

GENDER AND DISCRETION IN ADMINISTRATIVE  
STAFFING DECISIONS

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# ABSTRACT

## GENDER AND DISCRETION IN ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING DECISIONS

This study was designed to examine the hiring practices of administrators in a Lower Mainland school district and to determine the differences in the ways in which male and female principals exercised discretion. Staffing processes have become highly prescribed since the teachers certified as a union. In recent years, some staffing practices have contravened the prescribed process, suggesting that administrators had some latitude within the boundaries of the prescribed process. With the increased representation by women in administrative positions in recent years, the possibility that men and women exercise discretion differently merited investigation.

A literature search revealed little about hiring and school staffing and no literature regarding the ways in which male and female administrators exercise discretion in staffing decisions. Decision-making by administrators, however, is a major topic in educational literature. The authors of this body of literature are mainly men and their work was written when few women occupied administrative positions. A literature search for gender differences revealed a growing body of literature regarding psychological differences and gender differences in administrative behaviour and career paths. Because background to the question had to be intuited from other sources, a multivocal literature approach to explore the question was undertaken.

Three male and three female principals appointed prior to 1982 were interviewed as former appointees and three male and three female principals appointed after 1988 were interviewed as recent appointees. Interviews with the four groups of principals explored three themes for gender differences: Psychological Orientations, Decision-Making Processes and Sociological Origins.

The findings from these interviews were then scrutinized to determine if gender was a factor in the way discretion in hiring decisions was exercised by administrators. Although gender was found to be a factor in moral reasoning, it was not a factor in the processes used to make decisions or in the way in which principals exercised discretion in staffing decisions.

# DEDICATION

For my daughters, Laura and Roselyn Kraft,  
who lost their mother for long periods of  
time and who paid the price for this work,  
with love.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Michael Manley-Casimir, my senior supervisor, who got me started and guided me through this work. Without his help and encouragement, this work could not have been completed. I would also like to thank the twelve Surrey principals who took time out from their busy schedules, at the busiest time of the year, to provide the data for this study.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In British Columbia, until 1988, local school boards, through their agents - district administrators and school principals - employed substantial discretion in hiring teachers to their districts and in selecting staff for individual schools. The only restrictions placed upon the discretion of teams or individuals concerned with staff selection and hiring were those practices that contravened Human Rights, at first as found under common law and then as set out by The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was entrenched in Canada in 1982. Such practices included discrimination against sex, age, race or religion.

Two main methods of recruitment were widely practiced. One was a proactive method by the district where a team of district administrators of different ranks up to and sometimes including the superintendent, would advertise at universities and through local media for applications for teaching positions in their districts and then set up temporary interviewing stations at or near the university. These teams would select and hire a number of teachers for their districts from the applicants. Usually, these teachers would form a pool and would be given specific assignments at a later date. Either the district would assign a teacher to a specific position or principals would select teachers for their schools from this pool.

The second method was for districts to advertise positions through newspapers and staff bulletins, inviting applications to the Board Office or the principal concerned. In most cases, the school principal was able to perform the final selection of new staff members, whether the applications were sent to the Board Office or the individual principal. New positions, however, were not necessarily filled by teachers newly hired to the district. Positions could be filled by teachers transferring to another position in the same district or by newly hired teachers. Thus, staff selection by principals could sometimes occur through hiring and sometimes through teacher transfers.

Since staff composition has a direct impact on the learning of children as staff relations strongly influence the climate of the school, historically, principals have been given discretion in staff selection. Because, in most cases, principals assume their positions in existing schools with existing staffs, their discretion is confined to the selection of new staff members only when vacancies arise. Prior to 1988 principals made the decision whether or not to advertise vacancies. There was no existing mandate to advertise vacancies or to explain the selection of one candidate for the position over another. Thus, principals exercised substantial discretion in staff selection for new vacancies at their schools.

In the 1970's many school districts experienced declining school populations, so not many new teachers were hired. The average age of British Columbia teachers increased as teaching positions became more scarce. Before 1970 it was common for female teachers to leave teaching to raise a family. Many of these teachers were rehired when their children were older or they wanted to return to teaching for various reasons. With the scarcity of teaching jobs in the 1970's, however, women began taking leaves of absences for childbirth and rearing, rather than job resignation.

In the 1980's one British Columbia school district, Surrey, began to experience rapid growth while most other districts either remained stable or declined in enrolment. With the school population growth in this large district, which spans a geographical area of approximately 313 square kilometres including urban, suburban and rural pockets, came increased job vacancies. Many teachers in the district, for a variety of personal and professional reasons, desired to transfer schools. Because they had records of service to the district, teachers decided that they deserved opportunities to fill new positions, if they so desired, before new teachers were hired to fill these positions. New vacancies were not required to be advertised, allowing a great deal of discretion to individual school principals. At the same time, principals were not required to explain their decision to select one candidate over another, whether or not the candidate was newly hired or already working in the district. Staff selection by principals was perceived as a mysterious process by the teachers of this district.

Upon becoming a union in 1988, which gave them the legal right to formulate rules and regulations regarding their employment, Surrey teachers tried to end the vague and apparently arbitrary transfer

process in existence at that time. In the first collective agreement between The Board of School Trustees and The Surrey Teachers' Association of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in 1988, the teachers gained the right to have all vacancies for the next school year posted not later than June 1st. The vacancy list was to include the type and name of the school, subject and grade level. Teachers wishing to be considered for a transfer to vacant positions had to apply in writing to the Teacher Personnel Office within seven calendar days subsequent to the distribution of the list of vacant positions. Article 25.40 of that first contract states:

From the applications received, the Board shall place the most suitable continuing contract teacher chosen from a short-list which was formulated on the basis of seniority from those applicants possessing the necessary qualifications.

The applicants were short-listed by seniority and selected by criteria of suitability.

Through this collective agreement the teachers had managed to confine the discretion of principals in that all vacancies had to be posted so that teachers would at least be aware of available job opportunities. Because suitability took precedence over seniority, however, principals were still able to employ a great deal of discretion in selection practices.

Two years later, in 1990, the teachers, through their second collective agreement, attempted to further curb the discretion of principals in staff selection by mandating that transfers occur solely on the basis of seniority and that there be three rounds of vacancy postings to ensure maximum opportunities for teachers to transfer to positions they deem more desirable. The Board would not agree to adhere strictly to the seniority clause, taking the position that seniority and suitability to the position are not necessarily compatible. A compromise was reached in that:

from the applications received, the Board shall short-list candidates on the basis of seniority from those applicants possessing the necessary qualifications (Collective Agreement, 1990).

The teachers hoped that this transfer regulation, given that all short-listed candidates were suitable, would make staff selection on the basis of seniority automatic. In an attempt to fairly list all vacancies arising from teacher transfers an elaborate and complex process for the selection and hiring of teachers is now in place in Surrey. School principals, after conducting any internal reassignments,

must report any vacancies to the Human Resources Department by April 15th of each year. Then known appointments, assignments and transfers of Administrative Officers must be announced by May 1st of each year. Following these acts, three rounds of teacher transfers occur. Rounds One and Two are postings for teachers with continuing contracts in the district. They are basically transfer rounds and staff selection is from teachers already working in the district. Round Three vacancies are open to substitute teachers and new teachers to the district, as well as to teachers with continuing contracts. New teachers, however, are to be given last consideration.

In this complex system of staff selection, all teachers applying for a position, whether it is a first time position with the district or whether it is merely an in-district transfer, must apply for the position in the same way. Out of all the applications for a particular position, those applicants meeting the criteria for the position as described in the vacancy posting, are short-listed. The short-listed applicants are then interviewed by the concerned principal. Principals use the same open-ended questions for each interview and then select the best person for the position. Out of the candidates with similar qualifications, the most senior applicant is supposed to be appointed to the position. If the most senior applicant is not the successful candidate, the principal must be able to present defensible reasons for selecting the other candidate. Under the terms of the collective agreement, the unsuccessful candidate may grieve the principal's action through an arbitration procedure if such a candidate feels he/she has received unfair treatment.

While the union had endeavoured to limit the discretion of principals by attempting to base transfers on seniority, the Board allowed principals a degree of discretionary choice. In doing so, by directing principals to document each interview and to provide defensible reasons for their choices, the Board established its

expectation that the person or persons given discretion will use it "to the best of their ability" (Friedrich, 1958, p.41).

The Board would expect principals to give careful consideration to factors such as resumés, past work history and letters of recommendation as well as the candidate's interview performance.

Defensible reasons may be "instrumental" dealing with competencies and/or "valuational" dealing with value judgments (Friedrich, 1958).

The discretion as used is, in other words, tied to opinions, values, and beliefs shared by members of the organization, as well as to the tasks to be performed (Friedrich, 1958, p.41).

In the Surrey, British Columbia school district, the Board is the largest employer with over 4,300 employees. It is also the district in which teachers most bind the discretion of the employer in terms of staff selection by principals due to the seniority clause. The idea that principals in this district, while allowed interpretational latitude, governed by "reasoned elaborations", have to select staff within the constraints outlined in the collective agreement, led me to wonder what voices of conscience (Green, 1985) operate on principals in this district in staff selection. I wondered how principals judge the decisions they make. Green speaks of conscience in terms of not only what is "right or wrong, of what is just or unjust, but of what is wise, foolish or skillful" (Green, 1985, p. 3). He describes consciences of craft, membership, sacrifice, memory and imagination. These different voices of conscience exist side by side instead of developing in sequential order. I wondered how principals, in practice, reconcile the tensions that may arise in the competing claims of seniority and the best person for the job (Manley-Casimir, 1989).

At a time when principal behaviour seems to be circumscribed by contract in British Columbia, two other interesting phenomena are also occurring. One is that more women are entering administration and more women are now principals in British Columbia than before the teachers certified as a trade union. As of September, 1990, 22.3% of all administrators in British Columbia were female (B.C. Teacher, October, 1991). As of September, 1991, out of 76 elementary principals in Surrey, 28 were female and 48 were male. There appears to be a trend to increased female representation in administration in the province in general and in this district in particular.

The other phenomenon is that in the psychological literature there has been a recent paradigm shift from the idea of woman being cast in man's mold to the notion that men and women are different. Newspapers are publishing woman's news sections describing women's experiences and authors (although mostly female) of books about the psychology of gender are recognizing that women's

experiences are different from those of men. Furthermore, recognition is being given to the experience of women, a recognition that is shifting from the notion that women's experiences are inferior to men's. Women are being encouraged to speak in their own voices, rather than from the male perspective. Carol Gilligan (1982) and Nel Noddings (1984) describe masculine and feminine themes in terms of ethical and moral decisions. Both men and women can fit the characteristics of either theme, but more women would generally conform to the feminine theme and more men to the masculine. The feminine approach is tied to caring and nurturing; a desire not to inflict harm on another. It is an approach based on connections and relationships, according to Gilligan (1982). The masculine approach, on the other hand, is tied to ideas of justice. It is an approach based upon separation and individuation (Gilligan, 1982).

## **Statement of the Problem**

Based upon these ideas, and because more women are becoming administrators, I began to wonder if male and female principals would exercise discretion in staffing decisions in the same ways or if there would be differences that could be ascribed to gender. To pursue these ideas I formulated the research question: Are there differences that can be attributable to gender in the decision process of staff selection by male and female administrators?

The intentions of this study are two-fold. It is intended to lend support to the theory that discretion, bounded by reasoned elaboration, is necessary to confer authority to the leadership role (Friedrich, 1958). In order to have "good" schools (Lightfoot, 1983) principals must be allowed discretion in staff selection if they are to harken to their voices of conscience in order to deal with administrative tensions (Manley-Casimir, 1989).

By examining the discretionary actions of both male and female principals, my second intention is to ascertain whether or not women do indeed speak in a different voice. I believe it is more possible to examine gender differences when men and women are equally situated: the variables of discretion and the framework of the position being equal. In that regard, this study, although exploratory in

nature, should make a substantive addition to the existing scant literature on gender differences in moral and ethical decision-making by principals by providing additional insights on which future theory can be built on the principalship in general.

## **Method**

To answer the question I first searched the literature for gender differences in psychological development, sociological origins and administrative decision-making. Then I decided to speak to practising administrators in the British Columbia school district most constrained in staff selection practices - Surrey. To explore differences or similarities in the exercise of discretion in staffing by principals, I chose to interview six male principals, three of whom had been appointed to the principalship prior to 1982 and three of whom had been appointed after 1988, and six female principals, three former appointees and three recent appointees.

Following the work of Yvonne Tabin (1991), I sketched a profile of each principal interviewed in order to provide insights into his or her personal history as well as analyze factors such as professional values, moral and ethical approaches to decision-making, professional behaviour and career paths. The findings from the data were coded according to the themes of the literature review and then reported. Finally, the findings were analysed to determine the significance of gender upon discretion in administrative decision-making.

## **Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis was organized into five sequential chapters. The first chapter details the background to the question, the statement of the problem, the reason for undertaking the study and the organization of the report. Chapter two consists of a literature review pertinent to the problem while chapter three outlines the research methods employed. The findings from the data are reported in chapter four and the significance of the findings with respect to the literature review are analysed in chapter five.

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

While a body of literature regarding administrative decision-making exists, this literature deals with general decision-making processes and is rarely situation or gender specific. Little literature is available regarding the school administrator preserving moral integrity in conditions of ethical or professional conflict (Manley-Casimir, 1989). Most of the literature is presumably inclusive of gender, but, interestingly is written from the male or androcentric perspective and relies heavily upon the rational bureaucratic model of decision-making. Little is written about decision-making from the feminine perspective and no literature exists which firstly examines administrative decision-making in staffing and secondly examines female versus male staffing decisions.

The conceptual framework of this study is based upon the notion that human behaviour is rooted in psychological, anthropological and sociological origins. These sources of administrative behaviour must be looked at to build a theory of the way male and female administrators perceive their organization, and their personal world. Such theory must account for the motives that drive administrators as individuals and as part of a group. Concepts to permit the description of administrative decision-making must be operational to provide building blocks for future theory (Griffiths, 1967).

To gain insight into the masculine and feminine perspectives of decision-making in staffing, to ascertain whether or not gender differences exist, other sources of literature must be examined including the literature of psychological and theoretical frameworks for decision-making, and the literature on the anthropological and sociological frameworks of male and female administrators.

Staffing is of primary importance to administrators because the staff, with administrator guidance, sets the tone of the school. There is a growing body of literature on effective schools. One strong conclusion formed from this literature is that "good" schools (Lightfoot, 1983) include softer images that diverge from the masculine stereotype of leadership. Good schools are "based on relationships

and affiliations as central dimensions of the exercise of power” (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 333). If knowledge is to be gained on how principals staff schools, administrative decision-making must be intuited and drawn from other research concerning the careers of male and female administrators.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS**

### **Theories of Moral Development**

Individual moral development affects decision-making, feelings about and relationships with others. Belkin (1975) provides a succinct overview of three traditional theories of moral development that have gained recognition and are widely practiced. One is the psychoanalytic theory as constructed by Freud, accepted as a convincing theory of personality development. His theory is that moral development is a direct result of the superego which is a sense of conscience that the individual is not only aware of consciously, but also unconsciously. The young child is amoral, motivated by the selfish, primitive drives of the id. The id strives for immediate gratification of instincts and is oblivious to the needs of others and to the constraints of society. As the individual goes through a process of emotional maturation, (s)he passes through psychosexual stages. During this time two other aspects of personality develop: the ego or realistic aspect of the personality and the superego, or conscience, which is strict, moralistic and often unrealistic. As the child resolves the Oedipus complex, many of the parents’ values are incorporated into his personality. These ethical values are assimilated by the child without judgment and form the basis of all decisions. The superego, or conscience, is responsible for the individual knowing the difference between right and wrong. When the individual acts contrary to the dictates of the superego, guilt is felt.

There is a strong antifeminine bias in Freud’s work because his theory was developed by observing males. Woman’s personality was then fitted to the male mold without observing women in clinical studies. Freud viewed women as less capable than men in areas of morality, assuming that “most

women over thirty are beginning to show definite signs of being exhausted by life”, and that, “the child’s first protector is the father” (Sagan, 1988, P.61).

Freud further defines the superego as a masculine attribute and claims women are incapable of having a complete superego. He also claims that:

women have a small capacity to sublimate their instincts and this results in the intellectual inferiority of so many of them (Sagan, 1988, p. 109).

Freud believes that ethical morality is different for men and women. Reasoning is a masculine trait while feeling is feminine and women can never become as independent of emotional origins as men. Freud also claims that women have less sense of justice than men. To find out about women, Freud offers these suggestions:

life experience, ask poets or wait until science can give deeper and more coherent information (Chodorow, 1978, p.145).

Freud defines gender and sexual differences as the presence or absence of masculinity and a penis. His work stems from an androcentric viewpoint; it is man’s work in a man’s world.

One theory of moral development that has gained wide acceptance in understanding moral reasoning was developed by Jean Piaget. He connects relationships between cognitive and moral reasoning. In Piaget’s scheme, moral reasoning develops through rules and a sense of justice and follows three successive stages. At the highest stage the individual holds autonomous principles of equity and fairness. Rules can be negotiated and changed. Piaget’s work was also based upon observations of males and so includes a strong androcentric bias.

Another theory for understanding moral reasoning was developed by Lawrence Kohlberg and was based upon Piaget’s work. Kohlberg developed a six stage scale of moral development based upon a sense of justice and rules. The sixth and highest stage is the postconventional or principled level. At this stage the individual holds autonomous principles. The individual will uphold basic values, rights and legal contracts even if they are in conflict with laws or the rules of the group. At this stage there is an emphasis in the legal point of view and universal principles of justice, reciprocity and equality of human rights. Kohlberg claims that the stages are sequential and that each stage must be passed

through to reach the next. The ability to pass each stage depends upon intellectual growth and ability to reason in the abstract.

## **Criticisms of Traditional Theories of Moral Reasoning**

Gilligan (1982) points out that Kohlberg's theory, like those of Piaget and Freud, is male created and male sampled. Therefore, these theories provide greater insight into male personality development than they do for female personality development. These traditionally accepted theories of personality development have been criticized (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; & Noddings, 1984) for identifying morality with justice. Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984) suggest that morality actually includes two moral orientations; one of justice as stressed by Freud and Piaget and one of an ethic of care and response which is more definitive of female moral judgment and action.

Chodorow (1978) views Freud's conception of morality as a patriarchal value system. She presents a conceptual shift in thinking about morality by taking an opposite view to Freud which is that differences and identity result from genital differences. Rather than sexual feelings and jealousies arising from the child, Chodorow suggests that these feelings originate in the parents. When parents experience such feelings, hostility toward the child may result. Chodorow presents the notion that gender differences result in the differences in the nature of early mother-child relationships. Girls emerge with a basis for sympathy as part of their primary definition of self while boys do not develop in the same way. As girls do not define themselves in terms of preoedipal relationships in the way that boys do, their egos are not threatened in the same ways as boys. Because the mother is the primary care-giver, girls experience themselves as less differentiated than boys. Girls include their fathers, with their mothers, in their world of primary objects. Boys, on the other hand, turn from their mothers to their fathers to become more masculine and less feminine. Thus, boys deny their sense of connectedness and become more isolated which may produce a more rigid and punitive superego. Feminine development, where internal and external object relations and affects are connected, may

lead to a superego more open to persuasion and the judgments of others. Girls would then have more flexible and permeable ego boundaries while boys would be more distinct and separate. Chodorow suggests that woman's world consists of "a complex relational constellation" (p. 169). Women are concerned with on-going relational issues. Men's world tends to be more fixed and simple. Relational issues tend to be more repressed in the masculine personality as the individual engages in a denial of relations and connections - the feminine personality.

Chodorow's ideas are supported by Gilligan's studies of women facing real-life abortion dilemmas in her pilot findings (1982). Gilligan found that 75 percent of the females studied used predominantly the response orientation and only 25 percent used predominantly a rights orientation. Gilligan found the balance reversed among males; 79 percent used predominantly a rights orientation and 14 percent the response orientation. Gilligan uses her findings to criticize Kohlberg's standard hypothetical moral dilemmas and to claim that his scoring system has a built-in sex bias which downgrades females.

Kohlberg takes issue with this claim and although he admits that the stage sequence has been constructed from the longitudinal data provided by an exclusively male sample (Kohlberg, 1984), he claims that sex differences only arise when males and females are not equally situated (controlled for education and job status).

Nevertheless, the important distinction between Gilligan's study and Kohlberg's longitudinal study is that one is a real-life, albeit particularistic, dilemma while the other is a hypothetical, general dilemma.

Nel Noddings (1984) sums up the historical perspective of moral reasoning in a forceful way:

The long-standing emphasis on the study of moral judgments has led to a serious imbalance in moral discussion. In particular, it is well known that many women - perhaps most women - do not approach problems as problems of principle, reasoning, and judgment... If a substantial segment of humankind approaches moral problems through a consideration of the concrete elements of situations and regard for themselves as caring, then perhaps an attempt should be made to enlighten the study of morality in this alternative mode... If

moral education, in a double sense, is guided only by the study of moral principles and judgments, not only are women made to feel inferior to men in the moral realm, but also education itself may suffer from impoverished and one-sided moral guidance (P. 28).

The historical perspective of moral reasoning has undergone a conceptual shift which now includes woman's experience in its own right. Masculine and feminine themes of moral reasoning are different. Thus, it would seem likely that since moral development affects decision-making and personal relationships, men and women administrators will make decisions in different ways, based upon the different values of justice and the ethic of care.

## **DECISION-MAKING**

### **Theories of Administrative Decision-Making**

Since the 1950's decision-making has occupied a central position in the literature on administration (Cross, 1980). Herbert Simon (1950, cited in Griffiths, 1967) was the first influential theorist to provide a framework for the analysis of educational administrative decision-making. He proposed that adherence to rational principles of the organization would ensure *correct* decision-making. Because Simon allows that it is possible for an individual to make an irrational decision, he suggests that limits to rational decision-making be defined by the boundaries of organizational goals, values and knowledge.

Griffiths (1959), who followed Simon's direction for theory development, questioned the idea that:

almost a universal belief that decisions of all kinds are made by going through a process of X number of steps...it is assumed that if several people proceed through these steps...they will arrive at the same conclusion (Griffiths, 1959, pp. 131-2).

Agreeing with Simon that decisions, and their success, are related to organizational goals, Griffiths contends that decisions depend upon the values, perceptions, aspirations and motivations, and the past experience of the decision-maker. Each person makes a decision from "his own unique, personal

belief centre” (Griffiths, 1959, p.125). Further, Griffiths believes that decisions are not isolated actions but part of a sequential series. Both theorists operate from a bureaucratic model of rational decision-making, although Griffiths diverges from Simon in believing that it is unlikely for any two individuals to arrive at exactly the same decision even when limited by commitment to the organization and its goals.

T. B. Greenfield (1973) disagreed with Simon’s and Griffiths’ systems approach and suggested a paradigm shift in thinking about educational decision-making. While Griffiths advocates a set of propositions to guide administrative action and account for observations of administrative decision-making in practice, Greenfield contends that a qualitative approach to building meanings based upon individual experiences and ideas would better inform administrative practices.

Hammond (1980) grapples with the dilemma of cognitive decision-making actions versus an intuitive approach to understand human perception, judgment and thinking. He proposes to integrate human judgment and cognitive decision-making into a “separate, identifiable scientific discipline” (Hammond, 1980, p.5). Hammond is skeptical of examining decision-making through descriptions because he contends that researchers bias responses through the content of their questions. Hammond clearly favours responsible cognition over descriptive decision-making theory. He states:

It has been the (slow and uneven) *cumulative* growth of hard-won empirical knowledge and skill that has increased the security that responsible cognition has sought, and found, for its “wobbling hypotheses”. For while the mid 19th-century philosophers were continuing to pursue the nuances of meaning in the verbal struggle between “rival types of knowledge”, mid 19th-century scientists, little known then and now, were successfully making quantitative analysis of judgments for the first time, and were thus preparing way for the mid 20th-century judgment and decision analysts. The fact that judgments *can* be quantified, *can* be refined in a responsible way, and *can* be analyzed and understood in quantitative terms, can no longer be doubted (Hammond, 1980, p.5).

Hodgkinson (1988), a supporter of T. B. Greenfield, promotes the descriptive exploration of administrative decision-making to formulate theory. Hodgkinson proposes that administrative action is based upon the values of individual administrators. He suggests that the ethical administrator will

seek to increase the freedom of subordinates as well as his own freedom by establishing a value base in one of two ways. The first way is through the voluntary acquisition of an ideological commitment, which is the foundation for the moral integrity of the administrator. The second approach is to make a commitment to rational forms of life in a bureaucratic organizational culture. Individual values would then be based upon the established ways of doing things in the organization and logic, efficiency and effectiveness would guide the actions of the individual. The administrator who is committed to the bureaucratic organization develops values based upon his perception of the goals of the organization and reveres the rules of the game.

## **Descriptive Theories of Decision-Making**

In the literature two distinct themes emerge for the formulation of decision-making theory. One is descriptive, informed by administrator action and behaviour. The second is prescriptive where the administrator's action is informed by theory. Descriptive theory, which grew from the need to reconcile theory with practice, examines organizations as collections of unique individuals who create and may change organizational norms. Traditional, prescriptive administrative decision-making theory was originally abstract, formal and elaborate (Gronn, 1989). There was a discrepancy between theory and practice which did not fit the real life experiences of some theorists (T. B. Greenfield, 1973). Cross (1980) maintains that descriptive theory is difficult to abstract because of the focus on certain phenomena to the exclusion of others. Cross (1980, p.154) states:

Decision-making has occupied a central position in the literature on administration. Barnard (1), Griffiths (6), and Simon (11) have all accorded considerable significance to the concept of decision-making as a focus for the study of administration. A few researchers have dealt with second-hand descriptions of the decision-making behaviour of school administrators (3) and still others (4, 9) have observed the nature of problems that come to educational administrators for resolution. First-hand descriptions of the decision-making behaviour of educational administrators, however, are virtually unknown.

In his study of decision-making patterns of elementary school principals, Cross (1980) devised the following constructs to guide his observations and to provide a tested system of categories, which, he claims, are exhaustive and unambiguous:

1. Critical Problem Stimuli:
  - administrator's perception of the problem
2. Initial Responses:
  - decision-making systems
  - explicit and rational approach
  - commonly include the five - six steps to problem solving
  - difficult to observe because they are mental processes
3. Decision Premises:
  - knowledge of the school
  - knowledge of instruction
  - job experience
  - cultural knowledge (common sense)
  - organizational prescriptions: rules, orders and policies

In his study of a sample of nine male principals, Cross found that almost all decision-making was reactive, strongly influenced by subordinates and rapid. He further found that principals rarely used organizational prescriptions or consulted their supervisors before making decisions.

Henderson and Nutt (1980) employed a descriptive method of formulating theory on the influence of decision style on decision-making. They used simulated decisions on a sample composed of administrators of hospitals and business firms. Since the sex of the sample population was not defined, it can be intuited that it was all male. Henderson and Nutt found that cognitive style influenced the choices made by the administrators. Administrators with different styles were found to react differently to the same problems. Henderson and Nutt also found that:

the tendency toward judgmental or perceptual dominance is contingent upon an individual's tendency to be an introvert or an extrovert and that the complexity of resulting decision style topology is increased substantially and would require a much larger sample size to investigate (p. 384).

## Prescriptive Theories of Decision-Making

The prescriptive or rational decision mode is founded upon a sequential succession of five or six steps:

1. recognize, define and limit the problem
2. analyze and evaluate the problem
3. establish criteria by which the solution will be judged as adequate to the need
4. collect data
5. formulate and select the preferred solution (test it in advance)
6. implement the solution and evaluate the results.

Griffiths (1959) contends that the definition of the problem depends upon the background, motivation and ability of the administrator to perceive the problem. The urgency of the solution will affect the decision made and will be based upon the values of the administrator as an individual and the goals or values of the organization. The level of aspiration and the motives of the administrator will affect the criteria by which the solution will be judged. The data collected to inform the decision should be relevant and repeatable; the data should remain the same when used by others as when used by the decision-maker. Griffiths believes that decision-making in organizations is not a personal matter, but affects the organization and should reflect its goals and values. He proposes that administrators interact with others as members of a group rather than as individuals which is in direct contrast to T. B. Greenfield's proposition that organizations are only a collection of individuals.

Although Griffiths addresses in detail the six step model of rational decision-making, he clearly points out that decisions can be made quickly, with little deliberate thought, or that they can be lengthy and thoughtfully deliberated. Decisions, in his view, are not isolated actions, but are based upon previous decisions. He states that:

decisions are pragmatic in nature; that the value of a decision is dependent upon the success of the action which follows it (Griffiths, 1959, p. 76).

He believes that all rational action is in terms of goals and that the value of the decision is related to the degree to which the goals are attained.

Griffiths also proposes that the quality of decisions can be improved by placing limits on the decision-maker. When decisions are limited the ways, means and content become prescribed through policy.

## **Decision-Making as a Matter of Conscience**

However decision-making is formulated as theory, the fact that individuals, not organizations, make decisions is undisputed. In the final analysis, trust in the individual's moral integrity to make decisions based upon defensible reasoning is of greatest significance to those affected by the decision.

Friedrich (1958) believes that:

reasoning which relates actions to opinions and beliefs, and opinions and beliefs to values, however defined (p. 35) will be acceptable. Limits upon decision-making become unnecessary if administrators who wield power recognize their responsibilities for discretionary acts in the sense of an obligation to retain the regard for the potentiality of reasoned elaboration (Friedrich, 1958, p. 48).

Rather than viewing decision-making as a rational cognitive process, Green (1984) proposes the development of conscience as the prescriptive guide to moral and ethical decision-making by administrators:

The moral, emotional, and prudential character; that sense of history; that understanding of political institutions, of justice, and of freedom...decisively contribute to the character of the persons whom we trust...to decide (Green, 1980, p. 25).

Rootedness and vision serve as guidelines to people engaged in public policy. According to Green, people possessing imagination and vision must be free of other limits to act and decide, contrary to Griffiths' view of prescriptive theory.

In hiring practices constrained by the policy limitations of a union contract, administrators may, in some cases, face strong tensions between what action is desirable to them in terms of personal and

organizational values; what is good for them and the school, and the actions they are constrained to perform by contract. Administrators will engage in moral discourse as they assess the policy governing hiring practices and such assessment will invoke the various voices of conscience as described by Green (1984) if their decisions are to be grounded in ethical deliberation (Manley-Casimir, 1989).

While school staffing by administrators is of primary importance to increase school harmony and reduce tension, this issue has not been addressed in the literature. This may be due to the fact that administrators have enjoyed almost unfettered discretion in staffing in the past. With the formation of teacher unions, however, teachers have worked toward limiting this discretion. Because this is a recent occurrence, researchers may be just beginning to investigate the effects of the contract upon administrators. Thus, predictions of how administrators make staffing decisions must be inferred from hiring practices in general.

Griffiths (1959) describes an instance of an executive choosing one secretarial candidate, among others, on the basis of her big eyes, although this executive rated the successful candidate as the most rigid of all the candidates. Griffiths calls this a "maverick" or rare decision. This conclusion is dubious in light of all the sexual scandals being exposed in the media. Wolcott (1973) conducted an ethnographic study of one man in the principal's office in 1967. He discovered that, although this principal stated he believed more men should assume elementary teaching positions, in actual fact, this principal did not support single male teachers on his staff. He feared such teachers may be of a homosexual nature, regardless of their expertise. These examples of decisions made by male administrators show that the decisions were formulated upon personal whims rather than on the rational bureaucratic method of decision-making or a sense of conscience as craft (Green, 1984). These "maverick" examples make a strong case for descriptive research into administrative hiring practices. They further indicate that, contrary to Griffiths' belief that prescriptive theory informs decision-making, descriptive studies could inform theory.

It can be inferred that Griffiths proposes that policy will limit the discretion of administrators in hiring practices by defining who hires and the process by which hiring is done. He suggests that attempts are made to select individuals who have an inclination toward the goals of the organization. The goals of the organization could be the goals of the administrator which may or may not be in the best interests of the school. Shakeshaft (1987) found that those in a position to hire, hired people most like themselves; people with whom they felt most comfortable. Another finding of Shakeshaft's was that men are not comfortable working closely with competent women and tend to discriminate more against them.

If the premise that administrators hire those who reflect the administrator's values and those with whom the administrator feels comfortable; those most like the administrator, holds true, then the hiring decisions of administrators would be most impacted by their aspirations, motivations and personal and professional values. All of the literature on administrative decision-making was written by men and it was never suggested that any differences might occur in decision-making processes because of gender. This finding lends credence to the supposition that decision-making in this body of literature was female exclusive and supports the notion that descriptive research is desperately required regarding female decision-making. Nevertheless, this body of decision-making literature provides a useful conceptual framework on which to create constructs to guide interviews and to formulate a conceptual analysis of gender based decision-making in school staffing.

## **SOCIOLOGICAL ORIGINS**

### **Gender Differences**

The status of womankind has undergone an evolutionary change. Women began their experiences as property; to be disposed of at the will of men. Their experiences grew to being considered separate from men, but less equal, and then changed to women being considered emotionally and intellectually the same as men. Finally women emerged as being different from, but equal to, men.

Historically, women were viewed as the property of their fathers first and then that of their husbands.

Women were seen as simple, childlike, and even stupid...their husbands or fathers acted as their legal representatives (Jacklin, 1981, p. 58).

