was not the case with other primary grades. In addition one principal stated "You attempt to go down to the preprimary whenever you can see them. It takes on a very small role in terms of time due to the focus on testing throughout the school which means preprimary comes as a very poor last. That's the way it is." One principal did however state involvement with the preprimary due to testing. "This year my preprimary teacher is a good manager while last year I spent more time with the preprimary testing for L-R handedness."

Supervision of student teachers was an instance in which equal time was given to preprimary as in other year classes, according to one principal. The one principal who had attended an inservice day stated, "As my preprimary is on site and I now have a greater awareness from the inservice day, I can now see what steps we need to take to improve the concept of K-7 in the school and in particular K-1 transition.

This will result in a different balance of preprimary within the school than in the past." (1)

Principals were asked to comment on any issues about preprimary or early childhood other than those raised. Principal responses are outlined below:

1. "If politicians got out of it and left decisions to the experts preprimary would be better off. My view is its obscene for politicians to make decisions, throw them at schools and expect schools to be experts and competent particularly when their decisions are made at short notice".(1)
2. All issues were covered. (1)
3. "We need to have an honest look at full-time five year olds and question whether four year olds have a place in the school system. Also an honest look at K-2." (1)
4. "Resolving the problems of this five year old issue across the board. I'm very interested in and know little about the integration of K-1 and perhaps 2." (1)
5. "I'm amazed at how preprimary teachers are responsible for finances, meetings and other different things not done by a classroom teacher." (1)
6. "I wish they would sort it all out. It will not be an easy solution and will linger for a long time as long as philosophy and differences of viewpoints are so strong. The media has not helped by emphasising these differences and disunity between preprimary people is a strong issue. I think primary schools were fortunate in that they were established before the media and were not highly publicised." (1)

4.8 Summary of interview data.

Interviews which followed revealed concurrence by all principals who stated no surprise with the questionnaire data in all instances with the exception of one. The one issue presented to principals which resulted in a mixture of surprise with the questionnaire data was the consensus of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers reached 13 out of 49 times (approximately 25%) in the area of administration and management and 23 out of 70 times (approximately 1/3) in education. In this instance 2 principals showed no surprise at the data, 3 principals were surprised and 1 principal did not comment.

Significant issues which emerged from the interview data were:

1. A divergence of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers has always existed on matters addressed by the questionnaire.
2. Principal lack of experience, confidence and understanding of preprimary educational curriculum issues.
3. Principals see preprimary as being less critical than primary due to the structure of the program and the fact that there is greater accountability in primary education.
4. There is a need to clarify roles, evaluate what is happening, make a "defined syllabus" and help solve the "philosophy battle."
5. Involvement by principals in the preprimary is dependent on the location of the preprimary centre and the fact that preprimary centres have telephones.
6. When preprimary teachers are experienced there is a tendency to leave issues to them rather than become involved.
7. Theoretically principals should be involved in these issues but practically they are carried out by preprimary teachers.

8. Preprimary teachers are seen as more knowledgeable in preprimary than the principal.
9. There is no avenue other than the Ministry of Education for principals to gain assistance. There is a reluctance by principals to use this avenue.
10. Interaction between preprimary teachers, Year 1 teachers and primary schools is not practical due to preprimary hours being different from primary school hours. There is a need for knowledge and guidance on how to integrate K-3.
11. Less time is made available to the preprimary centre than other primary years throughout the school, with the exception of time available for student teachers.
12. One principal had attended a Ministry of Education professional development course which focused on the early years.
13. There was opposition to mandating preprimary training for principals on the ground that it would not guarantee "ownership" and "belief" in the area and would place an air of "compulsion" on the issue.
14. A need for professional development courses in the presence of both preprimary teachers and principals.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses and uses the results of the questionnaire and interview data in conjunction with the literature review as a basis for its recommendations and implications.

5.1 Principals' Perceptions about their Adequacy as Leaders

Prior to the commencement of this study anecdotal comments by several preprimary teachers, early childhood specialists and principals, coupled with concerns raised by educational writers in the literature focused on the quality of leadership provided by principals to preprimary/Kindergarten teachers. In order to address these issues this study sought principals' perceptions in regards to their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres.

Questionnaire and interview data showed the majority of principals indicated administration and management as their most important role. When asked how well they fulfilled this leadership role in the preprimary centre 79% of principals stated "very well" to "well" with 8% of principals stating "poor." The introduction of educational issues resulted in a declining number of principals indicating the same level of satisfaction as that stated for administration and management. In addition a greater number of principals responded unsure in such important areas as appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers, supervision, diagnosing educational problems, providing advice and support in curriculum development and implementation, and providing advice and support in professional and work-related areas.

The educational areas identified by the data as causing concern to some principals are leadership components vital for the achievement of competence and excellence in schooling. (Jorde-Bloom, 1988; Keefe, cited by Chalmers, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1984). Caldwell (1985) believes without the presence of all the necessary components of leadership "quality and excellence in schools cannot be achieved" (p. 22).

This study sought to determine the reasons why the introduction of educational issues resulted in a declining number of principals indicating adequacy in the specified areas. In other studies educational writers such as Chapman (1986), Deer (1982), Rallis & Highsmith (1986) outlined the difficulties faced by principals and gave reasons such as devolution of power, added leadership responsibilities and time restraints. These factors were said to have often lead to success or failure when additional preparation and training was not provided to principals (Chapman, 1986). However these factors were not ones indicated by principals as reasons for this trend in the data. The perceptions of the six principals were sought and various reasons given for the data.