19th century biologists held that a woman's brain was too small for intellect, but large enough for household chores (Ehrenreich, 1992, p. 43).

Although many women worked hard in the 20th century to change this stereotypical image and they made important gains, such as the right to vote, opportunities for women continued to be unequal to opportunities for men. Western society continued to associate masculinity with autonomy, aggression, independence and goal achievement. Femininity was regarded as dependent, passive, nurturant and as a need for affiliation. Males dominated the occupational world while females occupied the domestic world and gained status through their husbands (Gilbertson, 1981). That men and women are different anatomically is obvious, but historically, these differences have been used to prove that women are inferior to men. By the 1960's, however, feminists had made substantial headway in protesting that apart from anatomical differences, men and women were equal; equal meaning the same. Observable differences were blamed upon upbringing, cultural conditioning, stereotyping, and anthropological origins such as men as hunters and women as child-raisers (Swartz, 1991 & Ehrereich, 1992). In fact, by the late 1960's, it was considered

politically incorrect to draw attention to - even collect data on - differing capabilities, aptitudes, responses (Swartz, 1991, p. 36).

At the same time, women were demanding equal pay for equal work and an end to sex discrimination in employment.

In the 1960's and well into the 1970's, in Education, mostly women were elementary school teachers; men were administrators and composed the majority of high school teachers. Women worked within the framework of the myth that they were incapable of making decisions; it was a man's domain. Men were more inclined to authoritative decision-making while women were

conditioned to be compliant, directed by others, compromising and nurturant (Wolcott, 1973 & Frasher and Frasher, 1979).

By the 1970's more women were becoming independent and proclaiming their equality to men. More women were in the work force and buying homes than ever before (Swartz, 1991). Women had also gained public policy on sex equity (Jacklin, 1981). Women, however, continued to be viewed as part of mankind and as some women became successful at achieving administrative positions, they accepted "the male model of how schools ought to be run" (Carlson and Schmuck, 1981, p. 128). Women were beginning to feel a conflict between what they should be and what they felt like by the early 1980's. As women began to want it all; money and status as well as the ability to be emotionally cool like men, many women entered psychoanalysis to achieve coping strategies. However, the majority of the analysts were men and so women were counselled from an androcentric perspective and told to carry on (Swartz, 1991).

Then came a "shifting ideology concerning women's place in the society" (Carlson and Schmuck, 1981, p. 127). Swartz (1991) cites reports by Master's and Johnson and the 1976 Hite Report which concluded that women were in fact different from men and that these differences were not to be interpreted as defective. In the 1980's, a body of literature appeared challenging the notion that men and women functioned and behaved in similar ways (Chodorow, 1978, Gilligan, 1982 & Noddings, 1984). Slowly, the paradigm shift in thinking of women as different, but not inferior, is gaining credence.

Recent studies, that measure function in the right and left hemispheres of the brain support the theory that men and women think differently. Gorman (1992) reports that researchers have found substantial differences between brain structure and functioning in men and women. They found that more men than women can rotate three dimensional objects in their heads (example: men can read maps better than women) and that more women than men can read the emotions of people in pictures. From these findings researchers conclude that men and women perceive the world in different ways.

This finding is supported by the study of characteristics of future educational leaders conducted by Judith Weller (1988). In her monograph, Weller reports on new brain wave research which suggests

that neurological differences may explain gender differences in organizing reality and achieving identity. Weller suggests that female traits previously thought to be a liability; cooperation, intuition and open communication, should instead be considered valuable assets for the 21st century.

Melissa Hines (reported in Gorman, 1992) conducted a two year study of the origins of gender differences by video-taping children playing. She found that on average girls preferred dolls and kitchen toys while boys were drawn to sports cars and fire trucks. She also found that one group of girls consistently displayed a preference for boy toys. These girls were discovered to have a rare genetic abnormality that caused elevated testosterone production, among other hormones, during embryonic development. Gorman (1992) reports that other medical researchers have documented such findings of innate sexual differences as heart disease striking men at a younger age than women and women having a more moderate response to stress than men.

Recent medical research also suggests that varying levels of hormones before birth may predispose boys to more rambunctious behaviour than girls (Gorman, 1992). A further medical finding suggests that the corpus callosum, a thick bundle of nerves at the top of the brain stem which allows the right side of the brain to communicate with the left, and is bigger in women than in men, may permit greater crosstalk between the hemispheres in women (Gorman, 1992).

If this is true, it could explain the phenomenon of female intuition. An important caution is issued by Hines (in Gorman, 1992) however, that most of the gender differences in cognitive function that have been discovered to date are statistically quite small. Gender is a complex puzzle "requiring pieces from biology, sociology and culture" (Gorman, 1992, p. 38).

## **Gender Differences in Educational Administration**

Several studies have been undertaken in the last thirty years which examine the sex factor in educational administration. These studies document differences in the ways in which male and female principals behave.

In 1962, Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen studied the administrative performance and

personality of 232 elementary principals; 137 male principals and 95 female principals. They found the average female principal to be ten years older than the average male. Less than ten percent of the men were not married while approximately fifty percent of the women were single. By and large, men were found to: work alone and make individual final decisions, take terminal action, follow pre-established structures in problem-solving and to comply more with suggestions made by others. Women, on the other hand, were more inclined to: involve teachers, superiors and other outsiders in their work, seek information from background materials, take a more thorough approach to in-basket items, be more concerned with improved student learning and provide instructional leadership.

Gross and Trask reported the results of their study of the sex factor in administration in 1976. They examined the ways in which gender may influence the careers of administrators, role performance, functioning and productivity of organizations and the orientations and responses of principals to their work. The data was collected in the 1960's through interviews and other techniques on a sample of 189 elementary principals in forty-one large city schools from all parts of the United States. Gross and Trask (1976) reported: the difference in median age between male and female administrators as thirteen years; most men were age thirty-nine or younger while most women were fifty or older, men were predominantly married while women were mostly single, women principals came from higher socio-economic backgrounds than men, women took more undergraduate education courses than did men, most women had taught for sixteen or more years while most men had taught for six years or less, and that more women were attracted to teaching at an earlier age than men. As administrators, Gross and Trask found that women enjoyed administrative tasks while men were more interested in moving up the hierarchical system. Women were found to place greater emphasis on concern for the emotional and social growth of children than men principals. On average women were found to place greater weight on the technical skills of teachers as a criterion for evaluating performance than men principals.

Both the Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen (1962) and Gross and Trask (1976) studies were conducted in the 1960's. The two studies produced markedly similar findings. Other studies of

principal behaviours that support the findings that women are more apt to behave in democratic and effective administrative fashions were reported by Meskin (1978) as a finding of the Florida Leadership Project, which began in 1952, and Frasher and Frasher (1979).

Patricia Andrews (1985) studied the impact of gender on upward communication in organizations. Her sample was composed of forty male and forty female college students in public speaking classes. The subjects were assigned to read a medical case study and were given two criteria for decision-making. They were asked to make a decision and present supporting evidence to a graduate student playing the role of a hospital administrator. The subjects also completed a questionnaire after their presentation. Three hypotheses were used to inform the study :

- 1) women would have less self-confidence than men in presentation,
- 2) women would rate themselves less successfully following the presentations than would men, and
- 3) women would be more likely to attribute their successes to external factors and their failures to internal factors than would men.

Andrews thought that the subjects would rate male power figures as making a more positive impression than female power figures and that men would be more likely to advance criterion-based arguments while women would present arguments of their own creation, based upon human relationships. The results of the study were found to support the hypotheses. Low self-confidence, however, was not found to affect performance. Men and women used different criteria to develop their arguments.

In studying decisions regarding the recruitment and hiring of administrators in Oregon in 1977-78, Schmuck and Wyant (1981) discovered that administrative positions were segregated by sex. Men's work included elementary and high school principal as well as superintendent positions. Women's work included some representation as elementary school principals and district coordinators.

In the 1990 U.C.L.A. Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey, John Lucas (1990) found that more males were tenured, held higher positions and earned more money than females.

Female faculty were found to spend less time in scheduled teaching, but more time in committee work and administrative activities than the national average. Female faculty were more willing to commit time to shared governance work.

Cobelli and Muth (1990) studied administrative decision-making styles in Higher Education to look at factors influencing the ways individuals make decisions and personality traits affecting decision-making. In looking at gender traits, they found that female administrators were perceived as more nurturing, more attentive to detail and more process oriented than were male administrators.

These studies, which examined group behaviour for gender differences, revealed masculine and feminine themes of justice and an ethic of care as described by Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984). These studies classified men and women by sex group and were not individual specific. Men and women could behave within either the masculine or feminine themes. Nevertheless, these studies demonstrate clearly the evolution of woman from property to independent beings who define their experiences in their own voices.

### **Career Paths: Are Men and Women Administrators Equally Situated?**

More women than men decide to become teachers at an early age. More men than women decide to become teachers during their college years or upon completing college because they lack the financial and or cognitive resources to enter their first choice field (Lortie, 1975). Teaching has traditionally been a woman's profession. Girls were socialized to regard teaching as an appropriate career, as it was one of few choices available to them. Boys, having a large number of occupations to choose from, were not socialized to regard teaching as a worthwhile career. Women were able to commit themselves to teaching as a terminal career while men viewed teaching as the first rung of the career ladder (Jacklin 1981). As teaching was the first choice of many women and the last resort of many men, the brightest, most capable women became teachers. Since the motivations of male teachers were generally different from those of women, the brightest and most competent men did not necessarily become teachers (Meskin, 1978).

All administrators began their careers as classroom teachers (Gross and Trask, 1978; Paddock, 1981; & Ortiz, 1982). Women went on to teach for fifteen or more years, increasing their skills at curriculum development, knowledge of student learning and process teaching. Women were able to move in and out of teaching during that time for reasons of marriage and child-bearing. Men usually taught for six years or less. They were subject to self and outside pressures to begin the climb up the hierarchy of the education system (Paddock, 1981 & Ortiz 1982). Men did not view teaching as an open door to swing back and forth through as women did. Once men left teaching, they viewed returning to it as a demotion. Men, of course, do not have the same need as women to interrupt their careers as they are largely not responsible for child-raising, let alone child-birth. Men, then, work continuously throughout their adult years until retirement, while women may enter, leave and perhaps re-enter the work force. Traditionally, men have been the main family wage earner while women's money has been considered extra, except in cases of single women.

All teachers may enter administration through one or more ways: curriculum specialist, district level coordinator, or the vice-principalship. Men were more likely to be promoted to line positions which permitted them to supervise adults (vice-principal or supervisor) while women were more likely to be promoted to staff positions where they assist other teachers (coordinator or curriculum specialist). Women who did their jobs well may have been assigned a principalship as a reward (Ortiz, 1982).

Because men viewed teaching as a point of departure to positions of higher status and money, they undertook graduate work at an earlier age than did women. More men than women began their first graduate degree by their mid-twenties while more women than men began their first graduate degree in their late twenties or early thirties (Paddock, 1981).

At the current time, the conditions for entry into administration in British Columbia differ from the traditional experience of American administrators, as described in the studies, in that the candidates self-select the position and enter a competition to obtain it.

Positions are no longer (theoretically) awarded for good performance. Each candidate must pass through the same process. Most candidates apply from classroom teaching positions or district staff helping teacher positions. The usual route to the principalship is through promotion from the vice-principalship, achieved through the same competitive process as was used to achieve the vice-principalship. A candidate rarely moves into the principalship without vice-principal training. In general, though, the experience of women administrators in British Columbia is similar to their American counterparts (for a more comprehensive discussion, see Yvonne Tabin's 1990 Thesis: School Administration In A Different Voice: The Careers Of Women Administrators In British Columbia).

The conclusions presented in the literature consistently support the notion that sex appears to correlate with behaviour. These conclusions should be viewed with caution, however.

The research findings are ambiguous at best about important personality characteristics such as dependency, timidity, anxiety, competitiveness, dominance, nurturance and fear; they do not support the hypothesis that sex is a useful predictor for individual behavior...However,...it does appear that the social and political implications surrounding the variables of sex are important in how leaders carry out their defined functions (Schmuck, 1981, p.224).

Factors such as the masculine and feminine themes of moral reasoning, the values and motives driving individual decisions, the process through which decisions are made, socialization of individuals, succession and career patterns will be "salient contributors to and shapers of" (Boyan, 1988, p. 87) administrator actions. Numerous studies have been conducted regarding gender in the experiences of American administrators. Whether and how this factor influences the decision-making processes in staffing of administrators in British Columbia is the focus of this study.

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODS

Men and women think, reason and perceive their worlds in different ways, the literature suggests. This study investigated whether men and women principals exercise discretion in different ways. To explore the motivations and moral and ethical values driving administrator decision-making in staffing, a qualitative method, rooted in ethnography, was adopted. Descriptive accounts were thought to be the most useful aid to interpreting and understanding administrator behaviour. The methodological procedures for qualitative research described by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) and Merriam (1988) were adapted to guide this social inquiry.

The decision to study the manner in which male and female principals exercise discretion in hiring stemmed from a compelling need, as an aspiring female principal, to develop greater insight into the role of principal by discovering how and why principals exercise discretion within a highly prescribed process. The procedures for hiring in Surrey, British Columbia, have been fiercely regulated and, over the last two years, have come under close scrutiny by the teachers' union.

The foreshadowed problems that this study was initially conceived upon were that women would be more rule-abiding, exercising discretion in hiring only over the issue of procuring teachers with superb ability. Men would be less rule-abiding, would exercise greater discretion and be less concerned with superb teaching abilities. As the study progressed, other problems emerged which led to the following questions:

- 1) Will the status of recent or former appointees affect the way in which the person will exercise discretion?
- 2) What effect does past experience, including successes and failures, have upon the process of individual decision-making?

3) What role does self-confidence play in decision-making and is self-confidence related to gender?

It was hoped that the research would provide knowledge about the way administrators make decisions and exercise discretion within the context of their jobs. Asking principals to tell their stories in their own ways was decided upon as the method for collecting data:

ethnography... generates descriptive accounts that are valuable in their own right and it also greatly facilitates the process of theory construction (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.237).

A systematic research design was necessary to explore the factors surrounding decision-making by principals. To be as inclusive as possible of the numerous variables which interact to guide or direct administrator action, a qualitative case study approach, within a bounded system, was chosen. The bounded system used was the decision-making through which principals hire staff. The system is further bounded by studying principals within a single school district. These principals were all governed by the same rules and accountable to the same union.

Qualitative case study was preferred for this research because it "is an ideal design for understanding and interpreting observations of educational phenomena" (Merriam, 1988, p.2). Within the framework of case study research, several designs were available to conduct the study. Hammersley and Atkinson describe the ethnographic process of direct observation and recording of notes of principals in action. Merriam's qualitative case study methodology, which subsumes ethnography, includes other designs such as interviews in which notes are recorded, written questionnaires, and tape-recorded, open-ended interviews.

The most rigorous method to collect data for this particular study would have been the true ethnographic style:

The ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people's lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions; in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. 2).

Using this method, the complete hiring process conducted by each principal, from approximately the end of April to the end of June, would have been observed by the researcher as a participant observer. Tape recorded conversations and interviews, field notes and all of the documents produced for and by the hiring process would constitute the data. This method would likely produce greater insight into the true manner in which principals exercise discretion because observations of principal behaviour would be integrated with the information volunteered by the principal about him/herself. Since each principal performs hiring tasks at nearly the same time as the others, however, it would have been impossible to observe the practices of more than two, if even two principals could be observed during the same period.

Because the major focus of this study is to compare the actions of male and female, former and recent appointees to the principalship, the true ethnographic method was rejected. A research design that permitted the description of the actions of many principals within the same time period became an important criterion. It was crucial to this study that the data be collected at the time principals were actually engaged in the hiring process to make the data as reliable as possible. Thus the data collection was restricted to the months of May and June.

Note-taking during the interviews seemed too cumbersome a task and this procedure seemed likely to prevent the spontaneity necessary to achieve the purpose of this study. Questionnaires were regarded as restrictive because they required the busy principal to write lengthy answers and it was impossible to predict all of the questions required to obtain a full range of responses.

For these reasons, the open-ended, tape-recorded interview was chosen as the preferred research design. The interview questions allowed for the widest range of responses and taping the conversation permitted it to flow smoothly, without interruption.

## **Research Approach**

Adapting Merton's and Kendall's (1946) focused interview approach which requires foreknowledge of the situation, among other prerequisites, open-ended interviews with principals in

the Surrey School District were adopted as the data collection instrument for this study. A sample of both male and female, formerly and recently appointed principals was chosen as the best method for acquiring reliable knowledge of their thoughts and behaviour so that this knowledge could be examined within the context of the three themes discussed in the literature review.

The interview focused upon the following factors:

- the psychological perspective of the subject (subscribing to an ethic of justice or care),
- the decision-making process used by the subject,
- the adult life history of the subject.

Within this focused framework, seventeen nondirective, open-ended questions were used to give the subject an opportunity to express himself about matters of central significance to him rather than the interviewer (Merton and Kendall, 1946, p. 545).

Principals' perceptions were solicited on four questions relating to psychological development: purpose of the principal, what is important about his/her school, how the principal would like to be known and his/her feelings about union and district policies. Six interview questions then asked about decision-making. Information was solicited about the hiring process and its rules, discretion within the rules and the principal's decision-making process. Finally, seven questions were asked to reveal the principal's background, road to the principalship, motivations, and aspirations.

The interview questions that were used to collect the data for this study are reproduced in their entirety as Appendix B.

## **The Researcher's Position**

The data for this study were collected within the district in which the researcher works. At the time of data collection, the researcher was an acting vice-principal, with a non-acting appointment to the position in the summer following the interviews. As this situation was potentially problematic, giving rise to a degree of writer bias, the researcher remained self-consciously aware of the dangers and deliberately attempted to distance herself in order to render the results as fair and accurate as possible.

Some of the interviewees were known personally or by reputation to the researcher. Being an administrator within the district proved to be an advantage for the researcher because it allowed access to the interview and provided for a common understanding of the hiring issues discussed.

All of the interviews were conducted by the researcher to ensure reliability of the understandings which emerged. The tapes, however, were transcribed by a professional typist, who guaranteed confidentiality of their content. The transcripts were then reviewed with the tapes, to ensure accuracy, by the researcher.

## **Data Collection**

### **The interview process and schedule:**

The data were collected by interviewing twelve principals over two months, May and June, in 1992. The data resulted from tape-recorded conversations which varied from one which was one half hour in length to an interview that took one and a half hours. The interviews usually took place in the principal's office at his/her school, between 3:15 and 6:00 p.m. One interview was conducted in the researcher's office, at her school, after 7:00 p.m. because both that principal and the researcher lived close to her school. Another interview was conducted in one principal's home, in the evening, again because that setting was more convenient.

Interviewees were not given a copy of the questions in advance of the interview because fresh, spontaneous responses were desired. All of the interviews were conducted in the same way. The researcher would arrive, introduce herself and review the purpose of the interview. Subjects were told to only answer questions with which they felt comfortable and to elaborate as much or as little as they thought necessary. The tape-recorder was then turned on and the interview proceeded. During the interviews clarifying and probing prompts were used to be sure understanding of what the principals were saying was reached. Each interviewee was asked, and responded to, all of the seventeen questions, although the order of the questions sometime varied.

At the end of each interview the principal expressed interest in the results and was promised an abbreviated version upon completion of the thesis.

After each interview, the tape used was labelled former or recent, male or female appointee and numbered in the order in which the interview took place (FM1, FM2, FM3, FF1, FF2, FF3, RM1, RM2, RM3, RF1, RF2, RF3). The date and starting time of the interview were also recorded. The length of each tape indicates how long the interview lasted.

It was not until all of the interviews were completed that the tapes were transcribed. The tapes were professionally transcribed over the summer months of 1992. While preliminary data analysis began during the interviews and in listening to the tapes over the summer, deep analysis did not begin until September, 1992.

### **Data reliability:**

A pilot interview was conducted with a recently appointed, male principal who was not included in the sample selection of principals. The interview was helpful in revealing the kind of information that the questions elicited, proving that the questions were open-ended, yet clear enough, and determining the approximate length of the interview. As the pilot interview proved fruitful in seeming to provide reliable information, it was determined to use the questions as they were originally designed, with only a few minor changes in wording. The changes made are shown below.

### **Research Questions Affected (Original)**

B. Decision-Making:

5. How was your present staff assembled?

A. What opportunities do you have to choose your staff members?

9. If you had two or three candidates to select from, all with similar qualifications, what might influence your decision-making?

C. Sociological Origins: Gender Differences:

11. How did you come to be a principal?

A. Please tell me about your background.

### **Research Questions Affected (Revised)**

B. Decision-Making:

5. How was your present staff assembled?

A. What opportunities have you had to choose staff members that you, personally, want to have work in your school?

9. If you had two or three candidates to select from, all with similar qualifications and experience, what might influence your decision-making?

C. Sociological Origins: Gender Differences:

11. How did you come to be a principal?

A. Please tell me about your background in terms of your career path.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There were two factors which may have influenced the validity of this study. The first factor involves time constraints and energy levels for both the researcher and the interviewees. The late spring is a busy time for principals because there are many year end tasks to complete in addition to staffing for the coming year. Staffing involves numerous interviews and documentation of those interviews. That each principal set aside time, at that point in the school year, to participate in this research was heroic. Shortage of time meant that several of the interviews were conducted on Fridays and concluded well after 5:30 p.m. In addition, most of the interviews were conducted on hot days. Therefore, this study may have been limited by low energy and high fatigue. Some of the interviews may have been coloured by the type of day the principal had as well. One principal remarked that he

had had a successful day and he was feeling good about himself and his school, while another principal remarked that she had had a tough day, had suspended a student and she admitted that these factors could have influenced her comments.

The second factor that limited the scope of this study was that all of the data were based upon self-reports. Discrepancies, if any, between how principals actually behave and how they describe their behaviour cannot be discovered through the research design used. The self-report style of data collection was further limited by the interviewees' knowledge that their responses would be published, albeit anonymously.

## **Data Analysis**

Although the focus of this research is the way in which principals use discretion; the use, or not, of discretion by an individual results from various factors which work together to make the whole person. For this reason, profiles were created of each principal as the first step of data analysis. These profiles were culled from observations during interviews as well as information from the transcripts. After each interview was transcribed, it was scrutinized for information regarding the individual's background, family life, career path and ambitions. The information was then synthesized into profiles describing each principal which are included in the sample section of this chapter.

Because this study was exploratory, its conceptual framework was only able to provide direction in formulating the questions and in guiding the content of responses. As foreknowledge of the responses could not be presumed, the method of analysis was to see what the data yielded through the process of coding responses.

HyperRESEARCH, a coding tool for qualitative research, (Research Ware, 1992) was the electronic device used to code and report the data. The initial coding began with each of the seventeen questions acting as codes. One of the most comprehensive interviews was chosen as the starting point to yield further codes because it was considered to be fairly inclusive. The questions were used as a rough guide to see what the analysis of this interview yielded. Further codes were then established to

represent the major categories of information from the transcript. Thirty-four first level codes were established by coding nearly all of the responses in this transcript. Once these first level codes were created, the transcript was recoded twice with one week in between codings, as the time interval, to ensure reliability of the codes. After the codes were confirmed in this way, the remaining eleven transcripts were coded in groups of former male appointees, former female appointees, recent male appointees, and recent female appointees as second level coding. Fifteen further codes were then added as the responses of different groups were found to take some different directions.

Once this process was completed and the data reduced to code classifications, the coded responses for each group were printed as a report. The coded data for each group was then manually separated into the three themes discussed in the literature review: psychological origins, decision-making processes and sociological origins and third level coding took place.

As the first level codes were examined within each theme, specific sections for each theme emerged as follows:

#### THEME ONE: PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS

- I. The Values of the School Principal
- II. The Purpose of the School Principal
- III. The Importance of the School
- IV. Outside Constraints

#### THEME TWO: DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

- I. Professional Decision-Making Processes
  1. Opportunities to Hire
  2. Staffing Decisions
  3. Hiring Decisions
  4. Criteria Decisions

5. Desired Qualities in a Teacher
6. Candidate Selection Decisions

## II. Personal Decision-Making Processes

### THEME THREE: SOCIOLOGICAL ORIGINS

#### I. Administrative Behaviour

1. Term of Principalship
2. Gender Affects Job Performance
3. Frustrations of the Job
4. Job Stress
5. Job Satisfaction
6. Future Aspirations

#### II. Career Paths

1. Motivation to Become a Principal
2. Background
3. Road to the Principalship
4. Vice-Principal Appointment Process
5. Principal Appointment Process
6. Role Model/Mentor
7. Family Life

As the initial forty-nine codes were classified within each theme, some codes were subsumed within the sections and sub-sections of each theme. Other codes remained in their first level form. A list of the first level codes and an outline of their reorganization under the three themes of this study are contained in Appendix C.

Findings, within the three themes, were then reported for each group separately in chapter four. Finally, cross group analysis was conducted to facilitate comparisons and to draw conclusions. Using the three themes as a conceptual guide, the four groups were contrasted and compared. The final chapter reports the significance of the findings.

## **The Sample**

In order to fully explore the research question, it was decided to not only compare men and women principals, but to include in the study principals grouped by status as former or recent appointees. Based upon the perception that status, as well as gender, could affect the exercise of discretion by principals, these two factors formed the criteria for a sample selection within the Surrey School District. Then a sample of three subjects for each category was decided upon as an exploratory representation of each group. In total, a sample of twelve principals was chosen as a representative group.

Former appointee was defined as a principal appointment in September 1982 or earlier, well before the teachers' union contract constrained hiring practices. Recent appointee was defined as a principal appointment in September 1988 or later, after hiring practices were subject to the rules of the union contract.

The sample was restricted to elementary school principals because there are more elementary schools to choose from and thus, there are more women elementary school principals than secondary school principals.

In order to gather a group of respondents, the Surrey District Research and Evaluation department was visited. A proposal for the study was submitted and approved in the fall of 1991. In the spring of 1992, Dr. Barbara Holmes of that department, was telephoned to request a sample of Surrey principals, to be randomly selected according to the defined criteria. A list of subjects, including their names and schools, was then mailed to the researcher by Dr. Holmes. At the same time, she mailed letters to all of the principals selected to compose the sample endorsing the study and asking for

voluntary cooperation. The researcher then telephoned the selected principals to set interview appointments. Each principal contacted agreed to participate in the study. Telephone conversations were followed by letters of confirmation. After all of the interviews were completed, thank you letters were sent to the principals. This correspondence forms Appendix A.

Following are profiles of the principals who participated in this research.

## **PROFILES**

### **Former Male Appointees**

#### **F.M. 1**

F.M. 1 is a tall, slim, fit-looking man in his early forties. The way he moves, speaks and smiles indicates that he is a cheerful person who is comfortable with himself. His firm hand-shake and initiation of the introductions reveal that he is used to assuming authority.

At the time of the interview, F.M. 1 was serving his twelfth year as a school principal. He has been the principal of the same elementary school for the last five years. His school serves many children with special needs and one of the frustrations he expressed about the job was the inability of the school to meet all of the needs of these children.

Prior to becoming an elementary school principal, F.M. 1 was the principal of a small senior secondary school in a desirable area of the district. It was there that F.M. 1 was most happy. This position terminated when the school grew to become a large 8 - 12 secondary school. F.M. 1 prefers small schools in which he is able to know and work with the children and teachers directly. Before assuming the principalship of the senior secondary school, F.M. 1 served as the principal of two junior high schools in the same district for five years.

F.M. 1's path to the principalship followed a traditional progression. After completing high school in Surrey, he attended the University of British Columbia and obtained a four year degree. He then

took a year out to travel. It was at that time he decided to become a teacher. He went back to U.B.C. and enrolled in a one year teacher training program. Upon completion of that program, he applied for and received a teaching position in Surrey. He taught Physical Education, Consumer Education and took on counselling responsibilities for four years at a junior secondary school. After his second year of teaching he enrolled in an Educational Administration Master's Program at Western Washington University because some staff members at his school were enrolled at Western Washington and staffroom conversation revolved around course work.

F.M. 1 married at the time he began his graduate work. After four years of full-time teaching with the last two of those years devoted to graduate work, F.M. 1 applied for and received a part-time vice-principal appointment at a junior secondary school. At that time vice-principals were selected by the school principal.

For the next four years, F.M. 1 continued as a part-time vice-principal at the same school. Then he applied for and received a position as part-time vice-principal at a large senior secondary school in the same district. He served one year in that position.

It was at that time that F.M. 1's first child, a boy, was born. The next year F.M. 1 applied for the principalship of a junior secondary school and was successful. Then began his career as a school principal. After one year as a principal, F.M. 1's daughter was born.

As the years went on, F.M. 1, as the father of a young family, felt the increasing demands on a secondary school principal. He viewed the job as never-ending since it included many evening meetings and weekend appearances. Wanting to devote more time to his family and less time to the job, upon termination of the principal position at the small senior secondary school where he was employed, F.M. 1 looked to the elementary school as a viable alternative. He is happy with his decision and plans to continue as an elementary school principal.

## **F.M. 2**

F.M. 2 exudes a professional and business oriented persona. On this spring afternoon he is dressed in a shirt and tie. He has a clean shaven face and his hair is neatly trimmed. F.M. 2's office is actually larger than it looks. Books fill floor to ceiling bookcases against two walls. A table pushed against the third wall holds neatly stacked papers. F.M. 2 sits in front of a large desk that is covered with papers.

At an early age F.M. 2 knew he wanted to become a teacher. Because he enjoyed his own school experiences, he viewed teaching as a worthy career. After graduating from high school, F.M. 2 went directly to the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. After four years of teacher education, F.M. 2 applied for and received a teaching position in Surrey. He spent the first four years of his career teaching upper intermediate at one school. Then he attended a workshop on "the integrated day" which proved to be the main turning point in his career. F.M. 2 enthusiastically implemented the integrated day in his own classroom. The district intermediate supervisor was extremely interested in what F.M. 2 was doing and often dropped into F.M. 2's classroom. The following year this district intermediate supervisor was offered, and accepted, a principalship in the district. He offered F.M. 2 a teaching position at his school which F.M. 2 accepted. One of the staff members at F.M. 2's new school was a district helping teacher. Up until that time helping teachers were not released from the classroom, but district administration decided that year to release helping teachers from the classroom and make these positions full-time for the following school year. The helping teacher at F.M. 2's school did not want to perform the job full-time so the position was then offered to F.M. 2.

F.M. 2 acted as a district helping teacher for two years and was then offered a vice-principalship in one of the schools he frequently visited.

After five years as a vice-principal, F.M. 2 decided to actively pursue the principalship. He had completed his fifth year at Simon Fraser earlier in his teaching career. F.M. 2 began a Master's program at Western Washington University after his third year as a vice-principal.

F.M. 2 had to go through three formal application and interview situations to obtain his principalship. He completed his Master's degree during his first year as a principal.

At the time of our interview F.M. 2 had been a principal in Surrey for ten years. Although he finds that the union is taking away much of the control over schools that principals used to enjoy, he still likes the job. F.M. 2 has not the desire to become a district administrator. He likes the connections and team building that occur at the school level and so, although he will eventually change schools, F.M. 2 will remain an elementary school principal.

### **F.M. 3**

F.M. 3 is an older, kindly, yet authoritative looking man. He appears used to being in command; a benevolent father figure. F.M. 3's office is bright and sunny. On one wall there is a hat rack holding a varied assortment of hats. Some, F.M. 3 tells me, are his and some are children's that for various reasons have ended up on his rack. There are bowls of jelly beans and cinnamon hearts on F.M. 3's desk and on the table under the hat rack. When F.M. 3 opened his desk drawer to get a document to show me, I noticed the drawer contained a large sticker collection. F.M. 3 seems to enjoy making his office a place where children like to come to get special recognition. At the beginning of our interview F.M. 3 told his secretary that he was not to be disturbed. Then F.M. 3 explained to me that when he is in a meeting he usually tells his secretary not to disturb him except in one circumstance. F.M. 3 will always be interrupted when a child is sent to the office by a teacher or a child comes to the office to see him, to read to him or share a success story. F.M. 3 believes that recognizing students is important.

F.M. 3 always felt that he would like to be a teacher, but did not act upon this feeling until he was twenty-four years old. After completing high school F.M. 3 attended university for one year and then decided to work for a while. For the next few years he worked in various mills and factories. At age twenty-four, F.M. 3 got married. This was a settling factor in his life. He decided he needed a stable job that promised some future. So, working part-time, F.M. 3 went to the University of British Columbia for the next three years and completed a Bachelor of Education degree. Upon receiving his teaching certificate, F.M. 3 obtained a teaching position in Surrey. He taught at the same school for

six years and during that time F.M. 3 and his wife had their children. After six years of teaching F.M. 3 began to consider a career in administration. He was greatly influenced by a substitute teacher who had remarked on the wonderful job the school principal was doing and she commented that F.M. 3 would probably be doing an equally wonderful job in the near future. At that time, however, F.M. 3 was not sure if he wanted to complete a Master's degree. Coincidentally, at the same time, he was offered a position as a physical education helping teacher in the district. He took that position and put the idea of administration on hold for a while. As the helping teacher F.M. 3 was able to observe the running of many schools in the district and he concluded that principals have a tremendous influence on the way schools are run. While in one school F.M. 3 spoke to the principal about the process involved in becoming a vice-principal. The school principal asked F.M. 3 if he was interested in the job. F.M. 3 said he was so the principal interviewed him for the vice-principalship then and there. At that time, principals could hire their own vice-principals.