First principals stated a lack of knowledge and experience held in preprimary education. The literature supported the need for school leaders to hold a deep knowledge of educational components in areas within the school (Caruso, 1989; Johnson & Snyder, 1986; Lyons, Hildebrandt, Johnson & Holdaway, 1987; McCormack-Larkin, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1984; Smith & Andrews, 1989). The recent trend within New Jersey to employ principals without teaching background still acknowledged the need for principals to hold an educational background and required them to serve an internship before taking charge of a school. In addition, the appraisal and evaluation of teachers is an important educational leadership role in that it affects important issues such as promotion, permanency and employment and requires a knowledge of content, methodology and learning (Caruso, 1989).

Second, preprimary was perceived as specialised and its philosophy different from that of the primary school. Within the literature writers such as Elkind (1988), Fishhaut & Pastor (1977), Hitz & Wright (1988), Seefeldt (1988), Tayler (1992) and Thurman (1970) outlined significant differences between kindergarten and elementary education which need to be understood by educational leaders. In the majority of cases preprimary education as a result of its own curriculum, teaching style, classroom management and evaluation is often distinguishable to other primary years. In respect to "philosophy" at present within Western Australia principals in charge of preprimary centres are faced with an enormous range of preprimary programs based on various early childhood theories, philosophies and approaches dominated by individual beliefs and values which often cause conflict within the early childhood field.

Third, was a lack of inservice education to support principals' needs in this area. As school's re-organise and greater powers and areas of responsibility are handed to principals, there is a need to be reviewing these changes continually and ensuring that appropriate training and guidance is given to people affected by that re-organisation.

Fourth, principals reported feeling uncomfortable going to the Education Department for assistance in preprimary issues and they knew that approaching other principals would not provide them with any more knowledge than what they held. An unwillingness to seek assistance from the Education Department and a preference to gain that knowledge from colleagues was an issue reflected in the literature by Rowley (1991) who acknowledged the fear by principals in damaging their image if they were to admit they lacked knowledge in this area.

The reality remains that the Education Department of Western Australia stipulates principals are to take on an administrative, managerial and educational role within

the primary school. The Western Australian Primary Principal's Association in 1989 reported and clarified this role to principals in a report which established the primary principal's role as an educational leader of teachers. The Education Department may have failed to address and stipulate as a criteria for job promotion the need for principals of preprimary centres to be knowledgeable in this area. When seeking principals for early childhood centres (K-2) the Education Department has stated a preference for the applicant to hold preprimary teaching experience. However, this has not been addressed within job descriptions for principals of K-7 schools. The Education Department's Strategic Plan 1994-1996 outlines the changes and directions to be applied until 1996 and promises "*management and leadership support* to enable management staff, especially principals, to fulfil their roles most effectively" (p. 2). There is, however, no indication of what form this assistance and support will take. The only mention of preprimary within this plan addresses reviewing options for the implementation of full-time preprimary programs. Within the Western Australian government school system preprimary centres have been operating for approximately 20 years.

These issues are important when the Education Department of Western Australia not only expects principals to undertake a leadership role in administration, management and education but to hold responsibility for key issues such as teacher appraisal and evaluation. Issues perceived by principals as having an affect on their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary centres need to be identified and addressed by the Education Department of Western Australia.

5.2 Principals' Perceived Professional Development Needs

When principals were asked to report their greatest need in the areas of administration and management most principals responded knowing how to implement Education Department guidelines and policies into the preprimary centre.

Principals reported the only written documentation provided to date by the Education Department was the 1989 publication *Guidelines, Pre-primary, Pre-school Administration* which was perceived as inadequate. Grievances voiced by five of the six interviewed principals focused on inadequate guidelines given to schools, issues which had not been resolved when transferring kindergartens to schools and little if any professional development for principals. Several principals perceived improvement to be difficult while conflict still existed between the preschool system and primary schools. The need to resolve the problem of finance was highlighted as important in dealing with conflict between school staff over the amount of money that was being allocated to the preprimary classes.

Most principals in the District surveyed reported professional development needs in respect to educational issues. A similar pattern to that found when principals stated their adequacy as leaders in educational issues appeared when principals' professional development needs were discussed. The introduction of educational issues resulted in a higher number of principals identifying these needs than with administrative/managerial issues. Evidence of this is found in the data with fifty percent and over of principals identifying needs in areas considered necessary for competence and excellence in education. These needs included a knowledge base of preprimary education, how to evaluate what children have learnt and preprimary methods and teaching strategies. Slightly less than 50% of principals (46%) identified needs in curriculum for 5 and 4 year olds.

The educational issues principals perceived as professional development needs are important educational leadership components and are further re-iterated as needs in data dealing with specific seminars, courses or workshops principals wanted offered. (See Figure 4.32). When principals were asked to rank from 1-9 issues they felt they would like to see offered as seminars, courses or workshops the area to gain greatest preference was "assessing and evaluating young children's

progress." In contrast the area of receive lowest ranking from principals was "reading instruction in preprimary education."

Educational writers such as Bredekamp & Shephard (1988), Elkind (1988), Hitz & Wright (1988), Kamii (1985), Sava (1989), Bredekamp & Shephard (1988) and associations such as N.A.E.Y.C. report on the existence of programs within the U.S.A. which ignore past theories on how young children learn best and are based on academically orientated programs incorporating factors such as reading instruction. Within the United States studies such as that undertaken by Shepard & Smith (1989) highlighted a great number of children being taught to read in kindergarten, strong pressure to teach reading and a cry from several educationists of the inappropriateness of this practice. Data from this study seemed to reflect a reluctance by most Western Australian principals to involve themselves with educational issues within the preprimary centre rather than the exertion of persuasion on teachers to teach reading and adopt academically orientated programs.