While F.M. 3 acted as vice-principal at that school he enrolled in a Master's program at Western Washington University which he completed two years later. After three years as a vice-principal at the same school, F.M. 3 applied for and received a principalship in the district. He served as the principal of three different elementary schools before coming to his current school. F.M. 3 likes to remain at least five years in one school before moving on because he becomes rooted in each school and feels that it takes that long to make any kind of a difference.

At the time of our interview F.M. 3 was serving his sixth year at his school and did not have immediate plans to move. He cares deeply about his school, students, staff and community. F.M. 3 does not plan to be anything other than a school principal in the future. He may work at one more school before he retires.

## Former Female Appointees

### F.F. 1

F.F. 1 is a smart, sophisticated, attractive woman who looks too young to have been among the first women principals in Surrey and the mother of adult children. This interview was conducted in F.F. 1's home because that venue was more mutually convenient than her school.

I arrived at F.F. 1's home at 7:00 p.m. to find that she had just arrived home from school. She works many such days and although she tells herself she must determine a quitting hour and stick to it, she never can because she cares so deeply about her school and all of its members. F.F. 1 is fatigued from her long day and she hasn't yet eaten dinner. She welcomes me, however, and wants to do the interview.

F.F. 1 went straight through the public school system and on to university where she began a degree program at the University of British Columbia. She left university after two years and began teaching primary school in Surrey. During those first teaching years she married and had two daughters. She took maternity leaves when each child was born and returned to work each time within the same school year. At that time in her life she took care of her home, husband and children while working full-time. She never dreamed she would end up being an elementary school principal and, in fact, she almost quit teaching altogether in the early years when one older, more experienced, teacher continually criticized her teaching and accused her of not doing even an adequate job. This older teacher taught the grade above F.F. 1 and said that the children had learned nothing the year before. This experience served to badly shake F.F. 1's self-confidence and if it was not for a powerful mentor in Education who entered F.F. 1's life at that point, she would have resigned. This mentor not only helped F.F. 1 regain her self-confidence, but also encouraged her to go back to school and complete her degree so that she could go on to become a vice-principal. F.F. 1 took his advice and over the next eight years she managed to complete her degree and get her fifth year while teaching full-time. At this point F.F. 1 still was not seriously considering a principalship. Her marriage had dissolved and she had to keep working to support her two children. F.F. 1 then was tapped on the shoulder unexpectedly and asked to work on curriculum development and put on workshops for teachers in the

district, which she did and found she enjoyed. Then, due to unusual circumstances, the principal of the school in which she was teaching was demoted and F.F. 1 was asked to become the head teacher, a position she accepted. She enjoyed the job and the following year she was appointed a vice-principal. Since she enjoyed all aspects of the job, she went back to university to complete a Master's degree, as it was a requirement for the position.

F.F. 1 happily served as a vice-principal for seven years. Up until her seventh year she did not desire to become a principal. During her seventh year, however, she suddenly wanted the job. She thought she was ready and could do just as good a job, if not better, than principals she had seen in action. She applied for the job and was successful. At the time of our interview F.F. 1 had been a principal for nine years. She works very hard and finds the decreasing control and autonomy principals have over their schools, due to union constraints, very frustrating. F.F. 1 is tired and finds the stress induced by the principalship almost too great to bear. She would like to get out, but, financially she must continue to work for several more years in order to receive the best possible pension. F.F. 1 likes her school and would be happy to stay there until she retires, but, if she is transferred she would not mind.

## **F.F. 2**

As I arrive at the office a tall, slender woman greets me, makes the introductions and invites me into her office. The woman, F.F. 2, is the principal of a large Surrey school which enrolls many children with special needs. During our interview, the notion of recruiting teachers capable of dealing effectively with special needs children recurs.

As an American, F.F. 2 took her teachers' training in the Northeastern part of the United States. Upon completion of her training, F.F. 2 moved to Eastern Canada to teach in a private school as her first position. She had married a Canadian and moved to Canada to be with him. The marriage did not last, but F.F. 2 remained in Canada. She taught emotionally disturbed children at an eastern university and then worked in the public school system as an elementary school counsellor. F. F. 2 found this job

to be frustrating so she moved to British Columbia and assumed a position at the Maples working with emotionally disturbed children. After doing that for a year, she moved to Surrey and worked once again as an elementary school counsellor. The job was just as frustrating to her in British Columbia as it was in the east because F.F. 2 felt that she did not have control over decisions that were made. She thought that many decisions were not being made in the best interests of children so F.F. 2 decided to become a vice-principal, hoping that she would have more control over decision-making. So, F.F. 2 applied for a vice-principalship and was successful.

F.F. 2 had obtained a Bachelor of Science at the same time she earned her teaching degree in the United States. She now had to complete a Master's degree which she did in Special Education Administration at the University of British Columbia over the next four years.

F.F. 2 began her administrative career as a junior high vice-principal. From there, two years later, she moved to a small elementary school as the principal. She remained there for four years. While she was there, she completed her first Master's degree and began a second one in Educational Administration. The second one was never completed because F.F. 2 lost the motivation to do it. F.F. 2's next school was an inner-city one. She remained there for two years before moving to her current school.

After six years at this school, F.F. 2 is ready to move on to another challenge. She thinks she has given this school her best and that it is working well, but that maybe someone else now needs to provide direction. F.F. 2 feels the stress of the job very strongly. She likes her job, the children, staff and community, but she feels pressure from the district, from the union and from the community. For the sake of her health, she must reduce her stress level as much as possible. In fact, F.F. 2 is looking for a way out. Financially, she must work several more years to receive the best possible pension. She is, however, keeping her eyes open for options other than education. F.F. 2 works hard for long hours everyday. She has difficulty getting away from school related issues. Because she cares so deeply and commits herself so fully, she is tired. She wants out.

### F.F. 3

The interview with F.F. 3 took place on the last day of the school year, late in the afternoon. All of the teachers had left for summer vacation and only the principal, F.F. 3 and her vice-principal were in the building. F.F. 3 was tired and ready to begin her holiday, but she wanted to give me a full interview first.

F.F. 3 was one of the first women administrators in Surrey. She began her administrative career when her children were teen-agers and she felt she had the time to devote to the job. F.F. 3 began her career in the traditional path that most women take. After graduating from high school, she attended the University of British Columbia, obtaining a Bachelor's of Psychology and English History. She then took a year of Education to qualify as a secondary school teacher. She applied for and received a job teaching at a large high school in a large metropolitan district. She was the youngest teacher on staff as most staff members were in their 50's. By that time F.F. 3 had married a teacher and after that first year they decided to move to a small west coast district so F.F. 3 resigned her position. She taught high school in that district for the next few years and then F.F. 3 and her husband moved back to their original large school district. F.F. 3 was successful in regaining a position in the district and she taught at a different high school for the next year. Then F.F. 3 and her husband moved to the interior. During that time the couple had children and F.F. 3 remained home to care for them. When her children were ready for pre-school F.F. 3 was ready to resume working part-time, but, there were not part-time positions available at the high school level in that district so F.F. 3 got a job teaching part-time as an elementary school principal's relief teacher. At the same time, F.F. 3 was president of her children's pre-school and assumed administrative responsibilities such as hiring teachers and overseeing curriculum.

Eventually the family moved back to the lower mainland and F.F. 3 worked in one suburban district as a part-time Librarian and Reading teacher. She also began to take courses in reading education at U.B.C. towards her sixth year. F.F. 3 then discovered an opportunity to become a Reading teacher in Surrey. She applied for the job and was successful. For the next four years she acted as a consultant in many schools in her Reading teacher capacity. At that time the head of the

Reading Department in Surrey encouraged her staff to get their Master's degrees and so F.F. 3 began to work on this degree. At the end of four years, F.F. 3, after working closely with administrators to plan and oversee the reading program in schools, began to think that she too could do the job and do it just as well as the administrators (who were all men) with whom she worked. F.F. 3's husband encouraged and supported her in this endeavour and so F.F. 3 applied for a principalship. Although she had never been a vice-principal, F.F. 3 was interviewed for the position by a team composed of all of the school board members, the superintendent and one parent and one teacher from the school to which she was applying. She was successful on her first attempt at the principalship. She completed her Master's while serving her first year as a principal at a small inner-city school. After several years F.F. 3 moved to a larger inner-city school where she remained before coming to her current school.

F.F. 3 thinks the job is becoming more stressful as the paperwork increases and the district grows. She makes a conscious effort to complete all school related tasks at school and to not talk school at home. In the last year F.F. 3 has realized that she needs time for personal growth and development now that her children are grown and her home responsibilities are reduced. All of her adult life she has given to her family and her schools and now she wants to devote time to her own interests such as travel. She is looking forward to retirement and has not any desire to move up the hierarchical ladder. She plans to stay at her current school for a while longer and then move on to one more school before retiring.

## **Recent Male Appointees**

### **R.M. 1**

R.M. 1 is a man with a busy schedule. We had a short, on-task interview because he had another appointment following our meeting. The school that R.M. 1 administers is a physically attractive building nestled right into the community it serves. It is the most attractive school that I have visited. Not only is the building newly painted, but the grounds are beautifully kept and the lawn looks rich and green.

After graduating from high school, R.M. 1 obtained a four year Bachelor's of Education degree from the University of British Columbia. He then taught in a large lower mainland district for one year. At the end of that year he resigned in order to return to university to complete his fifth year, an act he now regrets because he withdrew his pension and now has to work an extra year to make up for it. He wishes he would have taken a leave of absence instead, but, it did not occur to him to do so at the time. R.M. 1 was successful, however, in regaining his position in the same district the following year. He continued as a classroom teacher for many years and then he decided to get his Master's degree at U.B.C. by attending evening and summer sessions.

R.M. 1 fell into administration more or less by accident. When the assistant to the principal at R.M. 1's school retired, the principal asked R.M. 1 if he would like the job. It did not pay much more than a teacher's salary and only the school staff had to agree to hire R.M. 1 for the position. He thought, "Why not?", and accepted the position. The next year, with the support and encouragement of his principal and staff, R.M. 1 formally applied for a vice-principalship and was successful right away. He then served as a vice-principal for the next several years.

Then, R.M. 1 married and started his family. He decided to apply for a principalship and while he was unsuccessful with his first attempt, he got the position the following year. After serving a few years as a principal in that district, R.M. 1, who lived in Surrey, decided to transfer to Surrey. His wife, who is also a teacher had made the move to Surrey and R.M. 1 was beginning to find that the commute and the many evening meetings shortened the time he could spend with his family. He was able to transfer to Surrey as a principal the first time he applied and at the time of our interview he was serving his first year as a Surrey principal.

R.M. 1 is approaching retirement age so he has not the desire to move further up a career ladder. He would like to remain at his current school for several years. The first year was difficult for R.M. 1 because his support group and networks were in another district and he had to adjust to the policies and regulations of a new district. He looks forward to a better experience next year.

## R.M. 2

R.M. 2 is a young looking, energetic man who loves his school. As I arrive he shows me various features of his small, newly renovated building and offers to give me a guided tour of his school after our interview. His enthusiasm is contagious. I find myself wanting to work in this warm, attractive environment.

This is R.M. 2's first year at this school and first year as a school principal. Because the school population is so small, under 200 students, R.M. 2 teaches 40% of every day. He finds the dual role of teacher and administrator very frustrating because there is never enough time to do both jobs to the degree he would like. Not only is this R.M. 2's first year at the school, it is the first year that this school is being used as an elementary school. It has been completely renovated from its previous design as first a school annex and then an adult education centre. Many of the renovations continued to take place into the fall, so consulting with builders also took up much of R.M. 2's time at the beginning of the year.

R.M. 2 did not decide to become a teacher until after his first year and a half at university. He was a person who did not achieve high marks in high school and, in fact, did not enjoy his high school years. After completing grade 12, R.M. 2 took a job in a sawmill in a small community in British Columbia. That experience convinced him that he did not want to spend the rest of his life performing manual labour, so after two months he quit and in September he was enrolled at Simon Fraser University. R.M. 2 was not able to focus on a career path until his older sister graduated from university with a degree in Education. R.M. 2 decided to follow his sister's path and enrolled in the Professional Development Program at Simon Fraser. Two years later, with three and a half years of university under his belt, R.M. 2 received his teaching certificate and obtained a teaching position in a small town in the interior of British Columbia. In the middle of his first year he was transferred to a neighbouring community. He remained there for four years, coming back to Burnaby during the summers to take courses toward the completion of his degree. During that time he met his future wife, who lived in the lower mainland. R.M. 2 then applied for and received a job in a suburb of Vancouver so that he could pursue his courtship of his wife to be. A year later, R.M. 2 married. He continued to

teach in this suburb while taking courses to complete his bachelor's degree, which happened six years later. After teaching in this lower mainland community for four years, R.M. 2's principal offered him an assistant to the principal position, which R.M. 2 accepted. R.M. 2 enjoyed this position so much that, with his principal's encouragement, R.M. 2 decided to apply for a formal administrative position. He quickly finished his bachelor's degree and enrolled in a Master's program at Western Washington University.

Although it only took R.M. 2 two and a half years to complete his Master's degree, during which time he continually applied for a vice-principalship, he was unsuccessful in obtaining the position. His district was not growing and when administrative positions did become available, they were filled by women, as it became district policy to strive for gender equity in administration. These circumstances frustrated R.M. 2 and so he decided he needed a change in his life. With his wife, R.M. 2 went to teach in the Canadian East for a year on an exchange program.

When R.M. 2 returned to the same suburban district in the lower mainland of British Columbia, he did so as a regular teacher and not as assistant to the principal. At the end of his first year back, R.M. 2 applied for and finally received a vice-principalship in the district. At the same time R.M. 2 and his wife had their first and only child. After that year as a vice-principal, R.M. 2 decided not to remain in that district as chances for advancement were few and the commute to work was long. R.M. 2 had never lived in the district in which he had worked and he decided to apply for a vice-principalship in Surrey, a growing district and the one in which he lives. R.M. 2 was successful in his application and served two years at the same school in Surrey as a vice-principal before obtaining his current position.

R.M. 2, although frustrated by lack of time for his two jobs and by the reduction in resources for special needs children, is happy with his job, school, staff and community. He has fun everyday at work and would like to stay at this school for at least two more years. In the future he would like to open another new school and at some point administer a large school. He is happy in the role of school principal and he has not the desire to move further up the hierarchical ladder.

## R.M. 3

R.M. 3, a tall man possessing dark, attractive features, sits behind a large desk in an airy, cheerful room. Children's work adorns the walls and warm sunshine pours in through large windows.

R.M. 3's youthful and fit looks suggest athletic ability. In fact, R.M. 3's road to the principalship was through coaching and physical education activities. R.M. 3 has been coaching teams of younger boys since he was in high school. His interest in working with youngsters led R.M. 3 to pursue a standard certificate by taking Education courses at Simon Fraser University.

At age twenty-one R.M. 3 began his career by teaching grade seven at a school in a neighbouring district to Surrey. At the same time he continued taking courses at night and during the summers to complete his degree. Although R.M. 3 married the summer preceding the beginning of his teaching career, he continued to complete his degree out of a compulsion to finish a task he had started.

At age twenty-three R.M. 3 fathered his first born, a boy. Even though he had a young family, R.M. 3 managed to complete his degree, teach full time and take on extra-curricular activities in the area of sports coaching.

R.M. 3's school vice-principal was offered a principalship at another school and was released to assume his new duties in May. Because R.M. 3 had been active in organizing and running school events for the first five years of his teaching career, he was offered the acting vice-principalship for the last two months of his sixth year.

The following year, R.M. 3's former vice-principal, who had been promoted to the principalship of his own school, asked R.M. 3 to transfer to the new principal's school as his assistant. At that time R.M. 3 did not have a Master's degree, but felt district pressure to pursue graduate work if he hoped to remain in an administrative capacity.

While R.M. 3 acted as the assistant to the principal at his second school, he worked on his Master's degree at Western Washington University. The first year at his second school, R.M. 3 worked as

assistant under appointment. For his second term as assistant, however, the position was posted and R.M. 3 had to compete to retain it. Then after two years as assistant to the principal, R.M. 3 actively pursued the head teachership of a small country-type school and was successful in obtaining this position.

R.M. 3 served one year as a head teacher. During that time he completed his Master's degree. For the following year he applied for and was successful in obtaining a vice-principalship. He remained at his third school as a vice-principal for three years.

The first twelve years of R.M. 3's career had been difficult. He had a supportive wife who, through a joint decision, stayed home with the couple's two young children while R.M. 3 continually pursued course work and moved up his career ladder. After serving three years as a vice-principal, R.M. 3 felt professionally ready and the financial need to become a school principal. R.M. 3's previous district, however, was not experiencing growth. New principalships were far and few between so R.M. 3 looked to the growing district of Surrey to pursue his career as a principal. He was successful in obtaining the principalship of a small north end school and at the time of our interview was completing his second year as a principal.

R.M. 3 is motivated by challenge and change. As a life-long learner he continually seeks out new experiences and plans to continue to rise up the hierarchical ladder by pursuing a line position in district administration.

## **Recent Female Appointees**

### **R.F. 1**

R.F. 1 is an attractive, smartly dressed, middle-aged woman. At the time of our interview she was completing her first year as a school principal. R.F. 1 followed a male principal and at the beginning of the year she felt the parents loss of confidence in her because she was female. As she became familiar with her new school and its population, R.F. 1 was careful to retain many traditional events and yet slowly make her own mark upon the school. The few new traditions that R.F. 1 was able to introduce into the school were met with acceptance by the school staff and community. Thus, R.F. 1

overcame the barrier her femaleness caused and was happily and successfully completing her novice year.

At the beginning of her career, R.F. 1 did not entertain thoughts of becoming a principal. In fact, she taught only a few years until she married and began her family. After completing grade 13 at high school, R.F. 1 attended the University of British Columbia for two years. At that time it was common for teachers to begin their careers after two years of university. She taught for a few years and then stayed home for twelve years to raise her two children. After twelve years at home, R.F. 1 was offered a 60 per cent teaching position which she accepted. R.F. 1 taught part-time for the next four years and then, staying at the same school, she increased her time to 100 per cent. For the next nine years R.F. 1 retained the same full-time position. During that period of her life R.F. 1 completed her university degree, did an extended diploma in Education and began work on a Master's in Educational Leadership at Simon Fraser University. In her ninth year as a full-time teacher, R.F. 1 was offered the acting vice-principalship at her school when the regular vice-principal was released from her duties to have surgery. R.F. 1 enjoyed this experience so much that she applied for a permanent vice-principalship in the district for the following school year. At first R.F. 1 thought she was unsuccessful because she did not receive an appointment prior to the beginning of school in September. In October of that year, however, she was offered the vice-principalship of a large school in the district. R.F. 1 happily accepted this position and moved schools within two weeks. R.F. 1 remained at this position for three years. After her second year as a vice-principal R.F. 1 applied for a principalship but was unsuccessful. When she applied the following year, however, she met with success. Throughout her vice-principal years R.F. 1 continued to work on her Master's degree. She completed her course work before she received her principal appointment and she plans to complete her degree in the coming year.

R.F. 1 has found this first year as a school principal to be exciting as well as challenging. She plans

to continue as an elementary school principal for several more years before retiring.

## **R.F. 2**

R.F. 2 is a vivacious, beautiful, ex-model turned principal. She administers a small country-type school tucked away in the middle of farmlands. She was serving her second year in the principalship at the time of our interview.

R.F. 2 attended private school from kindergarten to grade twelve and then went on to the University of British Columbia. After two years of university, she applied for and received a teaching position in a large metropolitan district. As a young, energetic grade seven teacher, R.F. 2 felt out of place on her staff. All of the women R.F. 2 worked with were at least eight years older than she was, were married with home and family concerns and were primary teachers. Because R.F. 2 feared that she may become like these teachers if she stayed where she was, R.F. 2 resigned her position at the end of the year. For the next two and half years she worked as a model. Then she decided to try teaching again to see if her experience would be different now that she was a little older. Once again she was successful in obtaining a position in the same district and she taught for another one and a half years. Still thinking there had to be more to life, R.F. 2 resigned again and travelled for a year. Then she decided to try teaching one more time and this time she stayed with it. She was once again in her old district. She transferred schools and performed different kinds of teaching jobs often and this variety of experiences and challenges enabled her to enjoy her work. During this time she married and had a child. Eventually she became a single parent and had to earn more money to support her family, so she began teaching summer school in addition to the regular school year. At the same time she began taking courses to complete her degree and she went to night and summer school until she had her fifth year. After going to school part-time for ten years, she decided to do a Master's degree in Art History. Shortly after beginning the program she decided, with the support and encouragement of her friends, to apply for a vice-principal position. She then changed her Master's program to Administration and applied for the position. It took her three years and two unsuccessful attempts before she became a vice-principal. After serving as a vice-principal in the large metropolitan district

for four years, R.F. 2 could see that chances of her becoming a principal in that district were slim so she applied to Surrey for a principalship and was successful on her first try.

R.F. 2 found her first year in Surrey to be difficult because she had left behind her support group and she was unknown in her new district. While the first year was a real challenge for R.F. 2, the second year was a joy. She cares deeply about her school and the needs of the children. To make a lasting contribution to her school, R.F. 2 would like to stay there at least one more year, if not longer. She does not look beyond the next school year in terms of long-range plans. She may or may not move on to new professional challenges in the coming years, depending on how her personal goals are met. She has worked continuously, winter and summer, for so long that she would now like to devote some time to herself.

### **R.F. 3**

R.F. 3 is dressed casually for this warm Friday afternoon. Although she looks tired, R.F. 3 greets me pleasantly and welcomes me to her school. Before we begin our interview R.F. 3 warns me that we may be interrupted by her school counsellor who is dealing with a crisis situation.

In a soft voice, R.F. 3 describes herself as a facilitator, a role that provides support to teachers, parents and children.

Although R.F. 3 is now serving her second year as a school principal, it was never her intention to become an educator when she was first at university. After high school R.F. 3 studied and completed a degree in Sociology. She had planned to continue her education to obtain a Master's of Sociology degree, but, became tired of going to school. R.F. 3 then decided to get a job. She found, however, that there were not many jobs available to people with a Bachelor's of Sociology. Not knowing what else to do, R.F. 3 went to Teachers' College in the East (in her home town) for a year. She then took a job at an inner city school in Montreal because she felt that there she could make a real difference in the lives of children. After teaching for a couple of years R.F. 3 married and became pregnant. R.F. 3 took a year off after her daughter was born and then resumed teaching in Montreal. When she

resumed teaching she began putting together Social Studies units on the community her school children came from. She presented these units to principals and the district and her job changed from teaching to providing materials and in-service for teachers. R.F. 3 continued to work for the district the following year, but from her home instead of the district office. Although she enjoyed this position she found it too much with two small children to look after, so she resigned and stayed home full time.

When R.F. 3's youngest daughter started kindergarten, R.F. 3 tried to regain her teaching position but was unsuccessful. R.F. 3 then substituted and taught adult education.

Then in Quebec, outside Montreal, R.F. 3 answered an advertisement for a nursery school teacher. She got the job and after she began teaching, R.F. 3 was contacted by her Montreal School District and asked to implement a values education program in the schools. For the next two years R.F. 3 became a helping teacher to implement the new program. R.F. 3 did not have a teaching contract with the district because she was working under a grant, so she had to resign due to union pressure. She found it very difficult to get a full-time teaching position in the East, so she came to B.C. to find a job nine years ago.

R.F. 3 began her career in British Columbia by substitute teaching, teaching and becoming French Co-ordinator in a neighbouring district to Surrey. Then she really wanted to become school rather than district based so R.F. 3 applied for and received a vice-principalship in a different neighbouring district. By this time R.F. 3 had started a Master's program at Simon Fraser University in preparation to becoming an elementary school principal.

After acting as vice-principal for two years in that tiny school district, R.F. 3 applied to the growing district of Surrey for a principalship and was successful.

At the time of our interview R.F. 3 had been a Surrey principal for two years. She completed her Master's degree at the end of her first year as principal. She would like to stay where she is for a few more years and then she plans to look for a change. What that change will be, she does not yet know.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## FINDINGS

This chapter reports the findings of the data under three conceptual themes:

One. Psychological Origins

Two. Decision - Making

Three. Sociological Origins.

Within each theme, findings for each group of principals are reported separately to facilitate ease in understanding the data. The quotations used are intended to be illustrative of the responses of the group of principals unless specific principals are referenced.

### THEME ONE: PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS

Findings presented under this theme describe the values, self-images and methods of moral reasoning employed by each group of principals. Moral reasoning refers to the ethic of justice or care as outlined in the literature review. Theme One has been divided into four sections: I. The Values of the School Principal, II. The Purpose of the School Principal, III. The Importance of School, and IV. Outside Constraints.

#### IA. The Values of the School Principal - Former Male Appointees

Two of the three principals liked their own school experiences and viewed teaching as a worthwhile career. F.M. 2 reports, "I had made up my mind when I was very young, I don't know, grade four or five, that I wanted to be a teacher and it may well have been that I had some very positive experiences at school and thought a lot of the teachers," and F.M. 3 reports, "I always had the feeling that I would like to be a teacher."

Although these principals indicated that they wanted to teach, all three former male appointees were teachers for a very short time. Early into their teaching careers they realized that principals have, in F.M.3's words, "...an amazing influence on schools," and all three principals actively sought the principalship through the course of their career paths and by obtaining Master's degrees. F.M.3 explained, "It became pretty apparent to me that if there is something you wanted to do there were certain things you had to do to have it happen... so, I thought about that for a while and I thought I had better get a Master's degree." F.M.1 remembers, "I put in for the position in my circles and I got it," while F.M. 3 said, "The principal has much more influence than most teachers realize. The principal really is the pivotal point of everything in the school. They set the tone, they set the vision, they set the attitude..."

These principals value control at the school level. Although all three men believe strongly in developing teamwork among staff members and value staff members who, in F.M.2's words, "...fit the school personality," each one likes to feel that final decisions rest with him. F.M.2 laments, "It is really hard to get the feeling that you really are in control of where you are going and where the school is headed...sometimes I feel that things are out of my control to influence...The Ministry, the Board, the teachers' union, all of these are external to the school and they all, of course, impact these things..." "I would say," said F.M.3, "that I feel that it is always in my control, although that is not an absolute statement...the union is the welfare of the member...'If we don't get what we want, we'll take job action'..." F.M.1 finds that the union, "...procedures really get in the way of what is best for kids."

F.M.1 and F.M.3 hold traditional values. F.M.1 describes his school as, "...more traditional and perhaps structured than other schools...school that places a great deal of emphasis on student behaviours, student courtesies, student conduct and, as well, a great deal of emphasis is placed on student progress in the classroom." F.M.3 reports, "...we have a rule in the school that when you step into a classroom, you have to take your hat off," and that, "...concern and courtesy and careful behaviour are important to everyone."

All three men have difficulty with outside rules and regulations that restrict the degree of control and thus influence they exert in their own schools. F.M.1 reported, "You can't base your decision (to hire) on somebody's willingness to take a club or team or whatever...and I have some difficulty with that. You can't say we're looking for a male. Nowadays, with this human rights, etc., you can't discriminate."

These constraints to his authority are viewed by F.M.1 as restrictions to his ability to staff, and therefore run, the best school that he can. "When everything is laid out by rules, what you develop is your own little mini-bureaucracy and so what we have are a lot of encumbrances in doing the job, so that is frustrating," says F.M.1. F.M.2 finds that his lack of control over hiring affects his ability to perform his job in the manner in which he would like to,

"I often have teachers who don't necessarily buy into the new role the parents will be playing and, in my opinion, should be playing in the school and in the educational future, so that notion of team is probably the central issue, the central focus of my role as a principal in the last few years here... to build that concept...I think from a union perspective, it (new hiring procedures) is perceived to be fairness and I guess it seems to be much fairer than the process we used before... whether or not the end result is that we end up with better staff at the school level...I think that is very questionable."

Each principal has been at his present assignment for a number of years. All three men value stability, academic excellence and individual achievement. F.M.3 describes himself as a person who, "...puts roots down." He said, "(the superintendent) talked about that and said that there is no time frame for people moving around and principals ought to consider that stability is something else to think about. Mobility maybe is a good idea, but not necessarily for all." F.M.1 said that, "...providing quality education," and, "...interpersonal relationships," are important to him. His school motto is "Being the best that each of the students can be."

## **IB. The Values of the School Principal - Former Female Appointees**

All three of these women value hard work, professionalism and caring about the school and its members. Fairness is an important consideration for them. F.F.1 describes her values in this way, "I think my values should be clear to everyone and I think everybody should know that this is what I stand for. I would like to be perceived as somebody who has fairly high values; as somebody who is fair. That is important to me. Somebody who has the interest of children, that part is important to me, and somebody who is organized and who does what she says she is going to do and does it efficiently and effectively." She also values focus and purpose, "There are some (schools) that I worked at that just basically anything goes. Do your own thing; be happy, mark if you wish to." She cares about the quality of education that children receive, "I feel it is really important to have standards and to have values and to have criteria, because I think the students are the losers if everybody does their own thing..."

F.F.2 agrees that students are the main priority in the school. School, she thinks, should be a place to which children want to come, "It is a very caring place, but it is also a place where a lot of things are happening and they happen on purpose, as opposed to accidentally. It's determined, it's organized... I guess one of our philosophies is that every day that you go home you should feel very good about something that you accomplished...and that you want to come back the next day...that you have a direction that you set for that next day and the priorities you put together." F.F.2 would like to be seen as, "...considerate, collaborative...someone who is going to look at all possibilities...try to take advantage of the best situation, and create the best environment."

F.F.3 would like to be seen as, "...very professional, very caring and a strong individual." She values open communication because she believes that fosters a productive working relationship between staff and principal, "...that is absolutely critical, really for that type of working relationship and that kind of professionalism, and that is my relationship with my staff, that they know that whatever I am doing, there is no hidden agenda." F.F.3 also values high curricular standards, "...setting each year in a little different way, but that we have really high standards and then we work together to achieve that."

Responsibility is a quality that all three women value. They take their jobs seriously and feel that what happens in the school is a direct reflection on them. In that regard, these principals believe that they must have strong control over their schools and its members. F.F.3 articulates this idea, "I see the larger picture and I need to see that by getting out and about and really taking the pulse and I notice if I am away for even a couple of days, that sometimes we have to tighten up again and look at things again. It makes a difference, to have the principal in the building."

### **IC. The Values of the School Principal - Recent Male Appointees**

All of these men value children and teachers. They value individual treatment for children which includes support services. Team-work and cooperation among their staffs are important to these men. R.M.2 values, "...the sense of communicating in the school and one of the things that I am most proud of about this school is how well we all work together, as a staff, and we are doing everything we can to make this same feeling extend to the kids. We work together. We like each other. We enjoy doing things together. We do extra things together because we respect and care for each other..."

R.M.1 values helping children and teachers in terms of getting support for their special needs, "...there are times when I feel I have to speak up on their (teachers) behalf, be it to the Board or parents or with the kids and other times when the kids need somebody to be the person to speak for them to the teachers."

R.M.3 values the whole child and getting support for each child, "...our strong advocacy for kids, the outreach nature of all our staff and its programs. That whole notion of partnership in Education in that schooling is only one little part of a child's education." A strong, supportive school culture is important to R.M.3, "We do that type of nurturing thing; those kinds of self-esteem things, those kind of building upon, not, we don't really build upon the experiences the children bring to the school because the kinds of experiences are so negative, so anti-social..."

R.M.1 values control over the school. He sets everything in motion, "I value the chance to provide a role-model to encourage people to be innovative, to provide that support...selecting the people who

staff the school because when you select somebody, it has a really important influence on the make-up of the school.” R.M.2 and R.M.3, on the other hand, value being part of the school team using collaborative decision-making. “So school culture reflects the principal’s vision as well as school improvement plans and the kinds of goals we set for the school,” is the way RM.3 describes his values.

## **1D. Values of the School Principal - Recent Female Appointees**

All three of these women value adhering to standards and have high expectations of others and themselves. They all expressed concern for children, parents and teachers. An efficient, effective school where all members feel valued is important to these women.

R.F.1 says, “I am a caring person and I care about the people that I am responsible for and that I work with...I have some responsibilities and some standards to maintain in the district. That is part of my responsibility, too...”

R.F.2 says, “I would like them to see me as someone who has high expectations of herself as well as the people around her. Someone who is caring...supportive...someone who is continually growing and expects that from the people around her as well. Someone who is a good communicator.” She values fairness in dealing with people and has, “...no hidden agenda.”

R.F.3 says, “I would like them to view me as someone who sets high expectations for myself and for others and I would like them to view me as someone who is knowledgeable.”

## **IIA. The Purpose of the School Principal - Former Male Appointees**

Although each principal possesses a slightly different focus, all three men view the purpose of the principal as providing direction for the school and establishing a school culture. F.M.1 views himself as, “...someone who is open to ideas and open to suggestions, operates if you like on a consultative model and yet an individual who can make decisions, who has some definite ideas in terms of the direction a school should go but open and accessible to involving the staff members in decisions that

are made." To him the job is, "...multi-faceted...bringing all those elements together so that collectively the environment is a positive one." His job is to, "...provide a direction that is going to result in quality education."

"A person who understands...who enables things to happen, I like the element of fairness, I would like to be seen as a person who is fair and is reasonable," reports F.M.2. His goal is to, "...try to build a team within the school...to meet the needs of the students we have here and I think by doing that we have extended the team...when I first started as principal parents certainly did not play as large a role as they seemed to wish to and most of us would like to see them play."

F.M.3 views the purpose of the principal as establishing a vision of what will be valued in the school, "...if he (the principal) doesn't have a vision he ought not to be in the position of principal, he has to establish... what will be valued in the school and you have to reinforce that with everyone,...There has to be a continual attention to that." F.M.3's mission is to value his school and all of its members, especially the students, "I always clarify between the child and the behaviour...they don't resent it because I believe they believe that I am doing this because I care about them today, tomorrow and twenty years from now...Everyone is valued."

## **IIB. The Purpose of the School Principal - Former Female Appointees**

All three former female appointees agree that the major purpose of the principal is to provide the leadership in the school in terms of setting direction and goals and ensuring that those goals are met.

F.F.1 states,

"I have a vision of what schools should be like and the standards that should be in the schools and how schools should operate...the thing that I feel is right about how a school operates and I feel that there are enough schools that I would not ever want to work in as a teacher because they just don't operate as humane societies or effective societies and I feel that I can provide some kind of leadership in this and modelling in this to make an effective school...I feel that if there is someone to regulate them (teachers), to monitor and set an example and to work with teachers then chances of an education being a hit and miss thing are less likely to happen."

F.F.2 compares the role of leadership to coaching, "...providing leadership and direction for the school, I guess the leadership role is very much a coaching role...what you are doing is taking a large group of diverse people and trying to shape and mold so that you can continue going in the same direction,...in terms of organizing a building to deliver the most effective service to the kids, coaching and encouraging and being organized."

Her purpose, states F.F.3, is, "...that leadership role, setting the direction, setting the tone of the school. There is a real purpose in that and a difference if the principal has been away for a certain length of time..."

Ensuring that goals are set and met is included in F.F.3's definition of

"...leadership role where we all agreed as to what is important and everybody gets to their individual duties, but they want that to happen, they want to keep that goal in mind...I noticed that one classroom is consistently messy or that I see that children are out in the halls from that classroom all too often, and I have to pick up on that and move on it and it is important that somebody maintains that goal and it can't be done with an individual classroom teacher because they don't walk out and around the school everyday. They don't talk to the parents who give them the picture in a larger sense and I need to let staff know what parents are saying."

## **IIC. The Purpose of the School Principal - Recent Male Appointees**

All three men believe the most important job of the principal is to act as a leader by modelling the type of behaviour they would like to see from their staff members. R.M.2 describes this action, "...the most important thing that I do, sort of set the tone and I think I do that by modelling and by sort of saying what my expectations are. That is the most important thing." R.M.3 describes his purpose as, "One of facilitator, expediter,...the drive behind the vision in the school structure."

R.M.1 describes his role as the agent who puts everything in place so that the school can run in the way he wants it to run, "...provide a role-model...to be innovative...selecting the people."

### **IID. The Purpose of the School Principal - Recent Female Appointees**

All three of these women described the purpose of the school principal as being one of leadership; setting and directing their visions of what school ought to be. R.F.1 says, "...the most important role then is...providing the very best environment and situation that I can for the children attending the school." R.F.2 says, "I really do see it as in a leadership kind of way; that certain type of leadership, like vision...the vision thing is really important and the walking the top. They have to see you as a role model..." R.F.3 says, "I would say one of facilitator. I think of someone who has some ideas where the school should go and...I see myself as someone else on staff who has a specific role, but, I don't see it as hierarchical, more lateral, but, I still have the responsibility of bringing together all the bits and pieces and having the luxury of a global overview as to what's happening and how those bits and pieces come together."

### **IIIA. Importance of the School - Former Male Appointees**

The most important aspect of schooling, all three men agree, is that all members feel valued and important. Students, staff, parents and members of the community should feel welcome and comfortable coming into the school. F.M.2 views including parents in school life as vital to his school's success. Because his school is composed of a multi-cultural mix of students, multi-culturalism, as an on-going program, is very important to F.M.2. His goal is to get more parents (many who do not speak English) involved in school life. "In the last four or five years we have had a very large Indo-Canadian population and very seldom would you find any parents coming into the school."

Recognition for students, staff, parents and community members is most important to F.M.3, "I will get kids to go out to the people mowing the lawns and give them a drink and get them to tell these workers we really appreciate them coming to our school and making it the best it can be...it establishes that culture that I am talking about, everyone is valued."

Being viewed as a school that provides quality education is most important to F.M.1, "We are seen as a school that...places emphasis on having their kids perform the best they can both in the classroom and in terms of their interpersonal relationships. The school is still known as a school that places a great deal of emphasis on student behaviour...and as well...on student progress in the classroom."

### **IIIB. The Importance of School - Former Female Appointees**

While all of these women agree that the most important focus of schools should be academic, they also believe that schools should offer children a well rounded education: socially, emotionally and intellectually. F.F.1's main focus, however, is academic in terms of the curriculum,

"I think it is important that the teachers value teaching as a profession, to have high standards in their teaching...I want at the same time a humane place and that the children should be treated with dignity and respect and the differences that are inherent in children should be dealt with and not sort of shoved under the carpet. You deal with the child, where he or she is and you respect the difference and you make adjustments as necessary. I think the curriculum should be rounded, even before goal areas and I always thought it was important to have a balance. My ideal school would have had teachers who have skills in the sciences,...music and everything is covered."

While F.F.2 has a similar focus to F.F.1, she places emphasis upon a caring environment, "...it is a very caring place...teachers are here because they want to be here, the teachers have a fun time coming to school. It is a fun place to be..."

F.F.3 places importance upon extra-curricular activities as well as academics, although she makes it very clear that academics come first, "...it is secondary but still very important and we were one of the top schools in the district for sports. This is something we have done and we are known for, too, but I want us to be known for our high academic standards, so parents have the confidence that their kids are getting a great education here with great teachers...that is the most important thing to me."

### **IIIC. The Importance of the School - Recent Male Appointees**

For all three men, it is important that their schools are seen to be effective by their own communities and the district in general. R.M.1 states, "...we like to be known for being effective with some very difficult kids. Given the cutbacks in social development classes and so forth, we still run a very effective program in the school." R.M.2 and R.M.3 also believe that it is important to have parents and the community actively involved in their schools and that all members of the community feel good about their schools. R.M.2 says, "...we had about two weeks ago, an open house and our kids served barbecued hamburgers so that the people could stay and have their supper, actually, and we invited the whole community. We put newsletters on every person's door and had quite a number of people who don't have kids in school. Retired people...come and find out about the school, walk through it, meet some kids, meet some teachers...and so they start to care about our school." R.M.3 likes to get parents involved in individual classrooms, as well as the school as a whole, "...we have a lot of parents in the school. We have a very successful and live parent volunteer program; open door policy." It is important to R.M.3 that his school be seen as, "...holistic and nurturing. It's a whole family school. Basically because these kids come from dysfunctional families." R.M.3 views the teaching of parenting skills as an important aspect of his school, "...recognizing that parenting skills are something that the teacher has to articulate and give strategies that good parents use and model those kinds of skills in the classroom...getting parents into the school so they can be partners in the education..."

### **IIID. The Importance of School - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women believe that school should be a place where self-esteem is developed so that children feel confident to take risks and meet academic and social challenges. Quality education is what these three principals believe is the most important aspect of schooling, but, achieved in a nurturing, positive environment. R.F.1's belief is that, "I would like people to think that the education that goes on here is good and worthwhile...it is not just learning basic skills...a kind of people place;

that we are compassionate and understanding and aware of problems and differences..." R.F.2 believes that, "...the trusting environment is so that they have academic excellence." R.F.3 believes that, "...the main focus of school should be teaching and learning...our children, our staff, our support staff are treated with respect. Everyone is listened to; everyone has a chance to participate..."

#### **IVA. Outside Constraints - Former Male Appointees**

These men all found outside constraints in the form of a union contract to be frustrating and to make their jobs more difficult to perform. Board policies and regulations did not seem to pose as much difficulty for the three former male appointees as did the union contract. "District policies," said F.M.3, "...we are obligated to follow as Agents of the Board...if you differ with something, there are ways that you can voice your disapproval...we have committees and we have all kinds of ways to say I don't like it..."

Although F.M.1 acknowledges that, "...the union does represent the teaching group and they have a role to play in the direction the district takes and ensuring that there is due process and that procedures are followed," he finds that, "...the operation of the school has become more cumbersome." Sharing this view, F.M.2 states, "...the reality of the situation is that, yes, we now have teachers who are unionized, we have a contract which I think has in some ways...made the job much easier because there it is in black and white...in other ways it has made some things much more difficult...in that we are now having to try to appease or please another group that's external to the school. It's almost a life in itself...over all I think it has made the life of being a principal more difficult..." F.M.3 states, "I have always had difficulty with the concept of a professional union...the union is the welfare of the member..."

#### **IVB. Outside Constraints - Former Female Appointees**

F.F.1 finds the union contract, "...a horrendous constraint." It has the potential to hamper her control over hiring the most suitable candidate for the job, although she has not actually faced that

problem, "...and almost always with hiring in the past couple of years, I hired the most suitable rather than the most senior person and I have always been able to document that and I am lucky I haven't been challenged."

Although F.F.2 does not have a problem with the union contract, she thinks some of the guidelines are, "...ridiculous". Outside constraints that are more problematic for F.F.2 are district ones, "...things are very slow to come out of the Board Office and you aren't sure, things are not confirmed for you..."

F.F.3 used to be intimidated by the rules and regulations of the union contract, but she now makes decisions with more confidence and in that way does not view the union contract as such a problem, "I try to interpret those, with that focus for children because I'm afraid I think that a lot of the contract is very much for teachers, not for children, and that doesn't make good sense so...I used to be quite nervous about getting into a grievance and for the first time ever it was suggested that there might be a grievance by one of the teachers that I work with, and it was fine. I did it with program and children in mind and even if I'm faulted on it, I really feel confident that I made that decision for kids..."

#### **IVC. Outside Constraints - Recent Male Appointees**

All three men find outside constraints to undermine their control in their schools. They find these constraints restricting in terms of hiring and in terms of making things work in schools. R.M.3 believes, "They are not written with children in mind. They are written with adults in mind. They are contractual and have very little to do with learning conditions and everything to do with working conditions." Two of these men feel that the contract encourages confrontation between staff and administrator. R.M.2 states, "There are things in the contract that I think are not good for schools and not good for students and I don't think they are good for teachers either...I don't like the confrontation." R.M.1 says, "I feel in some instances, they are restrictive...there are times when people would, in the interest of the kids, or whatever, put up with something for a while because, to do otherwise, there would be a big disruption, but, because there are these rules and contracts in place

they sometimes feel forced to cause a grievance..." He also feels the contract limits his control over school decisions, "It sort of undermines the principal because if I don't get it from the principal of the school, I'll just go over his head and in most cases they get what they want..."

R.M.2 finds district policies restricting because they limit his control over programs for special needs children, "There is a fair bit of arbitrariness to all of those kinds of things, closing down those programs to us does not make any sense...at all, shutting down Transition, shutting down Speech and Language. We've got people that could use them and now I know that perhaps those are more budget concerns rather than philosophical concerns..."

#### **IVD. Outside Constraints - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women stated that they believe the union contract is there and so they must respect it. These women don't feel intimidated or unduly constrained by the contract because they feel there remain avenues to express their opinions and to work to achieve their goals within the contract. R.F.1 feels the same way about district policies, "The district policies are the same thing. I mean if it is in policy then we are obligated as Agents of the Board...to follow this policy. If, again, you differ with something, if you don't like something, there are ways that you can voice your disapproval. We have committees and we have all kinds of ways to say, 'I don't like it.'"

R.F.2 is more concerned about district policies than the union contract, "...in a small school we have greater numbers of district based positions, district based staff than one would in a large school. They want little bits and pieces...when you have less than a full-time equivalent, then it is a district based position and...you know, we obviously don't have a say in that and that does concern me."

R.F.3 thinks,

"...they are of value. I think the union is there as a guide for behaviour and many of the clauses...are there for good reason. It is because somewhere along the line, historically, things haven't been done fairly and justly and I think the contract is something that we have to respect and if administrators treat the contract with respect, then the contract will remain a useful tool to guide behaviour and decision-making. And then, as far as district policies are concerned, we all have to operate

under external constraints, although we want to be autonomated...They are usually so broad and general in terms that we can find our own definition of these policies.”

## **THEME TWO: DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

In this theme, which has been divided into two sections, findings from the data are reported upon the ways in which each group of principals makes decisions. The first section, Professional Decision-Making Processes, contains six sub-sections: 1. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions, 2. Staffing Decisions, 3. Hiring Procedures, 4. Criteria Decisions, 5. Desired Qualities in a Teacher and 6. Candidate Selection Decisions. The second section, Personal Decision-Making Processes does not have any sub-sections and is reported for each group separately.

### **I: Professional Decision-Making Processes**

#### **IA. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions - Former Male Appointees**

All three principals have had numerous opportunities to hire staff to their schools. Without exception, these principals preferred the hiring procedures employed before the union contract came into existence. In those days principals were allowed great latitude in staffing their schools, whereas, presently the union contract largely restricts their flexibility due to the seniority clause. F.M.1 explains,

“...in recent years...there are basically more hoops and hurdles that one has to go through. It may be...that you have a very established staff; a very senior staff. They, themselves, if you talk to them one-to-one, would indicate that it would be nice to get somebody, be it perhaps someone who is interested in taking over some clubs or interested in doing some coaching. There really is a focus here; it may be extra-curricular. Well, I mean now, it's not an issue that you can directly deal with in an interview.”

F.M.2 describes his opportunities to hire in this way,

“...ten years ago we basically developed a criteria ourselves locally here at the school. We wouldn't necessarily post the jobs. We would basically ask around and people would express interest. People seemed to find out almost through osmosis that these jobs existed and you might interview one person or you might interview five people. Most often it was based on someone that you knew that you might like to come on to your staff because you felt at that time that they would be a lovely addition to the staff and they would be a part of that team and philosophically, they would fit into the school and so on.”

“We had someone with 130 months and someone with 7 months...and we knew the person with 7 months, they actually were in the school and in the good old days we would have hired that person because we knew her...we felt that they were both suitable candidates. We said, ‘Let's hire the one we know.’,” was the way in which F.M.3 described his experience.

F.M.2 expressed concern over the lack of control principals have in hiring support staff such as English as a Second Language teachers and teachers of Severely Learning Disabled children. These are district based positions and principals have very little say in who is placed in their schools. “I haven't had a lot of input into the support staff that have been hired because they have been district based positions,” reports F.M.2.

All three former male appointees believe that they should retain control over hiring and find this lack of control to interfere with their ability to perform their jobs. “...in the contractual discussions ...they should never, never give up the suitability clause in hiring and transferring within the district...,” states F.M.3.

## **IB. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions - Former Female Appointees**

These women also have had many opportunities to staff their schools both before and after the union contract came into place. All of these women stated that it was much easier to staff their schools prior to the union contract because they had more flexibility. They find the contract

restricting, but they are still prepared to choose the most suitable candidate even if that candidate is not the most senior. The three women believe that in doing so they are serving the best interests of their students and their schools. In her first year at her present school, F.F.1 had latitude in staffing because it was the year before the contract came into being. She was able to bring staff from her former school with her and several staff members were transferred out of her school, "I did in my first year... I had some very poor teachers...and the other staff members were transferred out and a lot of teachers came with me from my other school...that was really useful because they were the kind of teachers I wanted...so the modelling was there." Forced transfers into her school upset F.F.1, "I had a loss of control. I dislike forced transfers...I think we were lucky...I don't like luck. I like to have control...I hate the system the way it is because I think the principal and the staff should have a lot of say in who comes into that school." F.F.1 believes that in order for principals to enact their visions of the way their schools can be, they must be able to exercise discretion over the staffing process, "I am really angry with the system right now, in that the brand new schools that are starting now. If you are lucky with the forced transfers going in, then you have a good school happening, but I think if you have a plan...you can have science schools, art schools, well-rounded schools. You can pick the people to cover all the bases that you have, but with the system the way it is right now, it is really difficult. There are stumbling blocks all the way through."

Discretion in staffing her school is so important to F.F.2 that she does not let the contract stand in her way. Although she believes the seniority clause in the contract is restricting, she will go around it to hire the person she believes will best fit her school,

"Perhaps somewhat, I think, the seniority thing gets in the way in certain situations, but,...yes, seniority is considered, however, if it comes down to something...the decision that I will make for the school will be in the school's best interest, not in the best interest of seniority, and I will go to the hilt with that." She goes on to explain, "If there is a grievance, fine we will go...yes, it is very important to me and I would only do that if I really felt that it was going to be a problem, for whatever reason, this person really shouldn't be considered. And, I would be prepared to defend it."

Because F.F.3 administers a specialty school, she has more flexibility in hiring suitable candidates over senior ones. This latitude is built into the nature of her school. She does feel, however, that, "I did (have opportunities to hire) more easily in the first few years, when we didn't have the contract, and we still got the people we wanted through our interview process and our rationale, and all of that, so I think I have had a fair bit of flexibility in getting the staff members that I wanted..." F.F.3 does not feel the loss of control to the same extent as F.F.1, "Yes, but even in the English program we have had the kind of people we want to come on because we structured the job description and job interview so that we got the kind of people who want to be at this school...which is ...inner-city and it is not everybody who wants to be here." F.F.3 does not believe that principals are necessarily hiring the most senior applicants, "No, not always. The figures we got from (the district) last week were 80% of the hiring in the last two rounds were not the most senior person, so they are not selecting the most senior person..."

### **IC. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions - Recent Male Appointees**

All of these principals were administering their first schools. R.M.1 and R.M.2 were in their first years at their schools, so they have not had many opportunities to staff schools. R.M.1 came to a school with an established staff, so he only hired one new staff member. R.M.2's school was brand new, so all positions were open. Three teachers were forced transfers from neighbouring schools which upset R.M.2,

"...the forced transfer business is a bunch of garbage, if you ask me, because I have no; it is not up to me at all. It is up to the teacher. They just say, 'I want to go there,' and they go there and whether they fit into your school philosophy or fit in with anyone else, it is secondary. They are the king of the castle. They can just do,...they hold all the cards and I am very upset over that...as it turned out, two of the three, I would have hired anyway, because they were just first-rate people...and the other one...doesn't really fit in with our goals of the school."

R.M.2 was able to interview and hire five teachers for his school that year, however.

R.M.3 was serving his second year as principal at the time of data collection. The first year he was at his school, he was able to hire eight new staff members. All of these principals had to perform their hiring tasks within the confines of the union contract. None of them hired prior to the contract.

## **1D. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions - Recent Female Appointees**

At the time of data collection, R.F.1 had had only one opportunity to go through the hiring process and that was at the beginning of her principalship. She was able to select and hire one teacher. R.F.2 and R.F.3 were both completing their second years as principals. They both had been placed in established schools, but still had the opportunity to hire some staff members in each of their two years at their schools. So, R.F.2 and R.F.3 had been through the hiring process twice. R.F.3 was more limited in her pool of candidates to select because she administers a specialty school and the selection pool of qualified candidates was small. All of these women hired according to contractual guidelines and none of them have ever had the experience of hiring with unfettered discretion.

## **2. Staffing Decisions**

At the time of data collection, there was a staffing process in place that all Surrey administrators followed. District administrators would send enrolment projections to each principal sometime in April or early May. The principals would then be given approximately a week's time to respond to the entitlement figures, in the form of citing mistakes or providing the district with information regarding special circumstances within the school. All staffing decisions by principals took place within the context of the district staffing formulas for their schools.

In the spring, all principals plan for the next school year's organization in the same way. Firstly, they look at their numbers of students and then they look at their entitlements for class divisions. The principals then draw up one or more organizational plans showing grades, divisions and the total number of classes. The teachers are usually then asked to submit, in writing, to the principal their

teaching preferences for the following year. All principals endeavour to give each staff member his or her first choice teaching assignment where possible. After this internal reorganization (if necessary) is finished, any openings that remain, newly created positions in the district and forced transfers are posted in Round One of the hiring process and Surrey teachers only may apply. New vacancies that are created through teacher transfers are then posted in Round Two and, again, only continuing contract teachers may apply for these positions. Finally, a third round of vacancies is posted and any certified teacher may apply.

## **2A. Staffing Decisions - Former Male Appointees**

F.M.1 describes the process in this way,

“...one looks at the entitlement and then examines where they’re presently at so that it may be that you know that you have two retirements, so you are entitled to replace those two people, given our staffing allocation for the upcoming school year. One would then, well the way I worked is, we indicate that to the staff that we are going to be running say 15 regular divisions, we have two retirements, or two individuals leaving, positions that would appear to be open at this point would be, say, primary or grade three, an early intermediate grade five and staff have the opportunity to do some internal transferring. So, that’s Phase I.”

Staffing decisions regarding internal re-assignment can sometimes force principals to make difficult decisions. F.M.2 had such an experience at the time of our interview,

“What we did was first of all determine the needs of our school based on projected enrolments that I was able to get from Chuck,...and we actually put that on an organizational chart, went to staff, pointed out to them that this information that we are giving them comes from Chuck,...and that (the vice-principal) and I had taken those projected enrolments and put them in a class organizational chart that we would give people and...if they wanted to play the numbers game and come up with their organizational chart, they were given a blank one as well to do that. Nobody did, so when we met on Monday, we were able to say this is the organizational chart we are going to use. (The organizational sheet) was done by grade, nobody’s name was beside, they had the seniority list and they also had already completed a form as to what they were qualified and were willing to teach. The first, second,

and third choice and that was also included in everybody's package so they... could look at the seniority list and see where I was on the seniority list. I could look at everybody's first, second, and third choices and we indicated to them that we were certainly not going out of our way to give anyone an assignment that would not meet with their wishes. However, we also acknowledged that we were not going to start at the top of the seniority list and give those people their first choice,... what I was going to do was I was going to start at the top of the seniority list and I would meet individually with each person, I would make sure that they understood that this is what our organization will likely look like. They have the seniority list. They know what people's first, second and third choices are and I think have a pretty good idea where they would fit in, although we were not going to put their names down and then they had to make a choice as to whether they wish to be declared a forced transfer and if they did they would declare to some school in the district... We worked down our list. As a matter of fact, I was so overzealous in this particular function that I came up with eleven forced transfers... it was quite embarrassing when I got to Human Resources with my eleven forced transfers, and now I had to explain that now I have to hire two people and it was explained to me that you can't do that, you have too many. So, I had to go back and the last two people, the least senior people who were the last two declared as forced transfers were then told no, that they, that I could not declare them as forced transfers. That I had made a mistake and that they are going to have to stay, and if, of course, they didn't wish to stay then they could apply in rounds one and two."

F.M.3 asks for teacher input into staffing decisions and tries to give teachers the assignment they want where possible, but the final decision regarding staffing assignments is his, "I want to be fair, but I also want to make sure that the teacher who ends up in certain grade assignments is the person I feel, of the ones that we have, is the most suitable... there comes in that phrase again, suitability counts... in the internal transfers as well as hiring from outside the school."

## **2B. Staffing Decisions - Former Female Appointees**

Each year, after receiving her entitlement, F.F.1 uses a formal, written process to determine internal reassignments before posting any positions, "I have a form that is internal, it goes into every teachers' box, whether they are at that grade level or not. It says that this particular position has come open.

People wishing to apply for this must notify me in writing by a certain date and the decision will be based on an interview and seniority combination, and that is how internal transfers are done." F.F.1 insists that staff indicate their teaching preferences in writing, "...one of the teachers who didn't get the form back in time thought I was playing favourites. But, the form hadn't come in and he verbally indicated to me a couple of weeks previously that if there was an opening in grade 6, he would like it, but, when the time came he figured that the verbal was o.k. and I didn't check that with him, so now I say it has to be in writing and it is fair."

F.F.2 administers a large school with many portable classrooms. Before the staffing formula comes out she asks teachers to state, in writing, their grade and classroom preference for the next school year,

"It is a fairly elaborate process, contract dictates some of it, but I've been doing it long before the contract. I send out a teachers' preference sheet in April and on it teachers indicate grade level preference, first, second, third choice, classroom preference, because we have as many outside as we have inside...and that just sort of waits for a while until staffing formula comes out, and then what I do is put together what it looks like. What does the grade level organization look like, where the special needs kids are, what grade levels they fit into,...and then we go back to the drawing board and my secretary just finished typing draft three for what the grade organization would look like...that will be circulated along with what their preferences were. The other thing I do is work up what the class compositions will look like...so that anyone making the grade level choice is well aware...and if we don't have...if it doesn't match then we sit down and talk and work it out; the goal is to give everybody their first choice."

If vacancies appear on staff due to teachers transferring out of the school during Rounds One or Two, the whole internal transfer process is repeated to ensure that teachers get their first teaching assignment preferences, "...when there is a vacancy, they may well want to change. So we do that step, so they have that opportunity for internal shuffle..."

F.F.3 also uses an internal transfer process before posting any vacant positions, but on a less formal level than F.F.1 and F.F.2. She lets the staff know what vacancies, if any, are open and, "They (the

staff) always have that opportunity and we have had one staff team move into another position. We didn't have many positions this year."

## **2C. Staffing Decisions - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.3 begins planning for the next year's staffing by finding out if anyone is planning to leave the school. If so, he then tries to help that teacher get a new position, "...a staff member will come to you...looking for a transfer. They would certainly appreciate some guidance in terms of what I know about other schools...they are also doing the common courtesy thing by letting you know..." Then R.M.3 waits until he gets his staffing allocation to decide what his vacancies are and then he posts them. R.M.3 did not mention a process of internal transfers. He administers a highly needy school and most of his staff are usually recently certified teachers who get their start at his school. It is common for teachers to want to leave after a few years because the work is emotionally draining, "...even experienced teachers with twelve or fourteen years experience find this place very challenging...There are no transfers here. It is like a double-edged sword, unfortunate in that I pretty well interview lots of people, most of them are inexperienced...and are looking for their first full-time teaching position."

R.M.3's internal transfer process is informal. Because he believes he has a good 'feel' for what the staff wants in terms of teaching assignments, he does not ask for written teacher preferences, "There is so much teacher talk in this place and there are so many formal and informal support group networks that happen that those kind of bits of gossip information, it just happens. I would never feel the need to go and say, 'So and so has been successful. You now have the opportunity to apply for that job,'...Specific teachers would come to me and say, 'Next year I would really like to move to an upper intermediate classroom...if anything becomes available, would you keep me in mind?'"

R.M. 2 had drawn up an organizational plan of what his school would look like for the coming year and he presented this plan at a planning meeting before the District allocations came out. At that time the staff discussed with the principal their preferences for the coming year and what

opportunities for internal transfers were available, "...somewhere in April, we had a professional development...and I gave them the numbers and they worked on the organization...and they talked about where various people would be...and then in May, sometime, I met with each of the teachers and talked about what they wanted to do next year..." When he received his entitlement from the District, he ascertained that he had one vacancy due to growth of the school, "...nobody wanted the new opening." He then posted this opening.

R.M.1 administers a large school with several portables. In the spring, before staffing allocations came out, he asked the staff to, "...submit to me the kind of assignment they would like for next year, so based on that, I would put together a rough assignment. I have also told people that whatever we have decided...could very well change in September because of the transient nature of the school...that includes portable options, too." After internal reassignments took place, R.M.1 got his staffing allocation and looked to see if he had to add or subtract staff to or from his school. He then waited to see if any staff members transferred out of his school, leaving vacancies. Once vacancies were determined, the positions were posted.

## **2D. Staffing Decisions - Recent Female Appointees**

Because R.F.1 only had a forty per cent preparation time position to fill, she did not go through an internal staffing transfer process and she has never had that experience.

R.F.2 and R.F.3 both drew up school organizations for the following year, based upon their population numbers and their staffing allocations. They generated several possibilities and presented them to the Staff Committee. Both principals invited staff to draw up their own organization plans. Then staff members were asked to submit their teaching preferences for the coming year in writing to these principals. Once this process had been completed, R.F.2 and R.F.3 worked with the teachers to make fair internal reassignments as was necessary. Ultimately, however, R.F.2 and R.F.3 retained the authority to make the final decision. R.F.2 looks for,

"...suitability...and if there are one or two teachers who are asking for the same division, same grade and the same organization seems to be

the consensus for everyone, then I will meet with each of those teachers individually and have a discussion. All things being equal, the most senior would have the first choice. If all things were not equal, like in last year, there were two people wanting the same division. One did not have early childhood experience or training, primary experience...and the class was a three/four split, and the experience was the same for both teachers. So, the teacher who had experience with grade three got it and there was not another opening, so that person who didn't get an internal was a forced transfer and it was fine because we adhered to all the contract clauses and we had gone through staff committee as far as the criteria. We had all agreed that one of the criteria for the late primary was to have the training..."

R.F.3 ensures that all staff members are aware of the vacancies on staff before she posts any positions so that staff are able to transfer internally if they so wish. She says, "...I go through it and I keep on it. I send out a memo, I say it orally, I do it through staff committee. I have to...do it in a multitude of ways and even at that you will still have someone say, 'Oh, I never knew that.'...well they should have."

Once the internal reassignments were in place, and the organization set as much as possible for the following year, the positions were posted.

### **3. Hiring Decisions**

Once teaching vacancies are determined at the school level, all principals establish a brief criteria outline for each position and this criteria is listed in the job posting that is made public. The principals, sometimes with the help of their vice-principals, determine the criteria, although they invite teacher input.

#### **3A. Hiring Decisions - Former Male Appointees**

All three men follow the procedure outlined by F.M.1,

"...we would have the position posted to confirm the competition and, at that point then, we would just wait until applications come in. When the applications come in, we follow the Board and the contract procedures. We determine a short-list which is based on meeting the qualifi-

cations for the job and, assuming all of the applicants do, it's then the most senior. So we determine the short-list. There is no magic number we've used for the short-list. Let's say we have ten applicants for the position. We would probably short-list it to five."

Both F.M.1 and F.M.2 short-list according to seniority, but hire the most suitable from that group.

F.M.3, on the other hand, short-lists according to suitability,

"I will take all of those (applications) and I will look through them and I will make about three stacks; this person looks very good and this person looks unsuitable or for whatever reason they probably won't be...and then one I am not so sure...so then I put that one over there and I go through the second pile and the second time I say...these people will probably be okay. Then I take a much more careful look at what we have here, and so I work my way through until I have a number that is manageable...When I get to about 10 people...I telephone them to establish my shortlist...I start with my telephone interview, and I say, 'Hello, Maria. I just want to check these things out...oh you don't have a degree, okay. Gee, did you read where it said that cooperative learning is one of the threshold criteria?...Oh, so you are going to do that this summer...oh, well...it would appear that you haven't met the threshold criteria,' and then I wait and see what they say...99% will say, 'Oh, thank you very much,' and they hang up...and that is exactly what I want them to do...they are the ones who initiate the close off on the telephone conversation. And now I have maybe six to interview."

Once these principals have determined their short-lists, they send courtesy letters to the unsuccessful candidates. F.M.1 sums it up for all three men, "We would attempt to contact the individuals who weren't short-listed. Sometimes, with the tight time lines, that's not possible. We would either phone them or send them a letter. Just a courtesy letter."

These principals then interview the short-listed candidates. The interviews take from forty-five minutes to an hour and all candidates are asked the same questions. F.M.1 describes the process,

"...very formal interview. We ask the candidates to bring any supporting documentation that would be helpful. It's my view that, as a professional, the applicant would hopefully have some kind of a resumé, documentation about their work and they would come to the interview session viewing it as a professional exercise. That is, that they would be prepared for an interview and then we go through the questions and generally we have it worked out so I might ask certain questions; she (the vice-principal) would ask so many questions...We

ask pre-determined questions. We take notes and we let the candidates know because, let's face it, it's a little artificial."

F.M.2 tries to act in a neutral manner during the interview, "...we ask them (the questions) in a rather stilted way and we haven't used facial expressions or anything or try to let on any of our feelings that might be coming through of surprise or shock or pleasure of what we are hearing and we've tried to keep it that way...less we be accused of being unfair of something..."

All of these principals take some form of notes during the interviews to provide documentation on which to base their rationale for the candidate selected. F.M.1 states, "You have to declare the people who applied. Here is my short-list, here is the individual selected for the position and here's my rationale." Not one of these principals hires strictly on the basis of seniority, although they may hire the most senior applicant and that is why they document the interviews. F.M.2 explains, "...in the sense that we can identify the most suitable applicant...our rationale that we come up with, we write it down and come up with about four pages long as well and we basically write it down as verbatim the best we can what people have said..."

After all of the interviews have been completed, the principals narrow their short-list to one or more candidates. Usually the principals will check the references of the candidate(s), even if they have already, in their minds, selected a teacher. F.M.1 says, "There are individuals, and we all get burned from time to time, but there are individuals who may come across well in an interview. That's why it's important, if at all possible, to have some kind of an opportunity to reference check on track records. I mean, an individual may be super interested in helping out for one year, but, after one year, then maybe they're not quite so keen."

Finally, the principals decide upon a candidate, offer the position to that candidate and inform the other short-listed applicants that they were not successful. Each of these former male appointees is prepared to defend his selection, if necessary.