With the focus on continuity of learning between preprimary and years 1, 2 and 3 in Western Australian schools (Continuity Working Party, 1985) a greater focus of professional development in this area was expected. Anecdotal comments from early childhood professionals and data from this study including the Ministerial Statement on the Report of the Scott Task Force (1994) have shown that preprimary centres have not been integrated as well as anticipated into the primary schools. Attention to continuity involves linking curriculum content, methodology, teaching styles and evaluations within the school. In applying the principle of continuity each part of the school is linked together to make it workable and to achieve a high level of cohesiveness between staff members. Data in this study showed principals also perceived the need for inservices with principals, preprimary teachers, aides and at least Year 1 teachers as a team so each person's point of view could be

grasped with a view to helping ease tensions between all parties. Yet principals rated the "relationship of preschool to primary school" seventh in priority, following issues such as "the principal's supervisory responsibilities" and "philosophy & practices of integrated developmental programs." Within the United States Campbell (1987) found 74% of principals identified this area as a professional development need. Caldwell (cited by Bell, 1980) stated "the concern for continuity is one of the strong arguments for including early childhood centres in public schools, but this continuity has not occurred in the 34 years that California has had early childhood centres in their public schools" (p. 26). Further attention to the meaning and relevance of continuity across preschool and primary is warranted given this data.

Within this study most principals clearly outlined a preference for having their professional development needs met through the provision of professional development courses and through formal statements. The Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training (September, 1991) provided a national directive:

It is imperative that those who are responsible for the early years of schooling receive appropriate training and executive support, so that effective curriculum, professional and organisational leadership are exercised in all centres of learning and teaching concerned with young children. (p. 15)

An avenue which may be considered by the Education Department is that principals who have attended professional development in the field of preprimary education may be given priority entrance to primary schools so that principals are placed in schools which are the best match for their particular skills and strengths. One of the principals who was interviewed in this study perceived that providing each school with a set of materials which outline developmentally appropriate practices may cause concern if this material is left on the shelf or interpreted differently by

different principals. Data from this study showed the majority of principals sought a set of material outlining "developmentally appropriate practices."

The professional development needs perceived by principals need to be addressed as they derive from principal lack of confidence, experience and knowledge. Whether information is dispersed by the Education Department through professional development groups, whereby principals will not have to approach the Education Department individually for assistance or whether preprimary training for principals is mandated are issues which need to be addressed. Campbell (1987) and Goodrich (1981) reported there was a scarcity of published literature which focused on issues such as the availability of information about the role of principal in kindergarten programs in relation to the role of the principal and principal's perceptions of professional development needs. Campbell (1987) reported that although some states have attempted to meet principals' needs through regular inservice training "a search of the professional literature has yielded very little systematic effort to determine the areas in which principals themselves identified their needs concerning implimentation (sic) of early childhood education" (p. 91). In situations in which professional literature is not as abundant in preprimary as in other sectors of schooling then professional development should take priority.

The perceptions of principals as to their professional development needs must be addressed. In this study the one principal who was interviewed and who attended a "Professional Development Day" in 1993 noted that although useful it did not include areas highlighted by principals in this study as professional development needs. One principal who was interviewed felt that mandating preprimary training for principals may be seen as placing an air of "compulsion" which would not necessarily guarantee "ownership" of the area. Providing principals with some compulsory units in respect to sector specific areas such as preprimary are options which need to be considered. The importance of professional development for

principals and the need for a positive attitude towards existing or new areas in schools is addressed in the literature (Jorde-Bloom, 1988; Keefe, cited by Chalmers, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1984). The literature (Johnson & Snyder, 1986) focused on the willingness and acceptance of principals to receive professional development assistance. This was generally found to be true in this study with one principal stating "unsure that I want to be involved in getting help in this area due to other priorities - probably need help though."

Issues such as these need to be recognised and acted upon so that the kinds of professional development needs principals perceived they had when contending with any problems related to preprimary, will be met.

5.3 Formal Education & Experience of E.C.E. held by Principals

Within the District surveyed 22 out of 24 principals reported they held no qualifications in preprimary education. The two remaining principals held a teaching diploma/degree E.C.E. One principal earlier reported responsibility for appraisal and evaluation but subsequently indicated no theoretical background was held. Data from this study like those studies undertaken by Bryant et al (1989), Campbell (1987), Ferratier (1985) indicated little if any qualifications held by principals in the field of early childhood education. Educational problems faced by principals incorporating kindergartens into the school system were confirmed by Rowley (1991) through his personal experiences and are based on a lack of early childhood professional development for principals. Data within this study highlighted principal's perceptions of the need for professional development and confirmed most problems stemmed from educational issues.

One principal in the District surveyed reported prior teaching experience at the preprimary level, although this was limited to one session per week in the

preprimary. Findings of this study were that principals overall held a greater number of years experience in the upper primary years as were the findings of Bryant et al (1989), Campbell (1987) and Ferratier (1985) who found most of the principals had taught middle to upper primary grades solely.

Fifty percent of principals in the District surveyed revealed they had not attended any early childhood workshops, inservices, seminars or mini-weekend courses. Participants who stated courses had been undertaken ranged in time from 40 minutes duration to 20 weeks. Many of the courses when traced were not specifically focused on E.C.E. Only one interviewed principal had attended a professional development inservice directed to preprimary. The data illustrates that to date the Education Department of Western Australia has made available little provision for principals to acquire knowledge through early childhood workshops, inservices, seminars and courses and the provision provided may have failed to focus on early childhood issues.

The performance appraisal form issued by the Education Department of Western Australia requires the evaluator to assess the teacher's program including goals and objectives as they relate to syllabus objectives, teaching strategies and methods, knowledge of learning theory and knowledge of subject matter. According to educational writers most of the areas within this form, such as teaching strategies, methods, and learning theory differ significantly from primary education with educationists such as Fishhaut & Pastor (1977) stating "the only commonality is the field of education....The differences in curriculum, classroom objectives, teaching methods and styles are extreme" (p. 43). The view that significant differences exist between preprimary and primary schooling has already been highlighted and discussed in this chapter. In the United States of America it is argued that failure to acknowledge these differences has resulted in miseducation within early childhood centres. This issue focuses on the capacity of principals to make key decisions

about preprimary centres attached to primary schools and the knowledge base from which these decisions are derived.

Western Australian primary school principals are expected to fulfil an educational leadership role in the preprimary centre by appraising/evaluating preprimary teachers, providing advice, guidance and supervision based on a sound understanding of the content and structure of the curriculum. Data from this study reflected that most principals within the District surveyed perceived they did not hold a sound understanding of the content and structure of one sector of primary schools - the curriculum for preprimary education. That the Education Department may have failed to address the preprimary (early childhood) field is a significant issue which becomes intensified with the hurried introduction in 1993 of full-day five year old preprimary sessions within government schools. In 1994 the Western Australian Government released a ministerial statement on the Report of the Scott Task Force on voluntary full-time preprimary education and highlighted specific deficiencies. "The hurried introduction of full-time preprimary education for only one-third of the children of the state along with the poorly co-ordinated provision for four year olds is unsatisfactory" (no page). This Report does not appear to address the issue of professional development for principals in charge of full-time preprimary education in Western Australian government schools.

5.4 Involvement of principals in administrative, managerial & educational leadership

This section of the chapter identifies the nature and extent of involvement of principals in administration, management and education, presents reasons for these findings, outlines the divergence of opinion which exists between principals and preprimary teachers' responses and highlights problems which have emerged.

The majority of principals in the District surveyed reported primary involvement in 2 out of 7 administrative/managerial issues (management of implementation of Ministry of Education policies and guidelines and liaising with other organisational units within the Ministry of Education concerning administrative issues) and 3 out of 10 educational issues (supervision for preprimary teachers, inservice and professional development for preprimary teachers and educational advice/leadership for the preprimary teacher). The remaining issues indicated decreased involvement by principals.

Data from the study indicated reasons for decreased involvement by principals in the remaining areas as being lack of experience and understanding of preprimary programs, the general view that preprimary teachers were more knowledgeable in preprimary and the fact that preprimary teachers have telephones. The data indicates a need for professional development for principals in charge of preprimary education.

Another issue which appears within the data is the need for role clarification. When principals and preprimary teachers were presented with the questionnaire schedule a lack of consensus between the responses of principals as a group and preprimary teachers as a group was forthcoming. In order to come to a deeper understanding of reasons for this occurrence each principal and their respective preprimary teacher's responses were compared and data indicated the only issue in which all principals and their preprimary teachers agreed on was "who develops the preprimary program?"

Interview data revealed that principals perceived the need for written clarification of roles, acknowledged differences in the nature of preprimary and primary programming, reported inadequacy when dealing with educational syllabus issues due to a lack of training or understanding of preprimary, confirmed differences

between what was supposed to happen theoretically and what was occurring practically, and acknowledged a constant divergence of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers.

Confusion of roles and a need for clarification of duties within preprimary centres are areas indicated by the data which need to be addressed by the Education Department of Western Australia. Inconsistencies within the data are emerging such as data which show 29% of principals as opposed to 0% of preprimary teachers stated the principal identified strategies for improvement of the program and facilitating appropriate change. One-third of principals compared to 8% of preprimary teachers stated the principal monitored and assessed student outcomes. Further confusion of roles and a need for clarification of duties is seen in data which showed fifty eight percent of principals and 17% of preprimary teachers indicated that the principal ensured continuity of learning across the years K-1 with respect to content covered and methods/strategies used. Eighty-three percent of principals as compared to 17% of preprimary teachers stated the preprimary teacher provided supervision for preprimary teachers.

Contradictions were also evident within the data. For example 92% of principals reported that the principal provided educational advice/leadership for the preprimary teacher in the school which was in contrast to earlier data which reported little involvement by principals in educational issues reported by the data (The involvement of principals in 3 out of 10 educational issues). Principals felt they visited their preprimary centre more frequently in each case than what was stated by the preprimary teachers. The majority of principals and preprimary teachers stated visits were up to 15 minutes in duration. In view of the short duration of time one may question the amount of educational advice and guidance provided by principals. One must bear in mind that the nature of the visits as reported by nineteen principals were related to administrative/managerial issues, with one

principals stating educational issues and four principals stating administration/management and education.

The question which needs to be addressed is what should principals be doing? In Western Australia principals have been directed by the Education Department to provide administrative, managerial and educational leadership within all areas of the primary school, regardless of the physical location of the preprimary centre. Within this study there were 13 preprimary centres not on the school site. Preprimary education is seen as an equal component of the primary school despite the fact that attendance is not compulsory. When principals were interviewed and asked how much time is allocated to the preprimary compared to other sectors of the primary school, preprimary was seen as less significant.