### 3B. Hiring Decisions - Former Female Appointees

F.F.1 defines the position criteria herself and then drafts an interview questionnaire. The questionnaire is then given to teachers, inviting their input. Finally, F.F.1, with the help of her vice-principal, develops the final form, "I put a copy of my interview form into the primary teachers' boxes and people contribute some ideas and thoughts and I put those together and then (the vice-principal) and I develop the criteria, the nitty-gritty from that." Next, F.F.1 states, "I have the criteria, I have the questionnaire, I have the people listed under the application, listed by seniority...First seniority and then suitability, you have to go by the contract. Then you eliminate the people who don't have the suitability and that leaves them by seniority." F.F.1 defines suitability as,

"...demonstrable experience at that particular grade level." After she has listed the suitable applicants by seniority, she is ready to begin making her short-list, "...it is not a short-list yet, until I talk to the principals...I will phone the principals and say, 'Such and such a person has applied for this job. This is my criteria. Do you feel the person fulfils this criteria?' and if they say, 'Yes', then that person will go on the short-list...then I will finish the short-list from having talked to principals and having looked at the forms and then I will phone the people and I will give them the A criteria and I would ask them if they think they can meet the criteria and ask them if they would like to come in for an interview based on that."

Once F.F.1 has short-listed the most suitable candidates from the most senior, she no longer feels restricted to seniority,

"Well you can't (ignore the rules), the penalties are too high and almost always with hiring in the past couple of years, I hired the most suitable rather than the most senior person and I have always been able to document that and I am lucky I haven't been challenged...You have to document, you have to be careful, you can't just go with a feeling this person is good. It's got to be a demonstrable difference that this person will make in the classroom; that this person is suitable...and each time I have been on pins and needles, and you wait for a challenge..."

F.F.2 develops position criteria with her staff, "...we have done as a committee, either intermediate or primary, we have set criteria like this is important for our school, this is what we have to look at..." but, she completes the rest of the process by herself, "I have done the

interviewing. I have set the questions, and made the decisions.” F.F.2 short-lists candidates strictly on seniority. In fact, her secretary selects the candidates to be short-listed, “So I interview five. I ask my secretary to pick the top five people. I short-list by seniority, and then I apply suitability; interviewing those top five and I base it also on reference checks and if I’m not told that this person is a superstar and that this person has all sorts to offer, then I don’t hire them.” When it comes to offering a candidate a contract, however, F.F.2 does not hire strictly on the basis of seniority. She considers suitability first and foremost. If she does not hire the most senior, F.F.2 is prepared to defend her reasons and, “...go to the hilt with that. If there is a grievance, fine, we will go...and I would be prepared to defend it.”

F.F.3 defines the position criteria, draws up the interview questions and short-lists applicants herself. She interviews with, “...the v.p. sitting in. I always like a second person and we just take our interview sheet and do one question after the other and write down and have them describe their rationale for it.” F.F.3 interviews everyone because she only gets two or three applicants for positions at her school. Then she, “...decided who I felt was most suitable and again one of them was a senior person who actually met all the criteria but had chosen another school so that eliminated that person and we were hoping to get the next person in who worked out well, but, I think I would follow that process just as the other principals would.” F.F.3 picks the most suitable out of the most senior, documents the interview and writes a defensible rationale for her selection,

“I do consider the top people who we have to look carefully at to see if the senior people are suitable first of all. We have to look really carefully. If we find they don’t meet our criteria, we might eliminate one or two of those people and go down a little further on the list to have a representative interview schedule and then set that criteria; that kind of person we want and choose that person who is most suitable. If the most senior is most suitable then that is fine. But, the most senior is often not the most suitable person and I have done that rationale.”

### **3C. Hiring Decisions - Recent Male Appointees**

Once each of these principals has determined his vacancies, he creates specific criteria for each position and then posts it. R.M.1 works with his vice-principal to write the criteria, “(the vice-

principal) and I sit down and write the criteria.” R.M.3 creates the criteria by himself, “I have already generated a criteria...the kinds of things I am looking for within my posting and I make it very (school) specific.” R.M.2 says he, “...told the teachers that we are going to get one more person and asked them if they had any sorts of requests or ideas to help me as I make the job descriptions and things to put in the criteria.” Then the jobs, with specific criteria, are posted and the principals wait for the applications to come through the Board Office. Working within the confines of the union contract in terms of seniority is something that R.M.2 has to be very careful about as he receives many applications for positions at his school. R.M.1 and R.M.3 administer schools with high needs and therefore these men do not get many applications from teachers with seniority. Most of their applicants are newly certified teachers. In this regard, they have much more latitude when it comes to hiring. R.M.2 states, “I had 110 applications for the jobs. There were more than 25 people for each of the jobs that I advertised.” R.M.3, however, would, “...get sort of twelve to twenty, and most of those are university students...I don’t have many round one positions, which are forced transfers. Some principals get 50 applications. I don’t get those kinds of numbers.” R.M.1 describes his hiring experience, “...although two positions that we eventually interviewed for, only one person applied for the job and the person was currently doing it, so she got the job. The other position ...two had reasonable qualifications and seniority, so I interviewed two of them. The one that we wanted held off and held off and finally ...decided to take another job and the other one, we just felt wasn’t suitable.”

Each principal begins to short-list by seniority. R.M.1 would, “...put them (the applications) in order of seniority, then go through them in order from the top and work my way down and pull out the ones who meet the qualifications.” Then, if he had many applicants, he would, “...short-list five or six, just to make it manageable...after I short-list, I pick on the basis of suitability.” R.M.3 begins with seniority, but soon turns to suitability, “...after I get through the first two or three applicants that have the most seniority, after that seniority doesn’t matter anymore because they all have so little seniority at that point, they are scrambling to come up with months...I guess on average I interview six to eight people for each position.” R.M.2, who gets many applicants for his school, looks strictly at seniority

to create a short-list, "...we have to do that. It is in the contract. The short-listing has to be done." Once he has short-listed, however, he does not feel compelled to stick strictly to seniority, "...I am not boxed into a corner."

After each of these principals short-list candidates, they go through an interviewing process. R.M.2 makes a list of questions he wants to ask every applicant. He writes down their responses to his questions during the interview so that he will have documentation to defend his eventual choice, "I started making a list of questions I will ask them and record the answers and then...I want to make a rating scale for each one so I can compare this person's answer and give them a score out of 10 and somehow by looking at that I will say this person got a higher score and so I hired this person and I'm hoping if I don't hire the most senior person and if it goes to arbitration I can just say, 'Well, this is how I rated them and I felt this person was the best.'" R.M.1 also has a standard set of questions, made up by himself, that he asks to each applicant, "...then each person who comes in gets a standard list of the question outline that we will be asking." R.M.3, on the other hand, does not ask a standard set of questions,

"I spend an average of 45 minutes to an hour with each applicant and tell them about (his school). After I finish telling them about (the school), there is the odd applicant who says, 'I really don't want to continue on with the interview. I'm not interested in teaching here.' That is partly why I do it...and then I get into the criteria and I want them to support their understanding of my criteria by relating their experiences to me. If there are certain areas within my posting that they haven't talked about, then those are usually my first questions...And then, I have specific questions I ask each candidate...a lot of it is governed by their reaction to my thumb nail sketch of the school."

When the interviews have all been completed, each principal selects the applicant that will best suit his school. R.M.3 tells each candidate not selected, "...if you would like to be de-briefed on the interview, call me back for an appointment." He says, "I quite often get that. I have them in and have a very informal chat on how the interview went." Each principal is prepared to defend his choice with a written rationale.

### 3D. Hiring Decisions - Recent Female Appointees

Before any vacant positions are posted, these principals write down specific criteria for each position and then from that, draft the job description that is listed with the vacancy in the posting. R.F.1 did this by herself because it was a forty per cent relief teaching position, "...I do that myself. Apparently there are some administrators that are...having some staff input and if the position...were a full time position in a classroom, then I would do that. I would go to the staff and say, 'We have this position,' and I would get some input as to what kind of a teacher we would like to have here."

R.F.2 and R.F.3 write the criteria themselves, but present it to their staff committees for input before conducting interviews. R.F.2 explains, "...the criteria would be written up by myself, but, prior to the interview, presented to the staff committee for their acceptance, so that I would be going into the interview with questions based on the criteria that the staff acknowledged and deemed important to them at that grade level." R.F.3 uses this procedure because, "...for them it is a difficult job to do. It's not fair to ask. It is easier to come up with something for them to respond to..."

Each principal then prepares a set of questions to ask each applicant in an interview. They do not share these questions with staff unless they are asked to do so. R.F.3 explains, "I mean, if anybody was interested in seeing the interviewing questions, I would share it. I had a teacher here that went to an interview and came back and said to me that she hated the interview, that it was terrible and I said, 'Oh, gee. Would you come and look at my interview questions and tell me what you think? I would really appreciate your input.'"

After all of the applications are in, each principal reviews the applications and short-lists candidates to interview. Each principal looks first for qualified candidates for the position. These are candidates who meet the criteria listed in the posting, as R.F.3 explains, "...if one of your criteria, say your school is very involved in computers and you have a computer program going in the classrooms. It's a school goal and you've got an established computer program in the school and one of your criteria is that the person has some knowledge in using computers in the classroom. One candidate does and one doesn't. Then you say this person is more suitable because this person has worked with

computers in these types of ways and taken these courses and that is the evidence of suitability.”

Then the qualified candidates are listed in order of seniority to the number that each principal decides to short-list. The principals then contact the short-listed applicants and arrange interview times.

Finally, each principal will select the candidate deemed most suitable for the position, “I will short-list them according to seniority of all people who apply and suitability. We still have a suitability factor in there, and once I have short-listed, then I will notify those people and I arrange interviews with them. I will interview them and again, it’s seniority that is a requirement of the union, but, I can also, in my own opinion, think about suitability for the position,” explains R.F.1.

All of these women mentioned following contractual procedures during the hiring process. R.F.1 says, “...it is a matter of district policy. Hiring is very clear.” All of these women are fully aware that they have to defend their choice if they do not select the most senior, but they do not feel that this causes them undue stress, as R.F.2 explains, “...I think if your criteria is firmly set and if your questions are based on the criteria and if you do a grid and really following procedures in terms of the interview and do it objectively and if your choice is to the least senior person, but, most suitable, you have yourself covered and you can justify it...educationally justifiable and so, I don’t feel nervous about it...”

#### **4A. Criteria Decisions - Former Male Appointees**

All three principals use two sets of criteria for each position. The first set of criteria is what F.M.3 calls, “...threshold criteria.” This consists of a very simple sketch of the required qualifications for the position such as:

- Grade Five Teacher:
- cooperative learning
  - anecdotal reporting
  - some F.S.L. experience.

F.M.3, who is the only one of the three former male appointees who does not have a vice-principal based in his school, develops this threshold criteria with the assistance of his staff, "...the staff and I will meet very quickly to establish some very threshold kind of criteria statements; cooperative learning is valued by us, thematic approach in the primary..." F.M.1 and F.M.2 develop the job posting criteria by themselves based upon their knowledge of the school's needs. F.M.1 gets, "...a kind of feel for maybe some thoughts that the staff have."

Then each principal sets out a more detailed list of criteria that becomes incorporated into the interview questions. F.M.1 enlists the aid of his staff to help develop this criteria, "...we've asked the staff for some criteria that we should be looking at. Let's just say it's a primary position. So we would just have some discussions, maybe informally, maybe a questionnaire, as to some characteristics that they might like to have considered in the selection of a new person." Using teacher input, he then formally develops the criteria individually.

With his vice-principal, F.M.2 also develops criteria based upon staff input, "...we sat down with the staff and we brainstormed...some of the criteria they felt was important to hiring staff,...we took that information from that brainstorming session and worked it into a format that we thought was quite desirable...and then we made up this little document."

Using staff input, F.M.3 also develops the criteria independently, "I do that with the staff. Supposing it turns out to be a grade five position, I would most likely talk to the teachers in grade four, five, six areas...and we will sit down and...talk about where their skills may be, the kind of things that we say as a staff that we are lacking here..."

In each case, the principals or the administrative teams write the final interview questions according to their own goals and values, incorporating staff input where and when possible.

#### **4B. Criteria Decisions - Former Female Appointees**

Depending upon timelines, F.F.1 will set the criteria by herself or ask for input from her vice-principal. She, "...know(s) exactly what I want and the areas of focus..." She develops two sets of

criteria: A and B, "All the candidates must meet the A requirement and the B are those bits and pieces that you can add onto it." A criteria, according to F.F.1, are criteria, "...that demonstrate current teaching at this particular level,...whole language...literature based...some cooperative planning, team teaching...the B list is sort of a secondary list and that deals with discipline, planning, assessment and evaluation and things like that." In one case F.F.1 had a term specific teacher that the staff and F.F.1 wanted to keep and, "...they developed questions sort of based on her qualifications, maybe we could have fit her into the criteria somehow," but, it didn't work because, "...her thing was P.E. and computers and to put that in as a year two criteria...wasn't fair. It didn't work out that way, it ended up the same format that I have always used..."

F.F.2, "...worked it (the criteria) through with the teachers," but, made the final criteria decisions herself. Although she states that her criteria is, "...very clear," F.F.2 did not elaborate upon the nature of her criteria.

Because F.F.3 administers a specialty school, much of the position criteria is built into the nature of the school. Beyond that, competence and cooperative teaching are the main criteria that F.F.3 looks for. She defines the criteria herself.

#### **4C. Criteria Decisions - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.2 determines position criteria collaboratively with his staff. After his staff has given R.M.2 direction, he writes the specific criteria for the posting into the job description by himself, "I...asked them if they had any sorts of requests or ideas...what sort of abilities do you feel that we are lacking here that we could incorporate in there. Like, do we need somebody who needs to know something about science? So, there are only a few of us here, so, we have to make sure that the people we get sort of cover all the areas and they gave me some ideas about that. So, I started making a list of criteria..."

R.M.1 and his vice-principal make up the criteria together, "(the vice-principal) and I sit down and...it is pretty general at this point. We just say conflict resolution, collaborative teaching, special integration; there is only so much you can say..."

R.M.3 says,

"I do it all by myself. I think I have a pretty fair idea what we're all about and what type of person I am wanting for the school and what type of person is compatible with other staff members. And through our school improvement plans and through my administrative goals, we are pretty well talking the same language in terms of who we are looking for...a lot of criteria is ...governed by our school improvement plan, such as this year we did the Quest program and years past we did the conflict resolution...and those kind of experiences are what I put on the criteria, so it is no surprise to anybody."

#### **4D. Criteria Decisions - Recent Female Appointees**

Although their staffs are given the opportunity to comment on the criteria for new vacancies, these principals write the criteria by themselves. They compose the interview questions using criteria specific to the assignment. R.F.2 explains,

"...I developed a criteria for each grade level at the school that was presented to the staff committee. The staff committee then said, 'Yes, we can live with this or can't live with this,' and they accepted all the different grade level criteria based on that. That is how I interviewed. All of the questions were defined according to the criteria and I did choose the most suitable candidate based on that criteria...and in a small school situation we do as much as a large school does with fewer numbers of staff and so, it is important, not that you could hire based on extra-curricular involvement, but let the staff member know that if you come and work in a small school that collectively, it becomes very important to work together and to pull your weight and so...built into that criteria were a lot of issues that reflected a small school environment."

R.F.3 does not want to add to the work load of her staff, so, she,

"...draw(s) up the criteria first and then I run them by the staff committee. It is easier than saying, 'Okay, Staff Committee, come up with criteria.'...I do the interview questions by myself. I think probably because there is no point in burdening people with unnecessary, I

mean, if anybody was interested in seeing the interviewing questions, I would share it...the interview questions were not a secret. But, you have to make decisions as to when to involve people in decision-making and when it is a waste of someone's time."

R.F.1 obtained staff input before she posted the position, "I make it very clear. I went to them and asked them what they wanted. I mean, I did do that. I mean, I already had a sense of what they wanted for their prep time. But, I did go to them all and say, 'What do you want?' before I posted it."

## **5A. Desired Qualities in a Teacher - Former Male Appointees**

All three men value strong classroom teachers who are able to demonstrate teaching expertise. This includes adapting different teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles, liking children, looking beyond immediate behaviour to the reasons for that particular behaviour, and keeping current with new ideas, methods and trends. In addition, F.M.1 values teachers who will contribute to the whole school, "...my bias is somebody who is going to involve themselves in the school over and above the classroom...somebody who is going to be a team player on staff and somebody who is going to add to the staff beyond nine to three." While giving 'extra' to the school is important to F.M.1, it is only important if this quality exists in addition to excellent classroom skills, "Now, if someone came to me and could only do musicals and weren't really interested or their track record from what it appeared was somewhat suspect in the classroom, I would be staying away from that person."

F.M.2 values order and evidence of written planning, "...an orderly class is important in order for learning to take place and to have an orderly classroom we need a person who is able to be proactive and to establish routines and procedures in the classroom...we are looking for an individual who is willing to put that planning down in writing in some way. We expect this person to be able to articulate in writing what they plan to do either by a yearly preview or monthly...long-term planning." A teacher who is respectful of children, "a person who has a lot of integrity and seems to have an element of caring," is also important to F.M.2. Other qualities that he finds desirable are,

"...a life-long learner, a team player and a person who is open and accessible to parents and school support staff."

F.M.3 values teachers who work hard and who care about the children. Above all he values teachers who can get the best that children can give from them, "...I am looking for...some sense of the teacher's awareness that this kid thinks the only way he is going to pass is by cheating. So, I want that teacher to say something like, 'I want to know why that kid was cheating. I'm going to sit down with that kid and find out why he felt he had to cheat.' That is much more important to me. That comes into that valuing. You value that child. You don't value the product."

F.M.2 and F.M.3 desire teachers whose main concerns are with the classroom while F.M.1 desires teachers who are not only strong in the classroom, but who devote time to extra-curricular activities as well.

## **5B. Desired Qualities in a Teacher - Former Female Appointees**

The ability to work as part of a team is a teacher quality that all three women value highly. Each principal expressed a preference for teachers who are competent or, in F.F.1's words,

"...skilled at their craft," but, this quality must be part of a collaborative teacher's expertise. F.F.1 articulates this idea, "It is also important to have people who are good staff members because I think there is an ethos on staff and I remember one time, I interviewed this absolutely marvellous...person. She had this incredible portfolio of stuff and she was so bubbly and she was so bouncy and so knowledgeable and I didn't hire her. I hired the person who didn't shine as brightly, but, I knew would fit into the staff and I have never regretted that decision...so ...a person can be a superb teacher...but, that person is faulty in staff relations."

F.F.1 was the only principal in this group who expressed, "...genuine liking for children...you have to respect this person, you don't just treat them as little bodies...if they have problems you work with them to overcome the problems and you don't fit them into a mold..." as desirable in teachers. She also values teachers who are life-long learners; who keep current with Teacher Education practices. She likes teachers who are, "...organized and neat and tidy and I want things in

on time. I want things planned, I want them to have a daybook with objectives. I want the report card not to be written out of feeling about their perception of a child, I want them based on evidence.”

F.F.2 values the, “...superstar...someone who wants to take on a challenge...someone who is willing to share...and to contribute to school as a community, not just as a classroom. Be keen...interested. Sex doesn't make any difference...They are going to add to and enhance the community.”

Cooperativeness is most important to F.F.3, “...that is something that I feel is really important and we have done it for five years (cooperative planning) and I need people who can work with other people so I can't separate those two. We have to have competence. If I had two people and one was very competent and one was very competent, but, cold and didn't feel they liked to work with others, I would not consider them for this school.”

## **5C. Desired Qualities in a Teacher - Recent Male Appointees**

All three principals desire teachers who are life-long learners; teachers who continually seek professional development and who are aware of current trends in Education. These men like teachers who are team players and who care for the whole child. Teachers who have strong, organized teaching skills are important to these men. R.M.1 prefers teachers with a, “...willingness to go beyond and do a little extra.” R.M.2 and R.M.3 are more concerned with classroom teaching which involves parental involvement.

R.M.1 states his preference as, “Somebody who is well-rounded in the sense of strong professional development base so that they are not winging it all the time...something like energy level in a sense of that willingness to tackle things.”

R.M.2 states, “Excellence in teaching or you don't want them...flexible and adaptable...a person has to get along with people...if a person is an excellent teacher and doesn't have that (ability to cooperate, be a team player), I don't think I would take them...if they just think that they have been hired to be a Math teacher or an English teacher and they don't have to worry about these kids and

the strife that is going on at home and in their life, well that just doesn't cut it anymore...they have to buy into the whole program and participate."

R.M.3 is looking for,

"A strong sense of child; a strong sense of what a child brings to the curriculum, experience in terms of learning styles...I guess that is basically strong collaborative skills. They are a team player...They don't mind someone else being in the classroom...They want to be involved in the daily operation of the school. They want to be involved in the school improvement plan...curriculum planning...showing that they care. That risk taker; that person that is really interested in personal sense of development...personal growth." Regarding extra-curricular activities, R.M.3 says, "I can't say it has really made a difference in our school...it is not a big thing for me."

## **5D. Desired Qualities in a Teacher - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these principals desire teachers possessing strong instructional skills coupled with concern and positive regard for children. R.F.1 first looks for such qualities as, "...knowledge of curriculum, flexibility, interest in using new ideas...then, after that,...I would look at willingness to cooperate on staff..."

R.F.2 looks for the life-long learner, "...someone who is a risk-taker, someone who is caring and really does like children...and who looks at the whole child, who sets high expectations, but, not unreasonable...someone who feels comfortable working with parents...someone who is open and who is not feeling a lack of security..."

R.F.3 also looks for the life-long learner, "...someone who is willing to take challenges and who will also balance them with a good, healthy personal life...someone who is enthusiastic to learn to do things, who has a certain energy and openness,...someone who wants to make the school exciting."

## **6A. Candidate Selection Decisions - Former Male Appointees**

All three principals short-list approximately five candidates for each position. Those people short-listed have already passed careful scrutiny and are deemed by these principals to be suitable

candidates for the position. Unless the most senior applicant is selected, the principals face the difficult decision of selecting one person for the job. All three principals very strongly believe that the person hired should fit into the existing school culture or add to it. Therefore, each principal will select the candidate he feels is most suitable for the position rather than always select the most senior. All of these principals are prepared to defend their reasons for selecting a certain candidate and to this end they document each interview and write a rationale for their choice. F.M.1 states, "That means I'll go with, in terms of the interview, the documentation. On occasion, it might be appropriate to do a reference check or I'll look at the resumé and past reports. Once I've made that decision, then if somebody challenges it, that's fine. Now, if the most senior person challenges it or some arbitrator decides that, 'We think you're wrong,' well, then I'm wrong. So, I get the most senior person anyway."

In selecting a candidate, F.M.2 wrestles with the idea of being objective, "I would like to look for the person who, in my opinion, personality wise, would be the best addition to staff to fit in best, but I have already made statements about how difficult I believe that is to justify. It is so subjective. I would find that extremely difficult and would look for some other criteria and I am certain, given all the criteria we have, that one of those people would be more suitable than the other..."

When selecting a candidate, F.M.3 makes certain that his reasoning will stand the test, "...if I hire this person over that person, can I justify that? Can I truly justify that or is this just a seat-of-the-pants feeling? How do you justify a feeling in a grievance process and I have been through a grievance process and believe me, it is difficult. So, not to avoid the grievance, but to really clarify in my head that I think this person is the most suitable."

Each of these three men have had many hiring experiences. They do not accept the interview as the only method for candidate selection because they have been fooled in the past. F.M.2's experience was shared by the other principals, "I think there are people who you interview who basically...they have the jargon. They have attended a few workshops. They certainly lead you to believe that they are very much in tune with the new program, but when you actually see them in operation they just

don't, and often the excuse for them not doing something is that they really don't believe in that, or it does not work for them. But, I'm not really that convinced they are really trying very hard to see if that particular strategy would work...we are looking for people who buy into the new programs..." Very often, during the interviewing process, one candidate will stand out. It, "...may be that one individual has done a little bit more in that area or has had some activities which they have been involved in or planned for the school, so it's usually something based on the criteria," explains F.M.1. Nevertheless, factors other than the interview are also attended to, as F.M.1 goes on to say, "...it's usually one person and, as I say, through a combination of the interview and how that interview proceeds, the presence the person brings to it, reference checks, resumé, putting everything together, this person will fit for the school."

All of the former male appointees value control over staffing their schools and are reluctant to give up the use of this discretionary power. F.M. 3 forcefully presents this message,

"Of all of the things that the district should pay attention to in the contractual discussions, it is that they should never, never give up the suitability clause in hiring and transferring within the district, and seniority does count. But, it does not come before suitability and many, many principals have delivered that message really clearly, and I doubt that they would ever give up on that because if you have a school with a vision and with a culture, and you may have to accept somebody on the basis of seniority, you could have the cat among the pigeons."

## **6B. Candidate Selection Procedures - Former Female Appointees**

All three principals base their candidate selection on the outcome of the interview and on reference checks. The interviews, in all three cases, are designed carefully to reveal the qualities that each principal values and so one candidate will usually stand out among the others. If all candidates were equally suitable, each principal would select the most senior. If the most suitable was not the most senior, each principal would select that candidate anyway, document the interview and write a defensible rationale. If the candidates were close in qualifications and seniority, F.F.3 would be influenced by the, "...sense of warmth or coldness," and competence, "I would ask at the reference

check, to make sure that there is competence in the classroom,” and finally she would consider the balance on staff, “...would they fit? I need to plug that person in. If I have two male teachers, I might say all things being equal, the children also need a woman teacher at that grade level, it’s sexist, but, you do these kind of things to build a balance.”

F.F.2 will make her final selection based on reference checks with administrators who have been colleagues of the candidate in the past, “...when I do reference checks, I don’t necessarily phone the people whose names they gave. I go to people they work with. I phone administrators who have been on staff with (the candidate), try to find out anything I can.” Through this process she finds that, “...there is just something that makes a person stand out a little more; could be your reference checks or the interview.”

F.F.1 tries to select the most senior, if possible. If the most senior is not the most suitable then she looks for, “...the demonstrable difference in the school. I mean somebody who speaks French, so French would be the breaking criteria, if you need somebody who will do the volley-ball, then it could be a person who had everything that everyone else has, but, is dying to take on volley-ball. So that would be the one; what the needs are for the school.”

## **6C. Candidate Selection Decisions - Recent Male Appointees**

From the applicants, all three men would select the candidate that best fits their school. Not one of these principals feels compelled to select the most senior applicant of those short-listed. R.M.2 and R.M.3 are looking for someone who would provide balance on staff, such as a male teacher. R.M.2 states, “I am the only man at this school and I am certainly not sexist in any way. One of the first things they said to me was, ‘It sure would be nice to have another man in primary,’ so if they were all absolutely even, I would be inclined to take another man.”

R.M.3 feels the same way, “I have looked for a man in certain roles. I would admit to that. Ultimately, I don’t think it had an effect on the decision I made, but having said that, I also said to myself, ‘I would really like to have a man for this position.’” The balance for R.M.3 is also the

experiences the individual brings to the school, "...what they do outside of school, what are their outside interests; what kinds of unique things can they bring to my school based on their own life experiences..." For R.M.2 the balance could include, "...extra-curricular activities like volley-ball coaching or some kind of coaching because we are a bit weak in that area right now..."

Only R.M.1 mentioned basing his selection on reference checks, "I check out references, but only when I am in doubt..." R.M.1 would select a candidate based on, "...something like energy level."

All of these principals are aware that if the most senior applicant is not selected, the selection can be grieved and so they are careful to document their interviews. R.M.2 states, "...you just never know. If it goes through grievances, it could be two months later and how can you remember it?" Because R.M.3 gets applicants with minimal seniority, he is more able to practice discretionary selection than R.M.1 and R.M.2.

## **6D. Candidate Selection Decisions - Recent Female Appointees**

Once these principals have short-listed the most senior of the most suitable candidates, they feel they have some latitude in selection. If they believe the most senior applicant to be the most suitable, then they will select that candidate without worrying about defending their choice. If, on the other hand, these women choose a less senior, but in their opinion, more suitable candidate, they will prepare an educationally justifiable defence and proceed with hiring the selected candidate. R.F.1, however, would only hire a less senior person if the difference was not great, "...it has been made very clear to us that if you choose someone with less seniority, the seniority can't be very much. We would be in a lot of trouble with the contract if we choose someone who was a lot less senior...even if I felt they were more suitable..."

R.F.2 thinks, "...any school has a unique setting, a unique environment and in a small school...it is important...that collectively it becomes very important to work together and pull your weight and so built into that criteria were a lot of issues that reflected a small school environment and suitability ruled and it didn't seem a problem."

R.F.3 bases her selection decision on reference checks. She believes that, "...the interview, I suppose is important. It gives you the status of someone's personality on the spot, but, I don't really think it gives you a feel for the person in more of a shallow way, so I think reference checking is really important and I just do lots and lots of reference checking."

## **II: Personal Decision-Making Processes**

The findings in this section report on the processes principals use to make independent decisions related either to their jobs or their personal lives.

### **II.A. Personal Decision-Making Processes - Former Male Appointees**

When making decisions, F.M.1 and F.M.3 try to project the consequences before deciding what action to take. They use rules or guidelines as a first level basis to determine the direction of the decision. For example, F.M.1 explains,

"...at the secondary level, if a student is smoking; I mean basically there is a 'no smoking' policy, so a student is suspended. There may be some judgment as to how you handle that, the number of days a student is gone for because it could be there are other factors...then you get into the whole matter of inconsistency, perceived unfairness. You're picking on me and not on Miss Goody Two Shoes. So you can't always be successful, but I like to think that generally, I try to be as consistent as possible based on other factors related to the student and to the situation. Then further decisions are made specific to that data."

All of the principals agree that most decisions are situational and must be based upon information gathered relating to the specific circumstances.

F.M.3 describes his decision-making process this way, "If I am presented with a situation that requires a decision, I want to clarify what the situation is, make sure that I understand what is going on here and once I think I know what's going on, then I think I probably know what kind of decision has to result here and once I have that straight then I ask myself the question, 'Who is going to be

affected by the decision?' and whoever is going to be affected by that decision, they ought to have some input...It may not impact on everybody else in the school, but it will certainly have some very direct impact, so I would at least want those people involved...I always try to remember that when I seek input that I clarify with the people giving the input that I am asking for information,...that I will be making the decision..."

F.M.1 and F.M.3 also look at previous decisions to help them come to an new decision. F.M.1 states, "You need to determine what are the facts relating to this particular situation. So, the facts would involve what dealings have you had previously with the pupil. What is the seriousness of this particular incident?...there are some cases that are black and white...cut and dried...Personally, and from my experience, you can get yourself into a major difficulty if everything falls into black or white because when you're dealing with people, it doesn't happen that way. But I think you have to defend that position and try to be as consistent as possible..."

F.M.2 did not articulate his decision-making process.

## **IIB. Personal Decision-Making Processes - Former Female Appointees**

Personal decision-making for these three women is situational. While the manner in which they make specific decisions is contingent upon past decisions in the same context, these women prefer not to make rapid decisions, although there may not be enough time to go through as thorough an information gathering process as they would prefer. All three women like to gather as much information pertaining to the decision as they are able, determine courses of action, weigh the consequences of particular directions and then decide upon a particular course of action. F.F.3 realizes that in making a rapid decision where she is unable to complete a thorough process of information gathering, or in making a well thought out decision, there are still aspects of the decision which she may not have considered. The decisions she makes, however, are the best ones she can make at the time and so she is willing to present them and stand corrected if necessary, "...and if I am proven wrong, then fine, but, I wasn't doing it maliciously and I was looking to make the best

decision based on the information, and if I am shown to make a mistake on it, then I am willing to defend it...I would say that these are the reasons that I did that. I did the thing for Educational sense. You can tell me I'm wrong and I may have to change my mind. That's fine. I'm willing to try that."

After F.F.2 makes a decision, she lives with it. It is done and over with and she does not spend time worrying whether it was right or wrong. Before making the decision, however, she spends time going through a process, "I like to avoid making rapid decisions. I like to take my time. Particularly, I like to avoid making a decision in the heat of an issue. I...look at all the positives and all the negatives, what are the ramifications of that decision, what is it going to do, what is the worst, what is the best? Do I have options? What is going to be the best for me, best for whoever is involved in that decision, and then try to pick the best one. So, it usually takes a bit of time...Once it is done, it is done."

F.F.1 uses past decision-making experiences to influence present decisions,

"You have done things enough that the experience tells you what to do and also familiarity with the child. He needs a suspension. You know whether it is the mother to call or the father to call. You know how much information you need to have for the parents before you call them. You need to know how to talk to a child, and there are children who have done horrendous things. You don't call the parents because you know the child is going to be beaten up. That's not the answer to that particular problem...you can not have hard and fast rules for dealing with people. You just can't...you just have to judge each one on their own merits...you always weigh the consequences."

### **IIC. Personal Decision-Making Processes - Recent Male Appointees**

When making decisions, all of these men like to have the time to consider several courses of action and determine the consequences of each one. If possible, they like to get as much information as they can that will impact on their decision before making it. R.M.1 says, "...I try to operate on the sense that there is probably more than one side to whatever the problem is...there are sometimes two or three or four sides to a story, and if you just hear one, then you operate on that and that is not a good decision."

R.M.3 describes his decision-making process as,

“I guess somewhere in my sub-conscious I ask myself how is me making this ‘me’ decision or completing this task going to benefit my kids, my staff, my teachers? If it’s not, it is in the ‘want to do pile’ and I would just let it sit. Then I want to contact the specific publics, the staff, could be the students, could be teachers...members of the community staff, meaning custodians, secretaries, supervisory aids, all those people who come in...who I have got to impact. Whatever we decide to do, who is that going to impact...this specific segment of my school. Those are the people I want to make contact with before I make any decisions...So I want to sit down with them and let them know how my decision will impact them and there are some cases where their input is just not part of my decision...it is very important that it comes from me; that they hear it from me...and I let them know...for all those reasons.”

R.M.2 describes his decision-making process,

“I usually write down what I am looking for or what criteria or positives and negatives and I do this in my personal life, too. Like, what kind of a car am I going to buy? You know, you look at some of them and then you say, ‘What is it that I really want?’ and so I am very logical in those kind of things and I sit down and think about it. Like, I have to make a decision on who goes into the portable and so I’m thinking, ‘Okay, what is going to be best for the kids?’ I could easily say the new teacher is going there, but, do I want grade ones coming into the school to go to the washroom?...checking through the possibilities and usually, the decisions, you don’t have to make them because it’s just right there, clear as mud...I’m thinking about what it is going to mean in the future all the time. If we are going to do this this year, does that mean we have to do it next year? What’s the future ramification this year, what is best for us in the future,...fair for teachers...kids and all that sort of stuff. I think about it driving home and to school and tend to have in my mind good reasons for the decisions so I can defend it and then when I tell people what the decisions are, I usually say, ‘This is how I came to my decision.’ When it affects people, I always ask them for their input along the way.”

### **IID. Personal Decision-Making - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women like to gather as much information as they can about the decision, project the consequences of alternate courses of action and then choose the best action to take for a particular

situation. R.F.2 says, "...there is no such thing as the right decision and the wrong decision. It is the best decision under the circumstances." Sometimes decisions have to be made quickly without time to do as much information gathering as they would like. R.F.3 says, "...one thing I would think about a decision is that once you have decided, then you shouldn't cogitate too long. You have decided and then that's that and that's what you go with and I don't think you should get involved with self re-criminations or worry. No, once you have decided and you move along with that and see what comes and...if it's wrong, then it's wrong and you change and you do something else. I think you can get hung up on deliberations..."

R.F.3 also thinks that the magnitude of the decision will determine the process used to make it, "...if it's a decision of some magnitude, you need some time to think. You need to think who that person is, then think of what your goal is; like, why am I doing this and what end result do I want?"

R.F.1 would like to discuss her decisions with someone to help her clarify her thinking, but, in making school decisions, she does not have anyone to talk with, "...I look at what do I want to have happen here? What outcomes do I want?...sometimes maybe I will bounce that off of somebody else, but, I don't have anybody else because I don't have a v.p., so I am really on my own with most things. But, it would be really nice to bounce that off of somebody else."

## **THEME THREE: SOCIOLOGICAL ORIGINS**

Sociological origins reports the findings on the experiences, motivations, aspirations and career paths of principals. For ease of data presentation, this theme has been divided into two sections: Administrative Behaviour and Career Paths. Administrative Behaviour contains six sub-sections: 1) Term of Principalship, 2) Gender Affects Job Performance, 3) Frustrations of the Job, 4) Job Stress, 5) Job Satisfaction, and 6) Future Aspirations. Career Paths contains seven sub-sections: 1) Motivation to Become a Principal, 2) Background, 3) Road to the Principalship, 4) Vice-Principal

Appointment Procedures, 5) Principal Appointment Procedures, 6) Role Model/Mentor, and 7) Family Life. The data pertaining to each group is presented separately.

## **I: Administrative Behaviour**

### **1A. Term of Principalship - Former Male Appointees**

F.M.3 is the most experienced of this group of principals, having served as an elementary principal for eighteen years. F.M.1 had administered junior and senior secondary schools as well as an elementary school over fifteen years. F.M.2 had been an elementary principal for ten years. All of these men frequently mentioned the “good old days” during their interviews. At the time of data collection, F.M.1 and F.M.2 were completing their fourth years at their schools while F.M.3 was completing his sixth year at his school. All of these principals administered large schools with the help of vice-principals.

### **1B. Term of Principalship - Former Female Appointees**

F.F.3 was one of the first female principals in Surrey. When she received her first appointment, one other female did, as well. These two women were the first female principals in the district. At the time of data collection, F.F.3 was completing her fifteenth year as an elementary principal. F.F.2 was appointed principal three years after F.F.3 and she was completing her twelfth year. When F.F.2 received her appointment, there were six female principals in Surrey. F.F.1 was completing her tenth year as principal at the time of data collection. While there were more women principals at the time of F.F.1’s first appointment, the numbers were small compared to the number of women principals today. At the time of data collection, F.F.1 and F.F.3 were completing their fifth years at their schools while F.F.2 was completing her sixth year. All of these women administered large schools with the help of vice-principals.

## **1C. Term of Principalship - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.1 and R.M.2 were completing their first years as Surrey principals while R.M.3 was completing his second. R.M.1 and R.M.3 were administering schools that had been established long before their appointments while R.M.2 opened a brand new school that year. Only R.M.1 administered a school large enough to have a vice-principal.

## **1D. Term of Principalship - Recent Female Appointees**

R.F.2 and R.F.3 were both completing their second years as principals at the time of data collection. R.F.2 was administering a small, rural-type school without a vice-principal while R.F.3 was administering a larger, suburban school with the help of a vice-principal. R.F.1, who was completing her first year as a principal, was administering a small, suburban school without a vice-principal.

## **2A. Gender Affects Job Performance - Former Male Appointees**

F.M.2 and F.M.3 think that a male principal may be viewed as possessing more authority than a female principal. F.M.3 states, "Without doubt a female principal would have more difficulty with that (parents). It is a very conservative community." F.M.2 reveals, "In this community it may make it more difficult for you to be an authority figure, for a large segment of the population is Indo-Canadian...and that is more cultural, from what I understand."

All three men think that, at least in the past, female principals may have more difficulty in disciplining children than would male principals. F.M.1 states, "...some aspects about discipline at the secondary level that I felt might create more difficulties for a lady...I'm not convinced about that anymore because I've clearly seen that it's often how people relate to other people - whether they are a man or a whatever." F.M.3 says, "I think you might have that problem with discipline with kids; being a part of it." F.M.2 thinks that, "...female teachers would probably say they do have a more difficult time...for example with discipline...young boys in particular, than with a male

teacher...and I think on that basis that it would be fair to say that a female administrator may also have that difficulty..."

## **2B. Gender Affects Job Performance - Former Female Appointees**

All three women view male administrators as more sports oriented. These women perceive men as 'tougher' in matters of discipline, but not necessarily more effective. F.F.1 describes it as, "I think that with the old time male principal there was a lot of deference, when they would nail you to the wall; a lot of yelling in public, more physical," whereas she views women as, "...more information seeking by women about a particular child and how he functioned." F.F.1 does, however, qualify this view, "But, I don't know anymore. I haven't worked with a male principal for...when I was a vice-principal, the male principals I worked for didn't do any of the discipline."

F.F.1 views male teachers as less hard-working than female ones, "...except for taking teams." F.F.2 thinks her school community would value a "jock" principal, "...this is a very sports, athletic driven community and I'm sure the community would love it if I were a 'jock'. I'm not. I think sometimes when we have parents, particularly fathers, they might react more comfortably with a man, and they are somewhat threatened by females or their backs will go up."

The parents in F.F.1's community thought the job of the principal was to perform work that required strength, "...the parents' group came to meet me and one of the men parents stood up and said, 'I don't understand why you have been chosen as principal.' He said, 'For example, if there should be a heavy snowfall, you are not going to be able to push the cars out of the parking lot like Mr. X did.'"

Both F.F.1 and F.F.3 view women as softer, more nurturing, while they view men as more interested in details around the child. F.F.3 states, "I probably focus on academics and the people more than do men. They focus on materials, ordering and administrivia...I want to encourage kids." F.F.1 thinks that women are more inclined to be organized about their teaching duties and more concerned with teaching strategies and lesson content. She believes that male teachers find her

demanding as a principal, "I think some of the male teachers would possibly find...me in particular, demanding, more so than would women. Almost all of the women would find me knowledgeable,...understanding,...supportive and the male teachers ...seem to have a different attitude towards teaching and their hours tend to be shorter...They put less into daybooks and extra stuff in the school; things like coming to school on time and all those things I find I have to talk to the male teachers about..." F.F.1 also does not put as much value on reference checks from some male colleagues as she would from female colleagues,

"...and the women principals will always tell me that, when I phone them. They say, 'This is good about this person, however, this problem is...' and it isn't that men lie or distort, it is that their values are very, very different...the women principals often tell me that this person never hands in his report cards on time...they don't do previews...daybooks...all those things that a woman principal will just automatically tell you because it is important to most women. Men principals ...will just say, 'Oh, yes. He is great on the volley-ball team. He has done a lot of fund raising this year and he took the grade sevens to Victoria,' and that is the kind of stuff you get from the male principals, generally speaking."

All of these women found their male colleagues to belong to an 'old boys' network', particularly when these women were in the early years of their principalships. A condescending attitude towards them was prevalent. F.F.1 still finds this condescending attitude from the men who work for the district maintenance department, "Yes, we call them more often and they treat you like a little girl. They sort of say, 'You don't know how to do this...you know these cupboards...there's never going to be an earthquake and they don't need fixing. I mean, none of the men have ever asked for this and the women are becoming hysterical.' So the men really look down on you and they treat you differently. One of the male principals said, 'It's all in how you talk to them.' You know, so it was obviously buddy-buddy."

## **2C. Gender Affects Job Performance - Recent Male Appointees**

All three principals view male principals in their own schools as strong 'father' figures. They view themselves as providing a positive male role-model. R.M.1 says, "...as far as the kids are concerned

you are like a second dad to some of these kids in whose own homelife there is no dad. It's pretty chaotic, so I am getting a lot of kids hugging me..." R.M.2 says, "...occasionally a teacher will send someone to me and they will say, 'I just didn't know what to do and I felt a man should talk to him.'" R.M.3 says, "I do not have a lot of fathers coming to my school, so in one way the perception of men may be less or their expectations or experiences with men have been bad. Conversely, there is a very real need here for strong male models."

R.M.2 believes that he is asked to fix things and perform maintenance jobs because he is a man, "Well, being the only man here, one thing you get called if anything breaks or needs to be lifted or anything needs to be moved. I get called. I am the handy-man." R.M.2 also, "...wonders about some of the discipline things that get sent my way and I wonder if they would send them to me if I was a woman."

## **2D. Gender Affects Job Performance - Recent Female Appointees**

R.F.2 and R.F.3 felt comfortable coming to their schools as female principals. R.F.3 says, "I think the parents...there are some mothers who are just so pleased that there is a female principal in their school..." R.F.2 says, "I have never felt that my gender worked against me or for me, personally...I really haven't felt that I had to work harder because I was a woman or I had to go out and prove something. It was almost as if there was a genderless, neutral kind of scenario as far as I was concerned. It was just me, the person, so people dealt with me as a person, not as a man or a woman."

R.F.1, on the other hand, was keenly aware of her gender when she first came to her school as the principal,

"I guess what I felt the most is when I was given my assignment at the school and they have never had a female principal before. They did have one year with a female vice-principal, and when I knew I was coming here I...wondered how they were going to react to me...because I was a woman...when I came in here I felt like I had to prove myself, maybe men feel that too, I don't know. I think it is a little bit harder for a woman and I have had this discussion with other

male principals...friends of mine, and they don't believe that. They don't understand that I would be at any disadvantage at all. But, they are wrong. Women are at a disadvantage because there is always that doubt on the part of the kids, parents and teachers of whether or not a woman can handle the job. There are still people who think that if you are a woman you are still just not quite strong enough, you are just not quite brave enough or whatever it takes to do the job, and smart enough, too, I suppose..."

R.F.1 says that the physical aspect of the job; carrying things, building and so on, "...is a worry to all women who become principals and they think about principals that they worked with that have done...building in the school...but, they shouldn't worry about that. There are lots of people to do those jobs." In regard to the maintenance aspect of the job, R.F.2 feels, "...a patronizing tone by certain district staff...in more the maintenance facilities...where I have felt being a woman meant something less than it should mean...I have come up with a few situations like that, that have not been pleasant..."

### **3A. Frustrations of the Job - Former Male Appointees**

The most frustrating aspect of the job to all three former male appointees is the lack of control they have over their schools. This includes the rules and regulations of the union contract and for one principal, the Board policies in terms of staffing allocations. All three men feel that critical decision-making power has been taken away from them. They are unhappy with the paperwork involved in justifying the decisions that they do make. The principals feel that too many people are making demands on the resources of their schools and so these men are being stretched in too many directions and are unable to get to the work that they think is important; interacting with children, teachers and parents in positive ways.

F.M.1 articulates his feelings in this way, "I think (the union contract) is important. It's just that when everything is laid out by rules, what you develop is your own little mini-bureaucracy and so what we have are a lot of encumbrances in doing the job...I think another frustration is that there are increased demands on the public school system. We are expected to be a teacher, a surrogate parent, a nurse, the lawyer, the whole bit and...on it goes. What I see right now is a more adversarial role

between, not individual people, but teacher groups and administration..."

F.M.2 reports that,

"...it is really hard to get the feeling that you are in control of where you are going and where the school is headed. I think that sometimes I feel that things are quite out of my control to influence things... The Ministry, the Board, the teachers' union, all of these are external to the school and they all, of course, input these things... staffing is probably the most ideal example to use... we have gone from the point where as principal you had ultimate control over staffing without having to necessarily justify to anyone your choice in trying to build a team... to a point now where we have very elaborate time lines and we have a contract that we must follow very closely... and it seems like every decision you make, not only staffing, there are many, many people who have lots of time to weigh decisions that you made and many of those decisions are made almost at the spur of the moment, not necessarily... because... we make hundreds and hundreds of decisions a day and many of those decisions are reviewed by people who as I say have lots of opportunity to sit down and reflect..."

F.M.3 struggles with the bureaucrats,

"...the bureaucracy that exists, that has just kind of grown up... the staffing formula that gets kicked out from the planning department... of how many district based teachers are going to be assigned... when you deal with a bureaucrat, the bureaucrat says, 'Don't you argue with me, that is what the formula says,' and I say, 'For God's sakes, this formula has to be fitted with real live people, real live teachers and real live kids.'... 'Don't tell me it doesn't fit'... back in the good old bad days... (the superintendent) could be very arbitrary, but he had a good bottom line and that was what was best for schools and kids and that kind of stuff... and he would say, 'You're right. Thank you very much.'"

Although the frustrations expressed by these principals were related to constraints to their authority, each principal's specific frustrations were situationally particularistic to his own school.

### **3B. Frustrations of the Job - Former Female Appointees**

For F.F.1 and F.F.2, the biggest frustration is the loss of control over decisions that affect their schools. F.F.1 views the union contract as most responsible for this loss of control over decision-

making, "The contract is the biggest constraint there is. It is horrendous...because it is getting the people you want...and that is valuable to me; to be able to make decisions and I find there are fewer areas where I can. I care...and I have looked at ways to make myself not care as much, and I can't do that, and it is important to me to have a school operate with certain standards. It is really frustrating for me to have people on my staff who, for one reason or another,...don't measure up..." F.F.2 finds the district policies to be the source of her frustrations, "What is happening is that things are very slow to come out of the Board Office and you aren't sure things are confirmed for you..."

All three principals find the increased demands on their time frustrating. F.F.2 describes these frustrations, "...the number of demands; that teachers need a lot of time...you want to know them and know what they are doing in the classroom as much as possible...it is important to know the kids...and the parents...and all the other junk that is attached to it, and I think the paper work has increased...it is harder for me to find time to wander..." F.F.3 particularly finds the paper work frustrating, "...that blue bag is the biggest killer of this job. It's demoralizing. I really think you have to take a look at the psychological impact of that. If you don't do Monday's, then Thursday's is here already. I hate the paperwork."

F.F.1 finds the job lonely and exhausting, "...that loneliness is bad and just the heavy demands on your time and energy."

All three women have tried to put limits on their jobs. F.F.2 and F.F.3 rarely take work home, even if it means staying later or coming to school earlier. F.F. 3 states, "...I want it done. I don't want to take it home, so I'll come in at 7:00 a.m. and clean my desk and then I can get out into the school." F.F.2 states, "I don't take it home...once in a while where there is something really important,...like a teacher's report, then I will, but other than that I try to pace it."

### **3C. Frustrations of the Job - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.1 and R.M.3 cite lack of support services as the most frustrating aspect of their jobs while R.M.2 cites lack of time. R.M.1 says, "...we identify all kinds of needs for these kids and there is

nothing. Okay, so the kid needs this and there is nobody to do it..." R.M.3 says, "Support Services rank number one. I think it's mismanaged. It's too bureaucratic and it just doesn't serve the kids."

R.M.2 is a teaching principal, "...and that relates to being a teacher and being an administrator. There isn't enough time to do both jobs properly...it was really compounded because when we opened...our school wasn't ready yet. We had carpenters in...and a lot of equipment wasn't there..."

R.M.2 and R.M.3 also cited the union contract as a frustration, but, a secondary one. R.M.2 says, "...some of the contracts and things that come from up-stairs that have to deal with the teachers' contract...class size regulations and all that sort of stuff...it is something that you always have to be aware of when you try and make a decision and not only you have to make a good decision, you have to make sure you stay within the confines of the contract."

### **3D. Frustrations of the Job - Recent Female Appointees**

Each of these women strongly feel frustrations that are different from those of the others. R.F.1 finds the lack of time, due to interruptions, to accomplish all of her tasks to be her greatest source of frustration, "You don't have enough time to do everything. There are so many things all the time and there is such a variety of things that are confronting you...and some days you don't feel that you are getting anything done. You feel that you are always answering the phone or there's somebody to talk to you. You are always at somebody's call."

R.F.2 finds the lack of control over decisions concerning her school to cause her the most frustration,

"One of the most frustrating things is having policies, regulations, decisions made by people away from the school level to which you have not been asked for any input or have given any input, but, you have to implement them...it is not that I feel that the school based administrator should make all the decisions and I don't feel that because I don't think that is efficient. I think there are some decisions that have to be district based and more centralized, but I think that there are some key, key decisions that need your input and one of the

areas would be the S.T.A. contract. And, I know that has changed this year and partly last year where there is more input from administrators, but, some of the clauses which have a direct impact on the school were not created or agreed to by school based administrators, so the implications and the interpretations were not thought of in terms of what would this look like in the school. But, we have to live with it.”

R.F.3 believes that finding her place among the staff is the most frustrating aspect of her job,

“It is really lonely. You know, you always see yourself as yourself, not as the principal, and I...always wonder if I made the expectations and I...also...worry about being too soft, you know. I worry about not being sort of firm enough, not firm enough, but how familiar you get with people and how much do you stay back and that sort of thing...and it’s to know where to draw the line between, because when push comes to shove, you can’t be close friends, because there are things that can happen where you need to take a position, so I find that hard.”

#### **4A. Job Stress - Former Male Appointees**

Only F.M.1 and F.M.2 reported upon job stress. F.M.1 found that as an administrator of a secondary school he had little time for his personal life. He was able to reduce this stress by taking a position as an elementary school principal. He now has more family time, but he feels some stress due to outside demands, “I think that if you talk to most teachers and most educators, they’re care givers and, no matter how good a job we do, we could do, in the eyes of some people, a better job and so I feel we all carry around a fair bit of guilt. I should be doing this or I should be doing that.”

F.M.2 finds the union contract procedures stressful, “I think this situation... I hope it improves and I think it creates a lot of... it is a very stressful situation, it is something that really does not have to be.”

#### **4B. Job Stress - Former Female Appointees**

All three former female appointees find the demands of the job and the lack of personal time for themselves stressful. F.F.1 and F.F.2 live alone and, although they do not have to care for others on a daily basis, they also do not have others to care for them. Both of these women have just begun to

take better care of themselves because they do not want to be in poor health, physically or emotionally, when they retire. F.F.1 says, "...this is the first year I have ever taken sick days and I have never done that before...so I come to school whether I'm sick or not. But this year I did. I have a v.p. who is capable. My health is poor and I need to take care of myself." F.F.2 says she is, "...really working hard to reduce that stress."

F.F.3 finds that having the support of a full-time (no teaching responsibilities) vice-principal helpful in reducing her stress, "I give him a lot of responsibility and I do a lot of talking and sharing...and he wouldn't do anything without checking with me first."

#### **4C. Job Stress - Recent Male Appointees**

All three men cite working with special needs children as the most stressful aspect of their jobs. R.M.1 frequently mentions the negatives his staff and he are continually dealing with, "...the numbers of social problems have increased...and yet the school is trying...I am quite proud of the fact that they offer a lot and we put on a major musical here, an elaborate Sports' Day, field trips, people still work without a lot...but, I think you lose it after a while and I think it is because you are working with so many negatives all the time." R.M.2 describes his experience in trying to get support for one child, "I spent more time worrying about that one child and by worrying I mean being at meetings with people, talking, reading, finding out what's going on, gathering information, than I spent on all of the rest of the kids together. It takes a tremendous amount of time and it is quite stressful." R.M.3 says, "It is a very demanding place; very challenging, very stressful place to spend every single day with these kids and the parents and the kinds of horror stories and the events that happen on Saturday or Sunday evening...and of course, that spills over into the classroom. And dealing with all these agencies I mentioned before...you are dealing with crisis after crisis, no matter how proactive you are. You just cannot anticipate where the next fire is going to be. You are always putting out fires."

#### **4D. Job Stress - Recent Female Appointees**

Other than to describe the frustrations of their jobs, not one of these women commented upon job stress.

#### **5A. Job Satisfaction - Former Male Appointees**

All three men reported being very happy overall with their jobs. F.M.1 says, "I've got a great job... I quite enjoy it." F.M.2 reported, "I wouldn't necessarily want to be doing anything else," and F.M.3 says that he likes the influence he has, "You see, the bottom line for me is kids."

#### **5B. Job-Satisfaction - Former Female Appointees**

In discussing job satisfaction, both F.F.1 and F.F.3 mentioned the stress of the job, the demands of the job and concern about their pensions. The most satisfying aspect of the job for these two women is their effectiveness. F.F.2 feels, "...really good about what I am doing. I feel really effective and what is here is really a good place for kids...parents, for teachers." F.F.1 says,

"There are a lot of good things. The fact that you do have some control of your time...you get to inter-act more with adults and more with children than teachers do. Those...secret things that you can't talk about like sometimes you help people without it going any further and that feels good. The salary has been nice...the money isn't...except for the pension now at this point...the status has never been important..."

F.F.2 feels proud of what she has accomplished at her school, "I feel the building has done a lot of things to be proud of and those are recognized." She also feels tired, "...it is very tiring." F.F.3 feels "good" about her job. She finds it, "...really challenging."

#### **5C. Job Satisfaction - Recent Male Appointees**

While R.M.2 and R.M.3 keenly feel the stresses of the job, overall they are happy with the work they are doing. R.M.2 says, "We want to keep having fun and we have got so far, but, there are still

lots of places to go. We have kids that are in terrible shape.” R.M.2 would like to make a difference in the lives of these children. R.M.3 says, “I feel very happy with what is going on at (his school) and I’m very pleased with the job that I’m doing. However, I pay a high price for it.”

R.M.1 feels, “...discouraged this year...I can’t cover everything. The needs are so great... You don’t get enough time do all the positive things you would like to do...”

## **5D. Job Satisfaction - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women love their jobs and feel proud of their accomplishments. R.F.1 wishes that, “I had started a little earlier because I don’t have that much of my career left...and I am very happy doing what I am doing.”

R.F.2 says, “I am loving it. Last year was a difficult year in the sense that it was my first year in Surrey, and so, the transition...and this year it seemed that most of the pieces of the puzzles have started to fit together and I feel comfortable with myself and the staff feels that way and things are happening...it sounds like utopia and I don’t mean it to be, but, it is really positive.”

R.F.3 feels, “...very excited about the end of this year...for the most part, we have really got a few things accomplished in the two years that I have been here, so, I am pleased.”

## **6A. Future Aspirations - Former Male Appointees**

All three men would be happy to remain elementary school principals in the future. All three are committed to the Surrey School District and plan to remain there.

F.M.1 is going on exchange overseas for two years following the year this data was collected. He will work in some sort of administrative capacity there and he will return to an administrative position in Surrey. The only change he sees in the future is, “I’d be interested in, well, if the district ever moved to a Middle School concept, which is really not likely...I would love to try a Middle School concept.”

F.M.2 reports, "I can't off hand think of any position in the district that I would really enjoy doing as much as I enjoy being a principal...I don't want to say that, 'No, I have no aspirations whatsoever to move out of what I am doing,' because that's not sort of in my history. I seem to have moved about every four or five years into something different throughout my career."

## **6B. Future Aspirations - Former Female Appointees**

All three women are mainly looking forward to retiring. Each principal mentioned moving to at least one more school. All women have to continue to administer schools of 400 or more students so that they will not take a reduction in salary. Although F.F.2 is looking forward to retiring, she has, at this time, eight more years to go and she doesn't rule out changing jobs, perhaps in a different field, before retiring.

F.F.1 would like to move to a school closer to home. She says, "I must maintain a school of 400 or over, so that is about as high as I'll go. I'm hoping they don't give me another school to troubleshoot...I feel that I don't have to battle my last couple of years...I would like to stay...but, the school is going to down-size."

F.F.2 says she is, "...looking in a number of directions." She says, "...assuming that I will knock on the right door, it will be there, so that part is exciting..." If this does not work out then she, "...will probably stay in the district until I retire." She will, "...ask for a transfer next year and go to another school. The reason for that is you stop seeing the forest for the trees and it is time for someone else to do it...it is important for me to go to another building and do the same thing."

F.F.3 plans to, "...go to another school and then after that retire and have your own life."

## **6C. Future Aspirations - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.1, who plans to retire in a few years, would be content to remain at his current school until he retires, "I have only a few more years until I retire." He believes that the elementary school experience has the greatest impact on students, "I think this will make the biggest amount of change

in kids. The kids are here for eight years and if they are on the right track when they leave here, then they usually do pretty well in high school.”

R.M.2 would like to remain at his present school for a few years because, “...we’ve established a lot of things and it’s going to be so much easier next year...” Eventually, he would like to move to, “...another new school because there are some wonderful things about establishing your own sort of tone...and then my goal would probably be to make a larger school work more like our smaller school...”

Only R.M.3 aspires to a senior administration position in the district, “I see myself here for the next couple of years...and I have no desire to be a principal for the rest of my life; working career. I’m looking at a zone directorship or a director of instruction, a Board Office position in some title.”

## **6D. Future Aspirations - Recent Female Appointees**

All three of these women want to stay where they are for the next few years. R.F.1 is, “...the principal of a school with 380 students...and I would be quite content to just stay here until I retire.” Beyond the next year, R.F.2 does not know what she will do, “I am going to take it a year at a time. I really am...there are a lot of needs and desires and wishes, things that I have put on the back burner that I really want to explore and do something about...it is time for me...” R.F.3 would like to, “...stay here for five years, if they would give it to me...and then do something else. I don’t know what. I will think about it in the next couple of years.”

## **II: Career Paths**

### **1A. Motivation to Become a Principal - Former Male Appointees**

Early in his teaching career, F.M.1 thought about becoming a principal. He knew that in order to advance up the hierarchical ladder he would have to complete a Master’s degree and so he began

work on it after his second year of teaching. His motivation came, in part, from the fact that several of his colleagues were also pursuing Master's degrees at the time he was thinking of doing so. "By my second year of teaching, I was now into a Master's program...just starting simply because, through the people that were there were encouraging and were saying, 'Well, this is probably one of the best decisions,'" reports F.M.1.

F.M.2 and F.M.3 did not think of becoming principals until they had some experiences as district helping teachers. As helping teachers they assumed leadership responsibilities which motivated them to continue their careers in leadership capacities. F.M.3 describes his experience, "...so I was that (helping teacher) for a year, and through that year I learned a whole bunch about schools and how they operated, the big picture, and oh, man. I'll tell you, the principal has an amazing influence on schools...the principal really is the pivotal point of everything in the school. They set the tone, they set the vision, they set the attitude. It is all done by the principal..."

F.M.2 wanted a leadership role with a home base, "I've had an opportunity as a helping teacher to sort of not have a home base and that was fine for a year or so, but, I found that I wasn't really that comfortable with that. I much preferred to, in fact, have a home base, and have a regular group of people that you work with."

F.M.2 and F.M.3 were already in vice-principal positions when they began work on their Master's. F.M.2 finished his Master's degree, "...about six months after," his first principal appointment. F.M.3 reported, "...when I was a vice-principal, there was this little part of the hiring process that says you are either in a Master's program or you are committed to taking the Master's program."

## **1B. Motivation to Become a Principal - Former Female Appointees**

When these three women began their careers as teachers, none of them thought about becoming principals. F.F.2 and F.F.3, two of the first female principals in the district, decided to apply for administrative positions because they were performing jobs that carried much administrative responsibility. F.F.2 was a school counsellor and, "...found that frustrating because you didn't have

control of the decision that could be made, knowing that there were some decisions that should have been about kids, either discipline or whatever, or issues with teachers where decisions could have been made differently, and, as a counsellor, you were a facilitator and I applied for administration...” F.F.3 thought, “...the role of the Reading Teacher was one of administrative leadership because I was a consultant at most of my schools. I worked closely with the administrators to plan and oversee the programs. So, I decided to apply.”

F.F.1 was encouraged to apply for administration by her principal when she was a classroom teacher, “...within a couple of years of being a teacher...the principal in my school approached me and he said, ‘You should be in administration. You have a whole lot of organization ability and you’re a good teacher.’” Many years later, after she had been a vice-principal for seven years, F.F.1 thought, “I would be good as a principal and these are my values and it’s time and I’m ready.”

All three women became principals because they cared about schools and children. They thought they could do at least as good a job as the male principals with whom they had worked. All three women began their Master's degrees after deciding to become principals so that they would have the appropriate qualifications. All three women completed their Master's degrees after receiving their principalships.

### **1C. Motivation to Become a Principal - Recent Male Appointees**

Although R.M.1 worked on his Master's program during his classroom teaching career, he did not consider the principalship until the assistant to the principal at the school in which he was teaching retired and that assistant principal suggested to R.M.1 that he apply for the job. R.M.1 decided to do it, “...and at that time you had to get the staff to agree and, no problem. So I started there for a year.” R.M.1 then moved from assistant to the principal into a full vice-principalship. He was a vice-principal for several years, “...and then people said I should try and put my name in for a principalship. So again, I went down for an interview and didn't make it the first year, but the second year I was successful.” R.M.1 was drawn to the principalship because he viewed his strengths as

administrative in that he likes to, "...encourage people and work with people, to get funding, to do all the other stuff to get things happening..."

R.M.2 wanted to become a principal because he could not see himself, "...teaching grade five for the next twenty-two years...", and because he recognized, "...some of my talent and abilities that said why don't you do it? You have something to offer, something to contribute..." R.M.2 was also influenced by the encouragement of a previous principal who, "...recognized some strengths that I may have had, because it wasn't really a goal of mine to be a principal." After R.M.2 was offered an assistant to the principal position, which he accepted, he began to seriously plan to become an administrator. R.M.2 states, "It started me in that area and then after I was assistant to the principal and quite enjoyed working with other teachers and having served more influence over something and finding that I was pretty good, at least, I thought so, and being encouraged by other people, I had decided to finish my degree off as soon as I could and then I decided that I should finish my Master's off and so I finished that off in record time..."

Six years after R.M.3 began teaching, he was offered an acting vice-principalship to finish off the year at his school. This experience was the one that made him decide to actively pursue the principalship, "...it is a huge difference to one's salary, so that definitely caught my eye and all the organizational skills that you have to bear in terms of inter-murals and the teacher's executive..." R.M.3 then enrolled in a Master's program because he realized that, "...the district itself had a great many Master's degrees within it, so there is a lot of peer pressure if you like, a lot of status in that district, to have your Master's degree. There was sort of unspoken expectations, certainly, for any administrative positions. They short-list these people who have their Master's and the people who don't...don't call us, we'll call you." R.M.3 was drawn to the principalship by, "The whole notion of making a difference school wide. I know I had made a difference with my kids in terms of being a teacher. I knew I had made a difference in a school as a vice-principal...you know you have made a difference for the kids...and you realize; hey, I can make a difference...who makes the most difference in terms of school? My perception at that time was the principal, of course...he or she

makes the decisions basically...has the buck stop here, things tacked to their door. So, I wanted to do that. I also could not see myself teaching grade seven until I was fifty-five..."

## **1D. Motivation to Become a Principal - Recent Female Appointees**

All three of these women were motivated to become principals because they were looking for something different and challenging in their careers. They all said that they enjoyed teaching and found that challenging, but, the challenge of a different focus to their jobs appealed to them. R.F.1 describes her reasons as, "...as a teacher I did a lot of things in my school that were leadership jobs. I mean, I did a lot of organizing. I just did a lot of things...I enjoyed doing it...when I looked at continuing to be in the classroom, that was okay, because I really liked teaching and I found it challenging and very interesting, but, I thought I would like to do something more. This is different and I guess more of a challenge..."

R.F.2 gets bored quickly, "...and so after two or three years of doing something, I want another challenge and not that, when you are teaching there are all kinds of challenges, but, I wanted something totally different...I guess I felt I could...make more of a difference with a greater number of children than just in my classroom, so I guess, if anything, that was the motivator."

R.F.3 wanted to prove to herself that she could do it, "I think we are all motivated by, 'Am I good enough? Is this something I can really do?', that whole self-esteem part of it and, you do get a good sense of self-esteem by, 'I can do it. I am good enough.' I like change. I like doing things that are really different."