In Western Australian government schools the reality remains that administration, management and education are leadership issues which are the responsibility of principals. There is no move within Western Australia to recognize the instructional leadership of teachers as addressed by Rallis & Highsmith (1986). However Chadbourne & Ingvarson (1991) report on the "Advanced Skills Teacher" which at first was to offer teachers a professional career path comparable in status to administrators. Chadbourne & Ingvarson (1991) report on a problem faced by teachers as being "so little supportive scaffolding in the form of professional development" (p. 16). At present in Western Australia it appears principals have not been provided with the written documentation and professional development needs necessary when preprimary centres were incorporated within primary schools. The importance of leadership is stressed in the literature and when not provided adequately has sometimes resulted in tension between parties. Based on anecdotal comments by preprimary teachers and data from this study, this appears to be the case within Western Australian government schools. These issues are found to be

important when schools are striving past competency into excellence and matters of promotion, appraisal and evaluation are being pursued.

Certain issues have been consistently highlighted within the questionnaire, interview data and literature review. Principals perceived the need for written clarification of roles so that confusion between delegation of roles is addressed, acknowledged differences in the nature of preprimary and primary programming, reported inadequacy when dealing with educational syllabus issues and acknowledged a constant divergence of opinion between principals and preprimary teachers.

The perceptions of principals and the areas in which they hold professional development needs are issues which need to be addressed by the Western Australian Education Department.

5.5 Other Issues

In order to justify principals' workloads in relation to the total primary school the perceptions of six principals were sought and asked to comment on how the administrative, managerial and educational role was balanced across the different parts of the school. The data confirmed that less time was spent by principals in preprimary centres and that the preprimary takes on a very small role in terms of time; equal time is deemed to be given to preprimary as in other year classes when dealing with supervision of student teachers. Principals viewed preprimary as less critical than primary, with greater accountability in primary than preprimary. One principal stated "due to the focus on testing throughout the school, preprimary comes as a very poor last." One principal stated as a result of attending the inservice day and gaining a greater awareness of preprimary, this would result in a different balance of preprimary within the school than in the past.

A further issue brought to the attention of the six principals was that the questionnaire had surveyed one regional district. Principals were asked if they felt this district was different to other metropolitan districts in any particular way. Responses by principals suggested administrative, managerial and educational issues are the same in all government schools and that the questionnaire looked at issues which are not affected by area.

When principals were asked "if the data were collected in another district would the pattern of results be similar?" all responses were affirmative. One principal added there may be a greater involvement by principals in country areas. The view was held that the results would not be affected by District as at the base of it were the Ministry Policy and Guidelines which were the same for all principals.

Finally principals were given an opportunity to comment on any issues other than those raised. Principals stated the need for politicians to leave decisions to the experts rather than make decisions, throw them at schools and expect schools to be experts and competent, particularly when decisions were made at short notice. Issues raised and needing attention were the full-time five year old question, whether four year olds should have a place in the school system, consideration of a K-2 concept, a greater knowledge of how preprimary centres work with special emphasis on the responsibility of preprimary teachers, and a need to find a solution to differences of viewpoints on philosophy. Disunity among preprimary people as a group was seen by principals as a strong issue.

5.6 Summary of chapter 5

Many key issues have been identified as a result of the study data.

This study collected data which reflected principal's perceptions about their adequacy as leaders with respect to preprimary and found the majority of principals in the District surveyed indicated administration/management was their most important role in the preprimary centre. The introduction of educational issues resulted in a greater number of principals responding unsure or indicating performance which was not as adequate as that seen with administrative/managerial issues. Interviewed principals perceived inadequacies were due to various reasons. First principals felt they lacked the necessary knowledge and experience to provide adequate leadership in preprimary education. Second principals acknowledged that preprimary is specialised and its philosophy different from primary school. Third principals had not been provided with adequate professional development assistance and there existed an unwillingness by principals to seek help from the Education Department.

Data from this study identified the kinds of professional development needs principals perceived they had when contending with any problems related to preprimary. Most principals identified their area of need within administration and management as being in the implementation of Education Department guidelines and policies into the preprimary. Grievances were reported by five of the six interviewed principals that inadequate guidelines had been given to schools. Most principals surveyed reported professional development needs in respect to educational issues. Only eight percent of principals indicated they held no needs.

Unlike the literature in the United States of America, data from this study did not highlight areas such as "reading instruction in preprimary education" as sources of conflict between principals and preprimary teachers. Data from this study reflected a reluctance by most principals to involve themselves with educational issues due to a lack of understanding, confidence and professional development assistance in preprimary education. The data portrays a willingness by most principals to

mandate preprimary training, provide professional development and provide schools with a set of developmentally appropriate materials.

Data from the study on the formal education and experience of E.C.E. held by principals reported only one principal held prior teaching experience at the preprimary level. (One session per week) Principals held a greater number of years experience in the upper primary years. These findings were reflected by writers such as Bryant et al (1989), Campbell (1987) and Ferratier (1985). Within this study 22 out of 24 principals held no qualifications in preprimary education, a finding similar to that of Bryant et al (1989), Campbell (1987) and Ferratier (1985). The literature indicates that the Education Department of Western Australia may have failed to include a knowledge of preprimary curriculum within job descriptions of principals in K-7 schools. Within the literature Manasse (1985) argued principals should be placed in schools to which they are best matched.

The data illustrated a divergence between principals and preprimary teachers' responses of who was involved in administrative, managerial and educational issues within preprimary centres. Responses from both principals and their teachers portrayed confusion between delegation of roles within preprimary centres. The majority of principals in the District surveyed reported primary involvement in two out of seven administrative/managerial issues and three out of ten educational issues. The data illustrate a need for role clarification between principals and preprimary teachers in issues to do with administration, management and education.