## **2A. Background - Former Male Appointees**

All three men were born and raised in the Lower Mainland. F.M.1 and F.M.2 went directly to university from high school and then began teaching upon graduating from university. F.M.2 completed a four year, elementary degree, while F.M.1 completed five years as preparation to teach

high school. F.M.2 completed a fifth year of university while teaching and before becoming an administrator.

F.M.3 completed one year of university right after high school and then took several years off and worked at a variety of jobs, none of which he really enjoyed. He got married and then went back to university to complete a degree in Education.

## **2B. Background - Former Female Appointees**

F.F.1 and F.F.3 were raised in the Lower Mainland, while F.F.2 is an American from the East. F.F.1 has only worked in Surrey whereas F.F.2 has worked in Eastern Canada and a suburban district of the Lower Mainland, as well as in Surrey. F.F.3 taught in the interior of British Columbia and in several Lower Mainland districts before coming to Surrey. Both F.F.2 and F.F.3 have worked in high schools and elementary schools. F.F.2 worked at an Eastern University, teaching emotionally disturbed children and continued in that field at a school for emotionally disturbed children in the Lower Mainland. She then worked in Surrey as an elementary school counsellor for several years before becoming a vice-principal of a high school. She moved from a high school vice-principalship to an elementary school principalship. F.F.3 first taught at a high school. She then became a pre-school teacher because her children were young and she was involved in their pre-school. She then returned to teaching high school. Wanting to work part-time, she took a Library and Reading teaching job. Eventually, F.F.3 came to the Surrey School District as a Reading Teacher. From that job, F.F.3 moved straight into administration as an elementary school principal. F.F.1 taught elementary school, became an elementary school vice-principal and eventually a principal. Her entire career has been spent in Surrey.

All three women went to University directly from high school. F.F.1 did not complete her degree as she was able to begin teaching after two years of university. While teaching, F.F.1 returned to university to complete her degree and then continued on to obtain her fifth year. She had to then take a break for a few years as studying was taking too much time away from her young children. When her

children were older, she returned to university to complete her Master's degree, having by this time decided to apply for administration. F.F.3 completed a Bachelor's degree and a fifth year of Education right after high school. She did not return to university until she decided to become a principal. F.F.2 was able to get a Bachelor's of Science at the same time as she got her teaching degree. She, also, completed this work right after high school. It was not until she received her vice-principal's appointment that F.F.2 started working on her Master's degree.

## **2C. Background - Recent Male Appointees**

All three recent male appointees were born and raised in the Lower Mainland and all of these men went to university right after completing high school. R.M.1 completed a university degree before accepting his first teaching position while R.M.2 and R.M.3 did not. R.M.2 took the next eleven years to complete his degree because he was teaching full time while accomplishing this goal. R.M.3 quickly finished his degree three years after he began teaching, working on his courses at nights and during the summers. R.M.1 quit teaching after one year to return to university to complete his fifth year. He then resumed teaching the next year. All three men began teaching upon leaving university and have been working in the field of Education ever since.

R.M.1 worked on his Master's degree without thought of becoming an administrator while R.M.2 and R.M.3 obtained their Master's' degrees as qualifications for administrative positions.

## **2D. Background - Recent Female Appointees**

R.F.1, who was born and raised in the Lower Mainland, went to university right after graduating from high school. After two years of university, she began teaching in Surrey and taught for a few years. She then met and married her husband. After her marriage, she continued to teach for one more year and then resigned to stay home and raise her family. Many years later, when her children were in the upper intermediate grades, R.F.1 resumed teaching on a part-time basis in Surrey.

R.F.2 was also born and raised in the Lower Mainland. Her kindergarten to grade twelve education took place in a private school. After graduation, she too, attended university for two years and then began teaching in a Lower Mainland school district other than Surrey. Her first experience with the public school system was when she did her practicum and she found her first teaching experience as a full-fledged teacher to be an uncomfortable experience. She liked the children, but found the staff to be old and set in their ways. She resigned after one year of teaching. For the next two and half years she did other things and then she decided to try teaching in the public school system again. After one and half years of teaching, she again resigned and travelled for a year. Then she obtained a teaching job again in a large metropolitan district and taught there in various capacities until she applied for and received her principalship in Surrey.

R.F.3 was born and raised in Eastern Canada. She, too, went to university right after high school, but she did not take Education courses as she did not think of becoming a teacher at that time. After getting her degree, R.F.3 could not get a job, so she went to Teachers' College and got a teaching certificate. At that time she married and soon after she got her first teaching job, she became pregnant. For the next many years she taught off and on, at times staying home to be with her children. Eventually, her marriage ended and her children were older, so R.F.3 came to British Columbia to look for a teaching job. She worked in two different Lower Mainland districts before coming to Surrey as a principal.

### **3A. Road to the Principalship - Former Male Appointees**

F.M.1 became an administrator early in his career. He taught for four years, became a high school vice-principal, a secondary principal and then an elementary principal. F.M.2 and F.M.3 taught for six years each and then were asked to become district helping teachers. Neither man actively sought the position. F.M.2 was a Language Arts Helping Teacher while F.M.3 was a Physical Education Helping Teacher. Both men then became interested in administration, spoke to individual principals about how to become vice-principals, received the positions and eventually became elementary school principals.

### **3B. Road to the Principalship - Former Female Appointees**

After F.F.1 had been teaching for several years, she was approached by the Social Studies Helping Teacher and asked to work on curriculum development. She continued teaching full-time and did this work on the side, writing curriculum materials and putting on workshops for teachers in the district. Then, the principal of F.F.1's school, "...was demoted and I became head teacher the following year and then I became a vice-principal. I was a vice-principal for seven years and I wasn't interested in being a principal. Then in my seventh year I put my name in and I was working on my Master's at the time and the date came for the shortlisting." F.F.1 was short-listed and appointed a principal that year.

F.F.2 first taught in a private school in the East for one year. Then she worked at an Eastern University, teaching emotionally disturbed children. For personal reasons, F.F.2 then moved to British Columbia and worked in an institution for emotionally disturbed children. Next, she moved to Surrey and worked as an elementary school counsellor. F.F.2 then applied for and received an appointment as a junior high school vice-principal. Two years later, F.F.2 applied for and received an elementary school principalship.

F.F.3 began her career by teaching high school English in a Lower Mainland school. Then she moved, with her family, to a coastal school district in this province, having resigned her position as an English teacher. There, instead of teaching, she began her family. They moved back to the Lower Mainland and F.F.3 was rehired in her old district as a high school Social Studies teacher. One year later the family moved to the interior of British Columbia and F.F.3 worked, "...part-time as the principal's relief because there were no secondary part-time positions and we had young children." Next, still in the interior, F.F.3 ran a pre-school. The family then moved back to the Lower Mainland and F.F.3 took a part-time Library and Reading Teacher job. She then took courses in Reading Education towards her sixth year. An opportunity then presented itself for F.F.3 to become a Reading Teacher in Surrey. The year after she accepted that job, she applied for and received a principalship. She was never a vice-principal.

### 3C. Road to the Principalship - Recent Male Appointees

All of these men worked in Lower Mainland School Districts other than Surrey prior to receiving administrative appointments in Surrey. R.M.2 also taught in a school district in the interior of the province before coming south.

R.M.1 began his teaching career in a large metropolitan school district. He was a classroom teacher for many years, during which time he taught in England for one year on a teacher exchange program. After his return from England, he was, "...at X School. They had an assistant to the principal, sort of one step below the vice-principal. It didn't pay much and the person who had been doing the job was retiring...so I started there for a year...and then I got accepted into the vice-principal training program...so, I missed the first round of that, so the next year, I made it as a vice-principal." Several years later, R.M.1 applied for a principalship and was successful. He then applied for a principalship in Surrey a few years later and was successful.

After three and a half years of university training, R.M.2 accepted a teaching position in the interior, where his parents were living at the time. After four years in the interior, R.M.2 decided to resume his course-work in order to complete his degree and he met his future wife, who lived in the Lower Mainland. He then transferred to a Lower Mainland district and continued teaching while he worked to complete his degree. He says,

"At that time they had assistant to the principal in schools in (his district) which was basically vice-principal, but, you didn't go through the same application process...you got an allowance, but no relief teaching time...so, when I finished my Master's degree, I was still assistant to the principal and I...applied to be a vice-principal because you get more money,...and I was not successful for probably a couple of years...so I gave up my assistant to the principal and went to P.E.I. for a year on exchange and came back and was just a regular teacher and then applied and the next round got the vice-principal job...so I was the vice-principal in a school...and felt there were not that many opportunities...even then...and so I applied and came here and was the vice-principal...For two years there and then applied and got the principalship."

R.M.3 taught in one school for six years upon leaving university. He was then appointed acting vice-principal in that school for the last two months of the school year. He then changed schools and

went to another school as assistant to the principal because his principal changed schools and asked R.M.3 to come with him as his assistant. R.M.3 was,

- "...an assistant to the principal for my second year, so for my...first year it was an appointment, second year I had to fight for it and so through the short-list and interview...A head teachership had come up in a small school, about 100 students. There is a principal in the main school about ten miles away,...so I talked to the principal about that. I talked to district staff and said in terms of the lines, divisional and experience, does an assistantship carry more clout on a resumé or should I look and apply for a head teachership? The word came down to me that as head teacher you are in charge of the whole school if there is no principal on site. You are it; you are making these kind of decisions, you have your own office...apply for it. So I did and I was accepted. While I was head teacher, I finished my Master's degree. Then a vice-principalship came up in the district. I applied for that and I was accepted there and I was a vice-principal in the district for three years and then I came to Surrey as a principal."

### **3D. Road to the Principalship - Recent Female Appointees**

R.F.1 was a classroom teacher for, "...eighteen years and then I applied for administration and went back and got my Master's degree and then decided I would like to be an administrator." During her teaching career, she took courses to complete her Bachelor's of Education Degree and then completed a fifth year. She enrolled in the Master's program to fulfil the qualification to become an administrator. After R.F.1 had been teaching in the same school for about thirteen years, she was appointed acting vice-principal while the regular vice-principal was on long term sick leave. The following year R.F.1 applied for and received a vice-principal appointment. She then moved to her new school and remained there as a vice-principal for three years. During her third year as a vice-principal, R.F.1 applied for and received her principalship.

Once R.F.2 resumed teaching permanently, she began taking courses to complete her degree. At the same time she changed her teaching assignments frequently performing such jobs as teaching a K-7 Physical Education program and teaching English as a Second Language. She,

"...did all the workshops for Physical Education...being a consultant was the next thing...I wanted to work with adults." Then R.F.2 began

a Master's program, "...which didn't have anything to do with administration to begin with...then I switched over...I had made a decision...I (applied for administration) a number of times, I think twice. I was short-listed each time I applied...it was three times before I got the consultant position and the third time I got it and twice before I got the vice-principalship...there were some issues there that involved women in power..."

R.F.2 did not think she would be successful in her bid for the principalship in her former district as the same opportunities were not there for women as in Surrey, so she decided to apply to Surrey and was successful.

R.F.3 began teaching in one Lower Mainland district when she came to British Columbia. Soon she was a Co-ordinator in that district. After two years as a Co-ordinator, R.F.3 decided she wanted to become a vice-principal so she applied to another Lower Mainland district and was successful. She had started her Master's program just prior to her appointment as a vice-principal as a qualification for the position. After two years as a vice-principal, R.F.3 applied to Surrey for a principalship and was successful once again. She completed her Master's degree at the end of her first year as principal.

#### **4A. Vice-Principal Selection Procedures - Former Male Appointees**

All three former male appointees were selected as vice-principals by individual school principals.

F.M.3's experience represents the experience of all three men,

"We were talking about this and that stuff and I said, 'How do you get into this administration stuff? I think it would be kind of interesting.' He said, 'Oh, are you interested?' and I said, 'Well, yes, I think I am.' He said, 'Come into my office,' and so we went into his office and had a full blown interview. He interviewed four or five other people as well. In those days it was up to the principal who hired the vice-principal, as long as they were a teacher in the district...the principal could choose...and then he came to me and said, 'I am going to recommend you to the Board that you be hired as vice-principal for this school,' and I was."

#### **4B. Vice-Principal Selection Procedures - Former Female Appointees**

F.F.1 was, "...tapped ." She explains, "You got a call from the Board Office and they asked if you would be interested and if you said, 'Yes,' then they just placed you. F.F.1 had been, however, a head teacher the previous year. She had also been asked to assume that position.

F.F.3 never was a vice-principal and F.F.2 was, "...interviewed by the school principal," and hired for his school, by him.

#### **4C. Vice-Principal Selection Procedures - Recent Male Appointees**

In the district in which R.M.1 was teaching, aspiring vice-principals must apply for and be accepted into a vice-principal training program before they can formally apply for a vice-principalship. Once they are in the program, they submit an application and resumé with supporting documents and references. The applications are reviewed by senior district administrators and then a number of applicants are short-listed. The short-listed applicants go through a formal interview process with senior administrators. From those short-listed, a number are appointed to vice-principal positions and then these people are placed in schools.

R.M.2 and R.M.3 both came to Surrey from the same school district. In their previous district, assistant to the principal positions are achieved through procurement by the school principal. In some cases, applicants must go through an application, short-list and interview procedure. Vice-Principal positions must be formally applied for in the same way that the process takes place in R.M.1's district.

All three men had to formally apply for the position, be short-listed and interviewed before receiving their vice-principal appointments.

#### **4D. Vice-Principal Appointment Procedures - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women actively sought the vice-principalship. They had to proceed through a formal process of application, including resumé, documentation of expertise and references. They were then short-listed and interviewed at the Board Office of each district in which they received their

appointments. R.F.1 and R.F.2 applied more than one time before receiving their appointments, while R.F.3 received her appointment the first time she applied. Only R.F.1 was a vice-principal in Surrey.

## **5A. Principal Selection Procedures - Former Male Appointees**

All three former male appointees had to formally apply for a principalship. One of the qualifications required was that the applicant be working towards or possess a Master's degree. The field of study did not matter. The applicants were short-listed to those who would be interviewed. F.M.1 states, "One had to submit a resumé, go through an interview procedure...The team involved the parents, the school Trustees and I think there were five of us who were short-listed. The Superintendent was there but didn't have a vote. Now what influence he had, I'm not sure." F.M.2's experience was slightly different, "...it was in an upstairs room (at the Board Office) and that is when the superintendents started interviewing along with one board member, one C.U.P.I. member, one S.T.A. member and three assistant superintendents."

## **5B. Principal Selection Procedures - Former Female Appointees**

All three women had to actively seek the principalship. They applied, were short-listed and then interviewed by a panel. Then they were appointed. F.F.3 had this experience, "The whole Board met at the Board Office at the huge board table. There was a parent from the school and a teacher interviewing, as well as the superintendent, and the questions were asked. I was selected." F.F.3 was interviewed and selected for a specific school, not to the district in general.

F.F.2 describes her experience in this way, "To become a principal in this district you were interviewed by the Board and I got two interviews prior to the successful interview. Two where I was not successful. I was short-listed, but, not successful and I think you have to do a fair amount of pushing." F.F.1's experience was similar in that she submitted an application several times before she was short-listed. When she was finally short-listed, however, she received the appointment. She was interviewed by the Board. F.F.2 and F.F.1 were hired to the district in general and then placed in a school.

## **5C. Principal Selection Procedures - Recent Male and Recent Female Appointees**

Both groups of principals went through the same process to become Surrey principals. They submitted applications including documentation and references. They were then short-listed and interviewed. The interviews took place at the Board Office with a panel consisting of one or more: School Trustees, senior administrators, and principals. They were then selected and hired to the district. Later, they were placed in a school and this placement was at the discretion of senior administrators. All of these principals actively sought the principalship.

## **6A. Role Model/Mentor - Former Male Appointees**

One high school teacher is cited by F.M.1 as influencing him to pursue a teaching career. After F.M.1 became a teacher, this high school teacher had become an administrator which motivated F.M.1 to become one, also.

Two helping teachers were cited by F.M.2 as influencing him to become a helping teacher. One principal with whom F.M.2 worked closely as a helping teacher was influential in directing F.M.2 to the principalship.

Although many people have made powerful impressions upon F.M.3, "The most influential, I would say, is my wife...professionally speaking, personally speaking, emotionally speaking..."

## **6B. Role-Model/Mentor - Former Female Appointees**

F.F.2 and F.F.3 did not have encouragement from fellow educators. They both decided by themselves that they would be good principals; that they could do the job and went after it. F.F.3 did, however, have the support and encouragement of her husband, "I thought, 'I could do that.' My husband said, 'Absolutely. Go for it,' and I got the position."

F.F.1 did have encouragement from fellow educators. Her first principal strongly encouraged her as did the Helping Teachers with whom she worked. She also had strong encouragement from the

superintendent of that time, "I guess (the superintendent) was the one who drove me to it...All through my career (Helping Teacher) was there. She was a role model...somebody I wanted to be like and she always encouraged me."

## **6C. Role Model/Mentor - Recent Male Appointees**

Former principals with whom these men worked were cited by them as influential to their decisions to become principals. R.M.1 also mentions a former girl friend, whose father was a superintendent in another province, as strongly influencing R.M.1 to seek the principalship.

R.M.2's most powerful role model was one previous principal, "I said to myself, if I get to be a principal, I want to carry myself as a gentleman, as an honourable person in all aspects of my life, and be fair...and he became a bit of a mentor for me because by that time he arranged...I had about an hour off a day and we used to probably spend a half an hour a day just talking...and it was often not education related...but this person was a whole person. He wasn't just...eat, breath and sleep school, which is what some of my principals did...so that had an effect on me."

R.M.3 says, "Every single principal that I worked with was a Master in their field. I was so fortunate; every school. They were so good as a model...so open...They were so much an advocate for the administrative team whether I was an administrator or a grade seven teacher..."

## **6D. Role/Model Mentor - Recent Female Appointees**

All of these women cite only one significant mentor who encouraged them to pursue the principalship. R.F.1 and R.F.3 named their partners as influencing their decisions. "...my husband because he's a principal. He is retired now, but, everything he did as a principal...he was very good at his job and I guess the way it affects me is that...in a way I tried to do some of the things I knew he did," says R.F.1. R.F.3 says, "I certainly had somebody who helped me a lot and that goes back to the man I live with...he gave me the confidence to say, 'Yes, you can do this.'"

R.F.2 points to a former superior, "...there is one person who is just retiring now, who is probably the most instrumental...and I worked with him when I was at the School Board as a consultant. We were in the same areas as we have here and he was the Area Superintendent."

## **7A. Family Life - Former Male Appointees**

All of these men married in their early twenties and were still married to their first wives at the time of data collection. F.M.2 and F.M.3 taught for several years and then had children. Their children were born prior to these two men becoming administrators. F.M.1 did not have children until much later in his career and after he became an administrator. All three men reported stable, happy home lives.

## **7B. Family Life - Former Female Appointees**

Of the three women, only F.F.3 was still married to her first husband at the time of data collection. F.F.3's family has been a top priority for her, "I want to look after my own personal growth which has been on hold for a lot of years. Looking after my children, my husband, my school. Now I am trying to put a balance into that. Now I am putting myself higher up the ladder."

F.F.2, an American, married a Canadian at an early age and moved to Canada, but, that marriage, did not last long. F.F.2 never had children or remarried. At the time of data collection, she was living alone. F.F.1 also married very early in her career. She had two daughters soon after her marriage, but, continued working through most of her adult life. F.F.1 has never remarried and although she raised her children as a single parent, they are now grown and she, too, lives alone.

## **7C. Family Life - Recent Male Appointees**

R.M.3 married the summer before he began his first teaching assignment, but put off having a family until after he had completed his degree. At the time of data collection he had two school-age children. Of his family life, R.M.3 says, "...a very supportive wife. Obviously, she was not working

at the time (while R.M.3 was completing his Master's). We had made a very conscious decision that she stay home and be with the children for the first five years of their lives...So, it was a difficult time, a very difficult time." R.M.3 has found that his present assignment has put a strain on his family life, "It is just too; I just can't create that kind of understanding with my family. You have to live (his school) to understand it...It's a major concern with me...I've paid a high price."

R.M.2 had been teaching for several years before he married. R.M.2 and his wife waited a long time before starting their family and at the time of data collection they had one young daughter. His wife was working part-time from their home so that she could look after their child. Their daughter was born the year before R.M.2 received his vice-principal appointment.

R.M.1 married at the age of thirty-nine. His children were born while he was serving as a vice-principal. His wife does not work outside the home and R.M.1 tries to spend as much time with his young family as he is able.

## **7D. Family Life - Recent Female Appointees**

R.F.2 and R.F.3 married in their twenties, but, are now divorced. R.F.2 has, "...one child and he is seventeen." At the time of data collection she was living alone. R.F.3 was living with someone and she had two grown children. R.F.2 and R.F.3 raised their children as single parents while pursuing their education and careers. R.F.1 also married very early in her teaching career and she was still married to her first husband at the time of data collection. They had two children soon after their marriage and R.F.1 stayed home with her children until the youngest one was in the intermediate grades before resuming her teaching career.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS

### THEME ONE: PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS

#### I. The Values of the School Principal

Of all the groups, the former male appointees have been principals for the longest period of time and teachers for the shortest period of time. More than any other group of principals, these men mention valuing control over school-based decisions and cite the union contract as the biggest threat to their authority. These men value their ability to set the direction for the school and control teacher behaviour in addition to traditional school values such as respect, courtesy, academic achievement and stability. They value staff members who fit their molds and work as a team.

Former female appointees value control over everyday events in their schools. They value high academic standards, efficient and purposeful schools and they expressed concern for the emotional well-being of the members of their schools. F.F.3 mentions the importance of 'working relationships' with and among staff members. All of these women cite fairness as important to them. Recent female appointees expressed the same concerns as former female appointees for high standards and expectations of staff and students. Both groups of women value being knowledgeable and fair. They feel a great sense of responsibility for their schools.

R.M.1 was concerned with the amount of control he was able to exert in his school. While he was more concerned with control over decision-making, R.M.2 and R.M.3 said valuing teachers and children was important to them. These two men value team-work, collaborative decision-making and being able to provide support for students and teachers.

## **II. The Purpose of the School Principal**

Across the board, all principals believe the purpose of the school principal is to provide direction and ensure that school goals are met. Former male principals, recent male principals and recent female principals spoke of collaboration, facilitating, building a team, and valuing people. Only former female appointees openly spoke of their role as the boss. This group of principals clearly view the role as molding, shaping, regulating and monitoring teacher behaviour in order to best run the most effective and efficient schools. Positional power seems to be used by these women out of concern for the quality of education being delivered in their schools.

## **III. The Importance of the School**

As each administrator administers a unique school, the focus for each principal is situational to the specific needs of his/her school. All of the principals believe it is important for their schools to be viewed as effective in providing the best educational opportunities possible under existing conditions. Some principals administer specialty schools, others administer schools with predominantly needy children and still others administer middle class public schools. Whatever the type of school, community and district endorsement and recognition of a well-done job is what matters to all groups of principals.

Although the composition and the values of the community are considered, the principal, rather than the community, dictates what will be valued in the school. Agreement that academics are the most important aspect of schooling was found among former and recent female appointees. F.M.1 views a quality education as most important and R.M.1 views being known as an effective school as important. All other male principals view parent and community involvement as most important.

## **IV. Outside Constraints**

Former male, former female and recent male appointees would prefer that there not be a teachers' union contract because it decreases these principals' discretionary power. All former and recent male

appointees regard the contract as infringing on their abilities to perform their jobs. While all of the male principals, except R.M.2, do not have difficulty with district policies, the contract is viewed as a threat to their power and control over their schools. All recent female appointees respect the contract and do not view it as a threat to their power. R.F.3, in fact, regards the contract as a 'useful tool to guide behaviour and decision-making'. Recent female appointees work within the guidelines of the contract as much as possible. If they have to work around the contract, the belief these women hold in the rightness of their actions permits them to take the challenge.

F.F.2, R.M.2 and R.F.2 find district policies more frustrating than the contract because they limit the power and control these principals can exert in their schools to a greater extent than the contract.

Former female appointees do not like the union contract, but, F.F.2 and F.F.3 have developed enough self-confidence and belief in their decisions to permit these principals to work around the contract, if necessary.

## **Discussion**

The moral dilemmas these Surrey principals faced at the time of data collection were the conflicts that arose between what was educationally right and sound for the students served by these principals, and what was in the best interests of their staffs via the union contract. In cases where what was good for children or the school as a whole conflicted with teachers' working conditions, across the board, all principals' primary concern was with the children or school as a whole. In this regard, no differences in moral reasoning were found among the twelve principals interviewed.

Former male and former female appointees seemed to value strong, singular leadership. All of these principals, while endorsing team-work, collaboration and working relationships, were prepared to make final, unilateral decisions, if necessary. Both groups of principals expressed the need to be in control of their schools.

Recent male and female appointees seemed more disposed to shared leadership, although each of these principals would make the final decision, if necessary. Words such as facilitating, collaborating,

team-work and providing support were used more frequently by these two groups of principals. Psychologically, then, it can be inferred that recent appointees operate from a greater need for affiliation than do former appointees.

As a group, the male appointees (former and recent) viewed the contract as a threat to their authority or positional power while, as a group, female appointees did not feel threatened by the contract. Rather than viewing outside constraints as eroding their authority, these constraints were viewed by women as interfering with their abilities to carry out their responsibilities of ensuring that students received the best possible education. Women, asserts Noddings (1984), have always been concerned with relations and caring and so, not surprisingly, women from both groups described themselves as caring.

These findings suggest that although both male and female principals behave in similar ways, psychologically, men operate from a predominantly rights orientation, where concern with autonomous decision-making supersedes concern with relationships. Women operate from a predominantly response orientation, where their need for control stems from concern with taking care of their schools. These findings lend support to Gilligan's 1982 findings on abortion dilemmas.

Former female appointees holding similar values, stemming from differing needs, to their male colleagues regarding the notion of control in their schools, gained their principalships at a time when men defined the role of the elementary school principal in Surrey. The only model these women had for the role was the male principal. Recent male and female appointees gained their principalships at a time when many women were principals in Surrey and when research was suggesting that effective schools include softer images that diverge from the masculine stereotype of leadership (Lightfoot, 1983).

The most significant difference between same sex groups occurred within the group of male principals. Former male principals, when asked about their values, did not speak of providing support, facilitating and collaborating to the same extent as did recent male appointees.

The conceptual shift in thinking of the principal as the 'manager' or authoritative boss in schools to viewing the principal as the visionary leader, school role-model and facilitator which has taken place over the last twenty-some years could account for the differing values of the two groups of male principals. Former male appointees operate from a value system principals have traditionally held. Recent male appointees, who trained and competed with women for their positions in an era where cooperative and collaborative values were favoured, appear to hold a more feminine construct of morality (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; and Noddings, 1984) than former male appointees.

Whether or not, as a group, recent male appointees are beginning to adopt more of a response orientation is a subject for future research, employing a larger subject sample.

All of the principals interviewed would exercise discretion in decision-making in cases where the best interests of the school as a whole or the children were involved. While gender does not appear to be a factor in the exercise of discretion, it does appear to make a difference in the psychological reasoning used to exercise discretion.

## **THEME TWO: DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

### **I. Professional Decision-Making Processes**

#### **1. Opportunities to Make Staffing Decisions**

Former male and former female appointees have had many opportunities to hire staff both before and after the contract came into effect. All of these principals report having more opportunities to hire staff they personally wanted in their schools prior to the contract. Former male principals, in particular, expressed nostalgia for the good old days when they were able to exercise substantial discretion in hiring, limited only by consideration of human rights. All of these appointees mentioned the restrictions of the seniority clause in the contract. Former male principals, more than former female principals, although frustrated by the constraint, seem to follow the guidelines of the contract. All former female

appointees said that they hire the most suitable candidate regardless of seniority. F.F.2 and F.F.3 do not worry about being challenged by this action because they base their decisions on defensible rationales and are prepared to defend their choices if they must. F.F.1, while following the same course of action as the other two women, feels stress and anxiety when not hiring the most senior, although she has never had her decision challenged.

All recent appointees have never had opportunities to hire outside the restrictions of the contract. Both groups of appointees have had limited hiring experiences as they are in their first or second years of their principalships. All of the recent appointees, except R.M.2, came to established schools. R.F.3 had the greatest flexibility in hiring as there was a large turnover in staff when she first assumed her position and so she was able to interview and hire several staff members. Because she administers a specialty school, she was able to look at suitability as a first concern. Her selection pool was small, however, so that inherently limited her choice.

R.M.2, opening a new school in his first year as a principal, was able to hire five teachers. He worked within the guidelines of the contract and found that he was satisfied with the results. He had three teachers come to his school as forced transfers which caused him distress because it took away his control over selection.

Only former male and female appointees have had the unconstrained experiences of hiring people that they personally desired to work in their schools and they experienced that use of professional discretion prior to the formation of the teachers' union contract.

## **2. Staffing Decisions**

Across the board, fairness was the primary consideration of all principals for internal reassignments. Working out the following year's class organizations is a major, time-consuming task that all principals perform in the spring. This task can become emotionally draining for principals whose schools are downsizing, forcing teachers to leave the school as forced transfers. When more than one teacher desires

the same position or classroom, the situation also has the potential to become problematic for these principals.

All former male and female appointees, R.M.1, R.M.2, R.F.2 and R.F.3 work through an elaborate process for internal reassignments. They either meet with each teacher separately to determine assignment preferences or these principals ask for teacher preferences in writing within a specified time-frame, usually including first, second and third choices. While each of these principals works with his or her staff to ensure that each teacher gets their first choice preference where possible, each principal is also prepared to make the final decision if teachers wanting the same position or classroom cannot agree or if one teacher wanting a particular position is not the most suitable. All of the principals prefer not to make a unilateral, final decision and only do so when circumstances dictate that they must.

In cases of forced transfers out of the school, all of the principals who spoke of this process said that the least senior would be selected, unless, as F.M.2 mentioned, the least senior was the most suitable for the needs of the school. In that case, the next least senior would be selected.

R.F.1, serving her first year of her principalship at the time of data collection, did not have any full-time vacancies on her staff and so she was unable to describe her staffing process through lack of experience. R.M.3 intuited the desires of his staff through informal gossip networks and did not use a defined process for internal reassignments.

All of the principals who used an open and clearly defined process for deciding internal reassignments were experienced with this situation. These principals faced the potentially conflicting dilemma between wanting to please their teachers, thereby preserving working relationships, and providing the best quality education possible for their students.

This set of data suggests that as principals' experiences with problems resulting from internal reassignments increase, the greater the need these principals feel to limit the boundaries of decision-making through prescribed policy. Gender and status do not appear to have an effect on this aspect of decision-making.

The significance of this finding is that when decision-making is limited by the principals themselves, they perceive the process to be fair and just. Internally conceived constraints are within the control of these administrators and can be over-ruled or changed by them.

### **3. Hiring Decisions**

All of the principals interviewed generally followed the same procedures for hiring. At least one principal in each group stated that contractual hiring procedures must be followed and each principal did seem to believe he/she was following the dictates of the contract.

After the applications came to the principals, they would pick all the applicants who appeared to be suitable and qualified for the specific job. Out of these applicants, the most senior were usually short-listed. Only R.M.3 stated that he short-listed strictly on the basis of suitability. All of the principals interviewed up to five or six short-listed candidates.

Before inviting short-listed candidates for interviews, F.F.1 conducts telephone reference checks to see if any applicants would be eliminated through that process. F.M.3 telephones all applicants meeting threshold criteria, eliminating those not suitable through the telephone conversations. Those applicants who survive the telephone interviews are the ones F.M.3 selects to comprise his short-list and are invited to a formal, in person interview.

All of the principals developed written criteria for each position and based their interview questions on that criteria. All of the principals, except R.M.3, conduct similar interviews with each short-listed candidate, asking every candidate the same questions in roughly the same order. R.M.3 uses a different process. He describes his school and his expectations of teachers and then lets each applicant respond to that before asking a pre-determined list of questions. All candidates are not asked the same questions because the questions asked are ones that are not addressed in the open-ended dialogue.

All former male appointees said that courtesy letters are sent to applicants not short-listed. All short-listed candidates not selected are notified by telephone.

The union contract states that of the most suitable applicants, the most senior applicant must be selected. All principals interpreted this clause to mean that of the most suitable, senior candidates, the most suitable candidate could be selected if a defensible rationale was presented. All of these principals strongly believe that they must retain some discretion over staffing decisions if they are to administer effective schools where staff members work collegially to provide the best learning environment for children. All of these principals operated with the knowledge that if the most senior applicant was not selected, a written defence of their choice must be provided and they all took great care to do so.

At the end of the school year in which this data was gathered, the teachers' union did, in fact, check every position that was filled to determine if the most senior applicant had been the one selected. If the most senior applicant was not selected, the teachers representing the union asked for reasons. Through contractual policies, the Surrey Teachers' Union was endeavoring to severely limit the discretion and thus, the control of Surrey administrators over school-based decisions. The conflict between contractual procedures laid out by the teachers' union and management rights as desired by school-based and senior administration was responsible for the time-consuming, elaborate hiring procedures which have evolved and which, as F.F.1 courageously noted, cause some administrators tremendous stress.

Overall, perhaps because the hiring process is procedurally prescribed, no significant differences were found between the four groups of principals in the making of general hiring decisions. Teachers who had goals and educational philosophies similar to those of the principals were the ones principals deemed most suitable, supporting Griffiths' (1959) theory and Shakeshaft's (1987) findings.