Other issues addressed in the study reported data which confirmed less time was spent by principals in preprimary centres for reasons addressed by this chapter. Principals who were interviewed believed administrative, managerial and educational issues were the same in all government schools and a study repeated in another district should not bring varying results. When issues such as these are

recognised then the kinds of professional development needs principals within the this study perceived they had when contending with any problems related to preprimary, can be addressed and resolved.

5.7 Recommendations and Implications

This study has determined how principals perceive they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational roles in respect to the preprimary centre. Principals identified professional development needs to be addressed and prompted the recommendations and implications presented below.

Given the data reported in this study it is recommended that:

1. Written acknowledgement be given by the Education Department Western Australia within the Position Entry Criteria, for principals to have a sound understanding of the content and structure of the curriculum for preprimary education.
2. Principals in charge of preprimary centres should hold either a degree in early childhood education or have completed coursework outlining preprimary philosophy and curriculum development. The Education Department needs to select a venue such as a university aimed at addressing the need for training programs in preprimary education for prospective principals.
3. Principals within each school in Western Australia be provided with written material which stipulates the nature and extent of involvement, expected of principals, in their administrative, managerial and educational roles.

4. Preprimary teachers within each school in Western Australia be provided with written material which stipulates the nature and extent of involvement expected of them, in administration, management and education.
5. Principals be provided with written documentation on the implementation of Education Department guidelines and policies into the preprimary year. In addition the need for the Education Department to make clear expectations regarding appropriate preprimary practices within teacher's programmes. At present the Education Department of Western Australia is drafting a document on this topic. Differences in E.C.E. philosophy and an understanding of individual beliefs, values and perspectives need to be developed in conjunction with principals.
6. The Director of Early Childhood Education Policy (appointed in June 1994 to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the Government's response to the Task Forces recommendations) addresses the need for principal professional development.
7. Principals need to be given the opportunity of seeing a variety of preprimary programmes being implemented. This can occur by visiting preprimary centres within the state. In this way principals will be given the opportunity to identify and see implemented, developmentally appropriate practice.
8. Inservice courses need to be formulated and based on principals' perceptions of professional development needs. In so doing, principals may take ownership because the content of the inservice courses will be a reflection of their needs. These inservice courses should not be "one shot", one day activities, but need to be undertaken on a large scale. The perceptions of

principals of professional development needs should be surveyed on a larger scale and identified needs implemented into inservices.

9. Persons undertaking the appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers need a theoretical and practical background in E.C.E. Unless principals are well versed in such a background their effectiveness in fulfilling the appraisal function would seem to be affected adversely and lack credibility.
10. In applying the principle of continuity to the school the preprimary year, years 1 and 2 need to be linked together to make them workable and to achieve a high level of cohesiveness between staff members. Attention to continuity should involve linking curriculum content, methodology, teaching styles and evaluations so that the focus is on curriculum and philosophy.
11. Further research should be conducted within the private school sector to determine principal's perceptions on how adequately they feel they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational role in respect to preprimary centres. The study should focus on the kinds of professional development assistance provided for principals and the effect, if any, on the quality of leadership provided to preprimary teachers.
12. Further research into effective professional development strategies for principals is advocated given their multiple roles and responsibilities.

5.8 Conclusion.

If preprimary classes are to be successfully implemented within Western Australian state government schools then principals will need to fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational role in the preprimary year. With the provision of a

strong theoretical and practical background in preprimary education, a strong sense of ownership and belief in this area, coupled with all the skills principals already possess when dealing with primary school issues, then principals will hold what educational writers have signalled as components of excellence in preprimary education. These issues hold implications for quality assurance, Education Department policies and further research.

Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE ONE

Your acceptance to participate in this study is greatly appreciated. All participants in this study will remain anonymous. Please answer each question as best you can. Questions relate to E.C.E. administration only.

PART A. BACKGROUND

- 1. Your Name
- 2. Your Address.....
- 3. How many years have you taught?.....
- 4. At what levels?.....
- 5. Are you a teacher/administrator?.....

PART B.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO POLICIES

Please circle the appropriate word.

Ad. (Administrator) Tch. (Teacher)

Others. (Specify)

STAFF.

1. Who is responsible for the selection of staff within the school?
 teacher-aide Ad. Tch. Others
 music specialist Ad. Tch. Others
2. Who is responsible for the evaluation of a teacher and teacher-aide's
 performance?
 Ad. Tch. Others
3. Who is responsible for calling in a specialist teacher?
 Ad. Tch. Others
4. Who decides who will attend inservices and conferences?
 Ad. Tch. Others

CHILDREN.

1. Who is responsible for determining the number of children taught by
 one teacher and the number of children with special needs to be
 admitted to each group?
 Ad. Tch. Others
2. Who is responsible for determining class structure. e.g. how many
 children are allocated to classes?
 Ad. Tch. Others
3. Who is responsible for ensuring discipline is maintained at all times?
 Ad. Tch. Others
4. Who is responsible for the testing and assessment of children within a
 classroom/preprimary?
 Ad. Tch. Others

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

1. Who decides whether parental involvement is allowed?
Ad. Tch. Others
2. If parental involvement is encouraged who is responsible for its implementation?
Ad. Tch. Others

FINANCES.

1. Who is responsible for collecting fees and issuing receipts?
Ad. Tch. Others
2. Who is responsible for deciding how much money is allocated to each teacher from government sources/P & C?
Ad. Tch. Others
3. Who is responsible for deciding how the funds available are spent?
Ad. Tch. Others

QUESTIONS RELATING TO PHILOSOPHIES.

1. Who is responsible for writing the school philosophy:
Ad. Tch. Others
2. Who is responsible for incorporating the school's philosophy into their individual program?
Ad. Tch. Others
3. Who decides what children should learn?
Ad. Tch. Others
4. Who decides the method most appropriate for learning to occur?
Ad. Tch. Others

QUESTIONS RELATING TO PLANNING

- 1. Who is responsible for selecting developmentally appropriate learning sequences for each groups of children?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 2. Who is responsible for drawing in relevant knowledge about children from parents and professional agents?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 3. Who is given responsibility for co-ordinating a program between teachers of the same level so that uniformity is maintained?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 4. Who is given responsibility for ensuring continuity of learning exists between K-3 in areas of content covered and methods used?
Ad. Tch. Others

QUESTIONS RELATING TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

TEACHER.

- 1. Who is responsible for the evaluation of the teacher's program?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 2. Who is responsible for choosing what elements of the program will be evaluated?
Ad. Tch. Others

CHILDREN.

- 3. Who is responsible for choosing test material for the evaluation of children's work?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 4. Who decides which methods will be used in the assessment of children's work?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 5. Who decides how the children's progress is communicated to the parents?
Ad. Tch. Others
- 6. Who is responsible for reporting on children's test results and incorporating them back into the program?
Ad. Tch. Others

PART C

**QUESTIONS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
AND NEEDS**

- 1. When gaining your undergraduate degree had you undertaken any early childhood units? (circle either yes or no)
Yes No
- 2. How many?.....
- 3. Have you taken any graduate courses in Early Childhood Education (ECE)?
Yes No
- 4. Have you earned a Master's degree in ECE?

Yes No

5. Have you ever taken any courses in administration in ECE?

Yes No

If your response is yes please outline the title of the course and where the course was taken.

.....

.....

.....

6. If courses in administration have been taken was it before or after you assumed your present position?

Yes No

7. Have these courses (if taken) been helpful?

Yes No

8. Do you perceive the need for inservice training courses in ECE?

Yes No

9. What specific seminars, courses or workshops would you like to see offered? Please indicate the topic, type of presentation (mini-weekend courses, seminars, workshops) and where it should be offered (university campus etc.)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. So as to carry out your job as an early childhood teacher or administrator who is expected to play a leadership role in ECE what has been provided by the Ministry of Education to help you gain an understanding of the theories and concepts pertinent to ECE?

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Have these courses been helpful?

Yes No

Why?

.....

.....

.....

12. What needs do you identify in ECE as being important in assisting you to carry out a leadership role in ECE?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please use the remainder of this paper and the back if there is any additional information you would like to share with me or add to this questionnaire. Thankyou.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire

Your role as Principal in the Preprimary Centre

The purpose of this questionnaire is to:

- document how you as a principal perceive you fulfil your administrative, managerial and educational role in respect to the preprimary centre.
- establish professional development needs you may have in regard to preprimary issues.

Confidentiality

Your name and that of your school will at all times remain anonymous and information confidential. Summary data will be presented in a way that will not allow the information given by you to be identified. As a participant in this study you hold the right to withdraw at any given time. Attached to this questionnaire is a form which needs to be signed by you as an indication of your willingness to participate. If you have any questions or queries about this questionnaire or the project please telephone me on 341 4789 at any time.

Elizabeth Stamopoulos.

Thankyou for your assistance.

PART A

This first section of the questionnaire deals with the nature and extent of your involvement in issues such as administration, management and education within the Preprimary Centre.

Please circle your most appropriate responses using the following code. You may circle more than one code for any answer if this is appropriate.

DS	District Superintendent	K3	K to 3 Adviser
PR	Principal	DP	Deputy Principal
PT	Preprimary Teacher	CO	Colleague/s
OT	Other/s - Please specify.(e.g. clerical assistant, teacher aide)		

1. On preprimary administration/management issues please indicate who:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| a. | Manages the implementation of Ministry of Education policies and guidelines? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| b. | Liaises with other organisational units within the Ministry of Education concerning administrative issues? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| c. | Attends to school administrative tasks such as correspondence, telephone calls and enquiries? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| d. | Manages the compilation of administrative information e.g. brochures, newsletters? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| e. | Manages the preprimary centre's finances? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| f. | Manages the preprimary centre's human resources (including parental involvement)? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| g. | Organises the purchase and allocation of resources? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |

2. On preprimary education issues please indicate who:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| a. | Develops the preprimary program? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| b. | Decides the method most appropriate for learning to occur? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| c. | Monitors and assesses student outcomes? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| d. | Identifies strategies for improvement of the program and facilitating appropriate change? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| e. | Ensures continuity of learning across the years K-1 with respect to content covered and methods/strategies used? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| f. | Evaluates the effectiveness of programs in relation to the school plan? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| g. | Provides supervision for preprimary teachers? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| h. | Provides inservice and professional development for preprimary teachers? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| i. | Provides educational advice/leadership for the preprimary teacher in your school? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |
| j. | Provides performance appraisal and evaluation of the preprimary teacher? | DS K3 PR DP PT CO
Other _____ |

3. Please indicate if the person(s) undertaking appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teachers has(have) a theoretical or practical background in preprimary education. (Please tick the appropriate boxes below.)

☐ No theoretical background ☐ Yes, theoretical background
☐ No practical background ☐ Yes, practical background

4. Please indicate how often (on average) you visit the preprimary centre. (Please tick one of the boxes below).

☐ Daily; ☐ Weekly; ☐ Fortnightly; ☐ Monthly; ☐ Each term; ☐ Once a year.

5. On a typical visit, what would be the approximate length of your stay? (Please tick one of the boxes below).

☐ Up to 15 minutes; ☐ Up to 30 minutes; ☐ Up to 1 hour; ☐ Over 1 hour.

6. Generally what are the purposes of these visits?

7. Approximately what percentage of the time do you feel visits would be due to administrative/managerial and educational issues?

Admin/Manag _____ %
Education _____ %

PART B

This section deals with your perceptions of your leadership role in Preprimary Centres.

1. What do you perceive as the most important part of your role with respect to the preprimary? (Please tick one of the boxes below).

☐ Administration/Management ☐ Teacher development ☐ Curriculum
☐ Social ☐ Other

2. Please indicate whether your contacts with the preprimary are *mainly*:

☐ self-initiated ☐ initiated by the teacher (or other personnel)

3. Please use the code to indicate how well you feel you fulfil your leadership role in the preprimary centre in the following areas.

1 Very well 2 Well 3 Unsure 4 Poor 5 Very Poor

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Preprimary administration and management? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in curriculum development and implementation? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Providing advice and support to preprimary teachers in professional and work-related areas? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Diagnosing educational problems experienced by preprimary teachers? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Providing supervision to preprimary teachers? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. Appraisal and evaluation of preprimary teacher's performance? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

g. Other not listed under 1-6 (please specify)

1 2 3 4 5

PART C

This section deals with your perceptions of your own professional development needs in relation to preprimary.

1. Please indicate your professional development needs (if any) in the area of administration and management. (Please tick appropriate boxes).
 - ☐ Implementation of Ministry guidelines & policies into the Preprimary centre.
 - ☐ Allocation of finances to preprimary centres.
 - ☐ Management of preprimary human resources.
 - ☐ None at all.
 - ☐ Other/s (Please specify).

2. Please indicate by ticking the appropriate boxes the kinds of professional development needs you have with respect to educational issues.
 - ☐ Knowledge base (philosophy, theory) of Preprimary education.
 - ☐ Curriculum for 5 year olds.
 - ☐ Curriculum for 4 year olds.
 - ☐ Preprimary methodologies & teaching strategies.
 - ☐ Developmental learning versus academic learning.
 - ☐ How to evaluate what children have learnt.
 - ☐ None at all.
 - ☐ Others (Please specify).

3. Please indicate specific problems which have arisen as a result of your leadership role within the preprimary centre.

4. What in your opinion would help you to deal better with these problems?

5. What specific seminars, courses or workshop would you like to see offered? (Please rank your preference from highest to lowest using the numbers 1 - 9.)

_____ Planning the Preprimary Curriculum

_____ Learning styles of young children

_____ Assessing and evaluating young children's progress

_____ Relationship of Preschool to Primary school

_____ The Principal's Supervisory Responsibilities

_____ Evaluation of early childhood programs

_____ Philosophy and practices of integrated, developmental programs

_____ Reading instruction in preprimary education

_____ Identification and implementation of developmentally appropriate practices for preprimary children

Others _____

To answer Question 5 please circle your response and select your answers from:

1 No priority 2 Low priority 3 Unsure 4 Medium priority 5 Very high priority

5. What priority do you assign to the following?

■ Mandating preprimary training for principals. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

■ Providing each school with a set of materials which outline developmentally appropriate practices. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

■ Providing professional development courses (ECE) for Principals. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

PART D - Background Information

1. In the space provided please record the number of years you have taught at each year level

_____ Preprimary	_____ Year 1	_____ Year 2	_____ Year 3
_____ Year 4	_____ Year 5	_____ Year 6	_____ Year 7

2. Please indicate your formal academic qualifications in E.C.E. by placing a tick in the appropriate area and indicating when these courses have been undertaken.

- ☐ Teaching Diploma / Degree (ECE)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Bachelor of Arts (ECE)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Bachelor of Educ. (ECE Major)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Bachelor of Educ. (ECE Minor)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Post-Grad. Dip.Ed. (ECE Major)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Masters in Educ. (ECE Major)_____ (Year)
- ☐ Other courses (Please provide name of course and when it was taken)

3. Please list any Early Childhood workshops, inservices, seminars, mini-weekend courses attended.

Topic	Type of Presentation	Duration of Presentation	Year
-------	----------------------	--------------------------	------

4. Please record any other relevant Early Childhood experience you have had which assists you to carry out your role as Principal of a preprimary.

Please use the remainder of this paper and/or the back of this paper if there is any additional information you would like to add to this questionnaire. *Thankyou for completing this questionnaire. Your time and assistance in enabling me to complete my Masters Degree is greatly appreciated. I will forward to you the results and recommendations on completion of the study.*

Appendix 3

Questionnaire

The role of Principals in the Preprimary Centre

The purpose of this questionnaire is to:

- document how principals perceive they fulfil their administrative, managerial and educational role in respect to the preprimary centre.
- establish professional development needs of principals in regard to preprimary issues.

Confidentiality

Your name and that of your school will at all times remain anonymous and information confidential. Summary data will be presented in a way that will not allow the information given by you to be identified. As a participant in this study you hold the right to withdraw at any given time. Attached to this questionnaire is a form which needs to be signed by you as an indication of your willingness to participate. If you have any questions or queries about this questionnaire or the project please telephone me on 341 4789 at any time.

Elizabeth Stamopoulos.

Thankyou for your assistance.