#### **4. Criteria Decisions**

All former male principals and F.F.1 use two sets of criteria. The first is threshold criteria which becomes the job description and the second is a more detailed criteria based upon qualifications for the assignment and school goals, which form the basis of the interview questions. F.M.1 and F.M.2 develop the threshold criteria by themselves and then seek staff input for the more detailed criteria. F.M.3 seeks staff input for the threshold criteria and then writes the more comprehensive criteria unilaterally. F.F.1

seeks staff input for threshold criteria when the position is for a regular classroom teacher, otherwise she determines both categories of criteria by herself.

F.F.2, R.M.2, R.F.1 and R.F.2 base their job criteria on input from their staffs while F.F.3, R.M.3 and R.F.3 develop criteria unilaterally. R.M.1 and his vice-principal develop their job criteria as an administrative team.

As a group, former male appointees make collaborative decisions regarding job criteria. Overall, former female, recent male and recent female appointees predominantly make criteria decisions by themselves, although staff input is welcomed. None of these principals seem to be hiding their criteria or prohibiting staff input. In fact, most of the principals expressed a concern for openness and were willing to share criteria information if they were asked. These findings suggest that these principals were acting upon informal knowledge of the wishes of their staffs, as well as their own beliefs of what was desirable for their schools and, in that way, were trying to relieve teachers of extra work.

Findings from the data revealed that principals are allowed some discretion in developing position criteria. In all cases, the criteria reflects the administrators' goals and values, but, as F.F.1 points out, the criteria must be fair and reasonable. These principals take care to make the qualifications suited to the assignment based on the knowledge that if they do not, their decisions could be challenged. These findings suggest that limits to decision-making significantly reduce opportunities to make 'maverick' decisions (Griffiths, 1959).

## **5. Desired Qualities in a Teacher**

Across the board, all of the principals desire teachers who are competent and skilled in instructional strategies. In addition, all of the principals value teachers who cooperate with each other and work as members of a team. Most of the principals: F.M. 2, F.M.3, F.F.1, R.M.2, R.M.3, R.F.1 and R.F.2, cited caring for children as an important quality. F.M.2, F.F.1, R.M.1, R.M.3, R.F.2 and R.F.3 prefer teachers who are life-long learners, staying abreast of current trends in Education. F.M.1, F.F.2, R.M.1 and R.F.3

expressed a desire for teachers who would contribute to the whole school, either on committees or volunteering to take extra-curricular activities.

These findings revealed that all of the principals interviewed would primarily base their candidate selection decisions on demonstrably effective inter-personal skills, teaching expertise, genuine positive regard for children and a commitment to personal growth. In addition, F.M.2 and F.F.1 would look for strong management skills in terms of planning and organization for the classroom.

Distinguishable differences between sex or status based groups were not found regarding desired teacher qualities. The findings from this set of data suggest that the goals of the organization (school) are the same as the goals of the individuals who administer the organization.

## **6. Candidate Selection Decisions**

All of the principals conduct lengthy interviews designed to reveal whether or not the applicant possesses the qualities each principal desires in a teacher, including the necessary qualifications for the specific position. Either prior to or after the interview, the principals also look at any supporting documentation the applicants submit. All former male and female appointees, R.M.1 and R.F.3 will telephone the referees listed by the applicants to determine if the information gathered through the interview is supported. Then, if possible, F.M.2, F.M.3, F.F.1, and R.F.1 will select the most senior applicant. If the most senior is not demonstrably the most suitable, these principals will then select the most suitable. All of the other principals will select the most suitable applicant.

If seniority is close between suitable candidates, F.F.3, R.M.2 and R.M.3 would look for a balance between male and female teachers on staff to determine their choices. All other principals would look for the person who would best fit the needs of the school as a whole; coaching or taking on extra responsibilities.

The most significant difference in selection decisions between former and recent appointees is that former male and female appointees are concerned with gathering as much information as possible before deciding. Former appointees do not necessarily trust the interview as a reliable indicator of actual job

performance. Of the recent appointees, only R.M.1 and R.F.3 mentioned reference checking as critical to their final decisions.

These findings suggest that there are not any significant differences in the decision-making processes men and women use to select staff. The differences in the processes used between status groups could be accounted for by the inexperience of recent appointees.

## **II. Personal Decision-Making Processes**

All of the principals use a similar process to make individual decisions. Firstly, they all clarify the nature of the problem and determine the goals for resolution. Then, as much information as time permits is gathered from those who will impact the decision or be impacted by it. Options for principal action are then considered in the context of possible consequences of these actions. The principals finally make the decision they consider best suited to that particular problematic situation. All of the principals are prepared to defend the decision by presenting the reasons on which it was based.

F.M.1 and F.F.1 use previous experiences to help them decide upon a course of action. F.M.1 also uses rules to guide his decision-making, but does not adhere strictly to these rules because he is primarily concerned with making consistent decisions that are perceived as fair.

F.F.3 maintains that even if a great deal of time is devoted to information gathering and all bases are thought to be covered, some information can still be missed or not considered because individuals operate from their own unique perspectives. Therefore, she believes that decisions should be made and then lived with. If the decision is not considered the best or right by others, she is non-defensive towards this verdict because she operates from the knowledge that she made the decision in good conscience. F.F.2 and R.F.3 do not spend time worrying about decisions after they are made because these women also believe that they make the best decisions for particular circumstances in good conscience. R.F.2 believes that there are not any right or wrong decisions; only the best decisions for the situation.

Differences of any significance in the decision-making processes between the four groups of principals were not found. One significant finding that emerged from the data, however, is that women,

in both groups, expressed a non-defensive attitude towards decision-making. In both groups of female appointees the idea of being told by others that the decision was wrong emerged, but, did not threaten the ego of the individual. Not one male appointee discussed this aspect of decision-making, although F.M.1, R.M.2 and R.M.3 expressed a willingness to defend their positions.

Not one of the principals said that he or she used an organizationally prescribed decision-making process, although, when asked to describe their process, all principals included some of the decision-making steps outlined by Griffiths (1959). The decision-making process used by these principals coincided with and supported Cross's (1980) findings that decisions by administrators are reactive, strongly influenced by subordinates and that superiors are rarely consulted before administrators make decisions.

## Discussion

Hiring practices within educational organizations; public elementary schools, in Surrey, British Columbia, in the 1990's, are highly prescriptive. Because the primary impetus for following prescribed rules comes from the teachers' union and not the Board of Education, rigid adherence to hiring rules is not enforced by senior administration in the district. A degree of discretionary latitude is conferred upon principals to choose the most suitable teachers for particular schools. The grievance procedure, which can be enforced by teachers, limits the discretion of principals to choices that can be justified in public hearings, forcing principals to be accountable. Because of the prescriptive nature of hiring decisions, differences in the general manner in which staffing decisions are made by the group of principals studied were not found.

Although former male appointees expressed nostalgia for the "good old days" when they could hire whomever they wanted without accountability, whether or not pre-contract hiring decisions were fair and objective is not the focus of this study. A descriptive study of staffing decisions by administrators prior to the union contract would have, however, been a valuable source to inform this study. While Griffiths (1959) and Simon (1950, in Griffiths, 1967) advocate a prescriptive approach to aid

administrative decision-making, the principals interviewed in this study found this approach to be cumbersome and they did not view it as enhancing their decision-making. The data from this study supports Hodgkinson's (1988) belief that the moral integrity of the administrator is founded upon the voluntary acquisition of an ideological commitment to the organizational culture. All of the principals expressed the desire to staff their schools with teachers whose values resembled the principals' values, which were to provide the best education and educational environment possible for children.

Friedrich (1958) and Green (1980) propose that limits to decision-making are unnecessary if trust is found in the moral integrity of the administrator to make decisions that can be accounted for and that are made using the various voices of conscience. While recent female appointees appear unconcerned by the limits imposed by the rules of the union contract, all of the principals interviewed value control over hiring decisions and would not ever want to see the contractual prescription strictly enforced. Women, more than men, in both former and recent groups of appointees, stated that they would hire the most suitable candidate and if it was grieved, so be it. Women, more than men, seemed almost to expect challenges to their decisions, but, because the decisions were made in good conscience and educationally justifiable, they did not appear to feel threatened by contractual prescriptions.

Two significant conclusions regarding staffing decisions by administrators can be drawn from the data comprising this study. The first is that while gender does not affect the process in which decisions are made, gender does impact on the attitudes that men and women hold towards the making of decisions. Only women mentioned making wrong decisions, and while F.F.1 was stressed by this possibility, most of the recent and former female appointees did not appear to be personally threatened by this possibility. This finding further supports the idea that, psychologically, women operate from predominantly an orientation of care. Women, then, are consciously aware that they use discretion in making staffing decisions while men, who also employ discretion in staffing decisions, do not seem to be as consciously aware of the fact.

The second significant finding is that decisions are impacted by the experience of the administrators. The data revealed that as administrators gain experience with problematic situations, policies and

guidelines, devised by administrators either independently or collaboratively with their staffs, to aid in making fair decisions, increase. While the principals interviewed chafed under external constraints, internal constraints were often deemed desirable. Thus, for problematic decisions, experienced principals seek to limit their discretion. This finding held true across gender boundaries.

As this study was based on a small sample selection for each group, it only attempted to begin exploring gender differences in staffing decisions to point the direction for further study, comprising a more exhaustive sample selection. A true ethnographic study, based upon interviewer observations of male and female principals actually performing the staffing process, would lend verification to these findings regarding gender and discretion in administrative staffing decisions.

## **THEME THREE: SOCIOLOGICAL ORIGINS**

### **I. Administrative Behaviour**

#### **1. Term of Principalship**

As a group, former male appointees have been principals for the longest period of time, followed closely by former female appointees. The differences in length of service between these groups are very slight. Recent female appointees, as a group, are more experienced at administering schools than recent male appointees although both groups are relatively inexperienced, as the longest term of principalship is two years. The average difference in term of principalship between recent and former appointees is approximately ten years.

All recent appointees were completing their first or second years at their schools while former appointees were completing between four and six years at their schools.

## 2. Gender Affects Job Performance

All of the principals except R.F.2 and R.F.3 perceived gender as affecting job performance in some way. Former male principals suspected that women principals would be viewed by others as possessing less authority and they would be less able to handle discipline problems. F.F.1 agrees that women would be less physically tough in matters of discipline, but effective in other methods of handling discipline problems. Former female appointees believe that others view the principal as someone who is physically strong and athletic. Because these women are not, they all believed they had to prove themselves through use of their own strengths, such as focus on the child, curriculum and teaching strategies.

Recent male appointees perceive male principals to be more favoured in their schools because they serve as male role-models for boys. These men believe that their students are around women so much, and because the men that are in these childrens' lives are not desirable role-models, male principals are valuable assets to their schools.

Only R.F.1, of the recent female appointees, believes that her gender affects the way her role is perceived by others. R.F.2 and R.F.3 do not think that their gender affects the way people perceive their roles.

The men and women principals interviewed did not actually think that either sex could perform the job better than the other. All of the principals acknowledged that men and women would most likely behave in different ways and all of the principals were quick to point out that different did not mean better or worse.

The main differences in job performance between men and women principals were physical. Women would call maintenance for help more frequently than would men and men would be asked by teachers or others to perform physical tasks while women would not. Both former and recent female appointees stated that maintenance workers (men) were condescending to women principals and these women were made to feel inferior by maintenance workers.

The notion that men are better disciplinarians arose from both groups of male principals while only F.F.1 mentioned this aspect of gender difference. F.F.1 presented the idea that women handled discipline better than did men.

The findings from this set of data reveal that there continues to be strongly held perceptions that men are more capable than women in administering schools in areas requiring physical strength and in matters of discipline. Former female appointees and R.F.1 believed they had to work harder than men to prove their competence. As R.F.2 and R.F.3 did not believe gender affected their jobs one way or another, the data also suggests that women are becoming more confident about their abilities to be effective principals as more women assume principalships.

### **3. Frustrations of the Job**

All former appointees and R.F.2 find lack of control over school based decision-making due to external constraints to be a major frustration of the principalship. In addition, all former appointees and R.F.1 find the increased demands on their time to also be very frustrating. F.M.1 sees the increased roles for the principal to play (counsellor, nurse, etc.) as extremely time-consuming, while F.F.3 views the increased demands in terms of more paperwork. R.F.1 finds that continual interruptions are time-consuming and prevent her from accomplishing the daily goals she sets for herself. Not being able to proceed through the day according to her own agenda is frustrating to R.F.1.

All recent male appointees view lack of support services for children with special needs as the most frustrating aspect of the job. External constraints are also viewed as frustrating by these men, but, not as frustrating as the lack of control or helplessness these men feel over providing necessary services for certain children.

F.F.1 and R.F.3 find the loneliness of the position frustrating. Because these women are ultimately responsible for final decisions in their schools, they are unable to form close friendships with staff members and must keep a professional distance. For these women, this is a source of frustration.

The data reveals that time demands, including lack of personal time, and lack of control over school decisions form the biggest sources of frustration for all groups of principals.

Only women, one from each status group, mentioned loneliness or a lack of connection with staff members as frustrating. This finding supports the notion that women are more concerned with relationships and connections than are men.

#### **4. Job Stress**

While former male and female appointees cited lack of control over school based decisions as most frustrating, they cited time, or lack of, as causing them the most stress. Former male appointees view the job as never-ending and are aware that there may be a perception on the part of the public that they are not doing enough. Former female appointees, on the other hand, view lack of time to mean that they do not have enough time for their personal lives because they work long hours and the job is so demanding.

Recent male appointees again cited the demands of special needs children as causing them the most stress and recent female appointees did not mention job stress.

This data suggests that all principals, regardless of gender, work long hours to provide the best service possible to their schools and that the longer the term of principalship, the more noticeable the time invested in work becomes. It seems likely that recent male and female appointees did not cite lack of personal time as a source of stress because they are new to their jobs and this aspect of their work had not yet taken its toll.

Women, more than men, reported trying to set limits to their hours of work. While all three former female appointees described the way in which they organized their work day, men did not. This set of findings further suggests that women have jobs other than their professional work to perform daily while men have only to worry about their professional jobs.

## **5. Job Satisfaction**

Former male appointees and recent female appointees seem the most happy with their jobs. All principals in each group unequivocally stated they liked their jobs and not one of these principals would necessarily like to be doing anything else.

Former female appointees mentioned the negative aspects of the job such as stress and demands on their time before discussing the positive aspects. Not one of these women used the words like or love when referring to their jobs. They felt effective or good about what they were doing or proud of the job they have done.

R.M.2 and R.M.3 are happy with the jobs they are doing, but, like former female appointees, discussed the stresses and demands of the job in conjunction with job satisfaction. Again, the words like or love were not used to describe their feelings towards their jobs. R.M.1 feels discouraged with the job he is doing.

While these findings suggest that job satisfaction is not related to gender or status, it is significant that the entire group of former male appointees and the entire group of recent female appointees all agreed that job satisfaction was very high. Perhaps because former male appointees chose the principalship early in their careers and committed themselves to it for life, they find such high satisfaction. Similarly, recent female appointees deliberately chose the principalship and did everything they could to obtain the position. These women must have thought long and hard about the position before achieving it and so it is not surprising that once they have achieved it, they are enjoying it.

## **6. Future Aspirations**

While all former male appointees want to continue as elementary school principals, all former female appointees are looking forward to retirement. Not one of these principals aspires to a higher position in the district, although F.F.2 would take a job in a different field if the opportunity arises. Of the recent appointees, R.M.3 openly stated that he aspires to a higher line position within the district

and R.F.2 and R.F.3 do not rule out a change in position in the future. All other recent appointees reported being happy as elementary school principals.

Significantly more recent appointees aspire to higher positions than former appointees. Women, more than men, mentioned wanting time for themselves, to pursue areas of personal interest. Women seem to have put their personal lives on hold more than men or are finding the lack of time for personal pursuits more costly, as they pursued their administrative careers.

While recent female appointees are happy with their positions and would like to continue as principals or in some other senior position, all former female appointees want out. These principals were concerned with pensions and the number of years they would have to work to receive the best possible pension. Former female appointees was the group most concerned with pursuing areas of personal interest and in 'having their own lives'. Only R.F.2 mentioned her desire to have time for herself. Recent appointees appear to be more upwardly mobile than former appointees, suggesting that status, more than gender, affects future aspirations.

## Discussion

It is interesting that the two groups of principals who seemed the most stressed by the job and who seemed to get the least job satisfaction were groups of principals of the opposite sex and status, former female appointees and recent male appointees. Age did not appear to be a factor in this finding as there did not appear to be a vast discrepancy between the ages of the principals interviewed. Although the ages of the subjects were not asked, recent appointees appeared to be from their mid-forties to early fifties, while former appointees appeared to be from their late forties to mid-fifties.

Former female appointees received their principal appointments at a time when it was men's work. These women broke the ground and paved the way for the many women who are principals today. It can be assumed then, that these women were more on display than any other group of principals and that they did, in fact, have to work harder to gain approval. Most likely, these women initially, at least,

modelled their administrative behaviour on the roles their male colleagues played. The data does show, however, that these women did find their own roles, defined by their perceptions of the world and their needs. F.F.1 provides very specific examples of the different ways in which men and women principals behave. She also mentions loneliness and a desire for connections on staff. F.F.1 and F.F.3 mention concern for the child, curriculum and teaching strategies as of primary importance. Men did not comment on these topics.

Former female appointees were the women who helped to reshape and redefine the role of the elementary school principal. Now, these women want out; they are tired and they want to salvage a personal life before it is too late. They paid a high price for the privilege of breaking the ground for female administrators.

Recent male appointees received their principalships at a time when more women than ever before were receiving principalships. Conditions for entry into the field appeared equal for both sexes, but there was a growing perception that women were being favoured in order to begin to achieve sex equity in the field of elementary school administration. In addition, the role of the school principal had been somewhat redefined to include more feminine traits. Perhaps these men, like former female appointees, were trying to find their own voices in elementary school administration.

Former male appointees state that female principals may be perceived as lacking authority. The gender differences described by former female appointees, R.F.1 and former male appointees reflect stereotypical gender differences and the traditional perception of the principal. That the traditional perception of the school principal has changed, however, is proved by the views on gender affects job performance expressed by recent male and female appointees (except for R.F.1).

The most significant finding regarding administrative behaviour is that differences in perceptions of the role of the principal and attitudes towards the principalship can be attributed more to individual personality traits than to gender or status group. Although individual administrators will always behave differently from each other because of innate personality traits, the teachers' union contract, Board and Ministry policies and a commitment to gender equity in elementary school administration

by the Surrey School District act together to regulate the behaviour of administrators, encouraging a degree of conformity. In addition, men and women must possess the same qualifications for the job and go through the same entry process. All of these factors conspire together to create uniformity of job performance by administrators.

## **II. Career Paths**

### **1. Motivation to Become a Principal**

Former male and recent male appointees were motivated to become principals by the status, prestige, salary and power to influence school events associated with the position. Of the men interviewed, only F.M.1 decided at the beginning of his teaching career that administration might be a field in which he would like to work. F.M.2 and F.M.3 and recent male appointees made their decisions to select administrative careers after experiencing leadership roles in other capacities. In addition, R.M.2 and R.M.3, after teaching for several years, decided that they did not want to spend their whole careers teaching a single class.

R.F.2 and R.F.3 were motivated to select administrative careers through previous leadership roles. These two women were not single classroom teachers for long periods of time, having assumed consultant and co-ordinator duties early in their careers. Both of these women changed jobs within the field of Education frequently and are motivated by challenge. They felt as capable as the principals with whom they had worked and were challenged to see if they could, in fact, obtain principalships. R.F.1 and all former female appointees selected administrative positions because they believed that could do as good, if not better, jobs as the principals with whom they worked. All of these women took on leadership roles throughout their teaching careers. F.F.2 and F.F.3 had formal leadership roles as a counsellor and a Reading Teacher, while F.F.1 assumed leadership roles firstly as a curriculum

developer while working as a classroom teacher and then through the role of the vice-principal. R.F.1 assumed leadership roles informally in her school, performing many administrative tasks.

F.F.2 and F.F.3 had enough self-confidence to seek the principalship fairly early in their careers while F.F.1 and R.F.1 required more time to be confident that they could do a good job of being a principal. R.F.2 and R.F.3 pursued leadership roles early in their careers and changed jobs frequently before becoming principals.

Both men and women principals were also motivated by the desire to make a difference in their schools. They all seemed to possess visions of what effective principals could do and wanted the opportunity to try.

Women, more than men, however, were motivated to become principals because they thought they could do a good job. Men, more than women, were motivated by the status of the position.

## **2. Background**

All former and recent male appointees were born in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia and attended university right after high school graduation. All former male appointees and R.M.1 completed degrees before assuming teaching careers, although F.M.3 took several years out, working at various jobs before going back to university. R.M.2 and R.M.3 began teaching after two years of university, completing their degrees part-time, while teaching. All male appointees, except R.M.1 and R.M.2, who went on teacher exchange programs for one year each, have only worked in British Columbia. At the time of data collection, all former male appointees had spent their entire careers in Surrey, while none of the recent male appointees worked in Surrey until they became administrators. R.M.2 and R.M.3 came from the same neighbouring district; R.M.2 as a vice-principal and R.M.3 as a principal. R.M.1 came to Surrey as a principal from a different neighbouring district. Of the male appointees, only F.M.1 has taught in and administered secondary schools.

Two of the female appointees came from the East, one from the States and one from Eastern Canada. The other four female appointees were born and raised in the Lower Mainland of British

Columbia. Of the female appointees, F.F.2, F.F.3 and R.F.3 completed university degrees before assuming teaching careers, while F.F.1, R.F.1 and R.F.2 began teaching after a few years of university. These women completed their degrees while teaching. Only F.F.1 and R.F.1 moved from classroom teacher to vice-principal to principal. All other female appointees worked as district staff members prior to assuming their administrative positions. F.F.3 was the only principal of all the principals interviewed who was never a vice-principal. She moved directly from the Reading Teacher position into the principalship. Most of these women, F.F.3, R.F.1, R.F.2 and R.F.3 viewed Education as an open door to go in and out of as they raised their families or pursued personal interests.

Only F.F.1 and R.F.1, of the female appointees, have spent their entire careers in Surrey. F.F.2 came to Surrey as a counsellor and then became a vice-principal of a high school. F.F.3 came to Surrey as a Reading Teacher and then became a principal of an elementary school. R.F.1 and R.F.2 came to Surrey as principals at the same time from two different neighbouring districts. F.F.3 has taught at secondary schools and F.F.2 has administered a secondary school.

As a group, former male appointees have the most similar backgrounds while individual members of other status or sex groups have diverse backgrounds. The most significant finding from this set of data is that male appointees, more than female appointees, have worked continuously for school districts since leaving university.

### **3. Road to the Principalship**

Male appointees had the most direct route to the principalship, going from classroom teacher to assistant to the principal, head teacher, or vice-principal positions before becoming principals. F.M.2 and F.M.3 became district helping teachers prior to becoming vice-principals. Overall, female appointees had more varied careers before becoming principals. Only F.F.1 and R.F.1 followed a more direct route, going from classroom teacher to vice-principal to principal.

Former male appointees were classroom teachers for the shortest time. F.M.1 served four years in the classroom while F.M.2 and F.M.3 each served six years. Former male appointees gained vice-

principal positions by expressing interest in the job to specific principals. Recent male appointees gained assistant to the principal positions by being asked, although they had to compete to obtain actual vice-principal positions.

Former female appointees also moved into initial administrative positions with relative ease. Although F.F.2 and F.F.1 had to go through a process to become vice-principals, they received their positions the first time they applied. F.F.3 received her principalship the first time she applied, without vice-principal training. Of this group of principals, only F.F.1 was a classroom teacher for a lengthy period of time.

Of the recent female appointees, only R.F.1 was a classroom teacher for a long period of time. R.F.2 and R.F.3, like F.F.2 and F.F.3, worked in capacities other than classroom teacher.

All of the principals, except R.M.1, worked on their Master's degrees as a qualification to become a school administrator. Only F.M.1 decided early in his career that he wanted to be a school principal and so he began work on his Master's degree during his second year of teaching. All of the other principals taught for at least six years before considering administrative careers. Most of the principals finished their Master's degrees after receiving administrative appointments.

This set of data revealed that men, more than women, were connected to individual schools, serving as classroom teachers. Women, overall, moved more than men and held a greater variety of jobs connected with Education. These findings suggest that women were more inclined to aggressively seek leadership roles, but that line positions were not necessarily their first consideration. Men, however, were singularly interested in line positions. The two men who held helping teacher positions quickly realized that principals held positions of power.

#### **4. Vice-Principal Selection Procedures**

All former male and female appointees either approached a school principal, expressing interest in administration or were approached by a school principal and asked if they would like the position. Each appointee went through an interview with only the school principal and then received his/her

vice-principal appointment. F.F.1, who had been a head teacher, was asked by the Board if she would like to be a vice-principal and was then placed in a school.

All recent male and female appointees had to go through a formal application, short-list and interview procedure to become a vice-principal. Not one of these principals was approached; all of them self-selected the position. R.F.1 and R.F.2 said that they had to go through this formal process more than once before receiving their appointments.

Recent appointees had to seek the vice-principalship through a highly competitive process while former appointees, some of whom self selected the position, went through a much gentler process. This data suggests that recent appointees were strongly committed to becoming vice-principals, using aggressive action to achieve their goals. Whether or not former appointees would have been as aggressive in their bids for the vice-principalship, the entry to administration, is not known.

## **5. Principal Selection Procedures**

All of the principals interviewed had to go through a similar, formal process to become Surrey principals. Each principal had to submit an application and supporting documentation to the Board Office. Then, successful applicants were short-listed and went through a formal interview at the Board Office with a panel. The panel was not the same for each principal, but usually included some senior administrators, School Board Trustees, principals, and in some cases, parents and/or teachers. If the applicant had a successful interview, he/she was usually appointed to the district with school placement coming later, although, in some cases, applicants were appointed to specific schools. Not all of the principals interviewed for this study were successful the first time they applied. All of the principals applied for the principalship from vice-principal positions except for F.F.3.

This set of data suggests that these principals strongly wanted their positions.

## **6. Role Model/Mentor**

All of the principals interviewed, except F.F.2, cited one or more role models/mentors as influencing them to pursue administrative careers. Four principals, F.M.3, F.F.3, R.F.1 and R.F.3 cite their spouses/partners as providing encouragement and support. All recent male appointees, F.M.2 and F.F.1 cite former principals with whom they worked as encouraging them to become principals. Helping teachers with whom F.F.1 and F.M.2 worked closely were cited by them as acting as positive role-models. Girl friends, high school teachers and superintendents were cited by F.M.1, F.F.1, R.M.1 and R.F.2 as providing encouragement to seek administrative positions.

Only F.F.2 reported that she decided to seek the principalship on her own initiative, without support and encouragement from others.

No significant differences were found between sex or status groups regarding the kind of people who acted as role models/mentors for these principals. The data does suggest that positive encouragement from those perceived as role-models by principals is instrumental in building the self-confidence necessary to proceed through the competition to become an administrator.

## **7. Family Life**

All of these principals, except R.M.1, married in their twenties. R.M.1 did not marry until he was thirty-nine. All of these principals, except F.F.2, had children. All of the male principals were still married to their first wives at the time of data collection while only F.F.3 and R.F.1 were still married to their first husbands. F.F.1, F.F.2, and R.F.2 live alone while R.F.3 has a new partner.

As a group, only former male principals reported stable, happy home lives at the time of data collection. While R.M.3 said that his job placed stress on his marriage, R.M.1 and R.M.2 also reported happy home lives at the time of data collection.

The most significant finding revealed by this set of data is that female principals do not tend to stay married to their first spouses while male principals do. The data also revealed that men have

significantly happier home lives than do women. These findings suggest that women make more personal sacrifices in order to pursue their careers than do men.

## Discussion

While some of the gender differences in career paths found in the studies reported in the Literature Review were supported by this study, overall, gender differences among Surrey principals were not significantly large. Findings that men tend to seek line positions initially while women initially seek staff positions (Ortiz, 1982), women view teaching as an open door while men do not, and that men enter administration for status while women enter administration because they think they can do a good job (Jacklin, 1981) support findings presented in the Review of the Literature. Findings which were similar to those of Gross and Trask (1976), Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen (1962), Meskin (1978) and Frasher and Frasher (1979) were that men were mostly married while women were mostly single and that men were initially more interested in moving up the hierarchical ladder while women were more concerned with the emotional and social growth of children.

While all of the male principals were still married to their first wives at the time of data collection, four of the six female principals were divorced. The marriages of these women broke down prior to their principal appointments in every case, so while being single may predispose a woman to seek administration, the job is not the cause of marriage break-ups.

As F.F.3 moved districts and changed jobs frequently while she followed her husband's career, F.F.2 and R.F.3 moved across the country and also tried various positions and R.F.2 moved in and out of teaching because she was not happy with teaching and wanted to try other things, the conclusion can be drawn that these women viewed teaching as a terminal career in their early years. All of the men only moved in order to advance up the Educational hierarchy which supports Paddock's 1981 findings that men view teaching as a departure point to positions of higher status and money.

The men in this study, however, selected teaching as a worthwhile career and pursued degrees in Education. Of all the groups, only former male appointees completed their degrees before they began

teaching. F.F.2 completed a teaching degree in conjunction with her Science degree and R.F.3 took a year of Education because she could not get a job in her chosen field of Sociology, contrary to Lortie's 1975 finding that men chose teaching because they were unable to pursue their first choice career. This study diverges from the Gross and Trask findings of 1976 in that there was not a marked age discrepancy between the ages of principals in each status group. Former female and male principals were around the same age as were recent male and female principals. Of the former appointees, only F.F.1 did not complete her undergraduate work before beginning her career and of the recent appointees, R.M.1 and R.F.3 both completed five years of university while all other recent appointees completed an average of two years. Gross and Trask (1976) had found that more women took undergraduate Education courses than did men. All of these principals, except R.F.3 took courses in Education.

All of the principals interviewed self-selected administration as a career and went through a similar, competitive process to achieve their goals. All of the principals, except F.F.2, were supported and encouraged by others held in high esteem by these principals in their bids for the principalship.

Because the sample group was so small, definite conclusions about differences in the career paths of male and female administrators in Surrey, British Columbia can not be drawn. The data does suggest, however, that although there are differences, the discrepancies are not as great as they were in the 1960's and early 1970's when initial data on gender differences in career paths was collected. Teaching now seems to be considered a worthwhile career by more men as salaries and working conditions have vastly improved. Entry into administration is governed by the same rules for men and women and a real effort is being made to balance the sexes in administrative positions. As men and women compete among themselves and with each other for administrative positions, perhaps their career paths will be even less different, reducing the differing psychological reasonings behind the discretion employed by men and women to make staffing decisions.

# SUMMARY

While differences in administrative behaviour appeared to reflect individual personality traits more than gender or status group trends, gender did make a difference in the career paths of male and female administrators. Men were attracted to the principalship because of the power and prestige of the position while women were attracted to the principalship because they thought they could do a good job. Administrative positions were most men's first choice for advancement while most women's first choice was a staff leadership role. All of the men interviewed had worked continuously while women left and re-entered teaching or district staff positions. All of the men were married to their first wives while most of the women had divorced their first husbands. Status was a factor in the future ambitions of administrators. Recent appointees were more upwardly mobile than former appointees.

The career paths of male and female administrators were connected to the educational and personal values they held and, in turn, these values drove the decisions made by these principals. The processes used to exercise discretionary decision-making were markedly similar among all of the principals. These administrators made decisions from their perceptions of what was best for their schools. Discretionary decisions were made accountable through written rationales. The rationales were either presented with the decision or were ready to present if asked for.

Since all of the principals used a similar decision-making process, gender was not found to be a factor in the way in which these principals staffed their schools. Gender was, however, found to be a significant factor in the psychological processes of moral and ethical reasoning. In describing their thinking, women, more than men, said that they would hire the most suitable candidate for the position, even if their decision was judged as wrong at a later date, because they were concerned about the well-being of children. Women, primarily connected to the members of their schools, were found to operate from a predominantly feminine theme of care, based on relationships, while men as a group, primarily motivated by power and prestige, were found to operate from a predominantly masculine theme of justice and individuation. Individually, however, men - recent male appointees in

particular, were found to cross themes regarding their expressions of regard for the children enrolled at their schools.

Although driven by differing personal motivations and values, both male and female principals wanted to administer effective schools in which the needs of the children were met. All principals repeatedly expressed the need to be able to hire teachers who, in addition to being well-qualified, would fit with the school culture. The principals interviewed found it difficult and frustrating to perform their jobs to the best of their abilities; to harken to their various voices of conscience, when their discretion in hiring was confined. While they worked within this constraint, using reasoned elaborations to allow them the freedom to choose, they always had to deal with the resulting tension caused by the possibility of a grievance. The findings from this study strongly suggest that the role of the school administrator is being redefined by the teachers of this district through their union contract.

In a district where the hiring process is highly prescribed, a degree of discretionary latitude is conferred upon principals and all of the ones interviewed seemed to exercise their use of discretion in markedly similar ways. Gender differences were found more in the psychological reasonings used to employ discretion than in the actual process of using it. Although men and women were found to speak in different voices resulting from their different personal experiences and psychological orientations, the conclusion can be drawn that gender is not a significant factor in the use of discretion in administrative hiring decisions in Surrey, British Columbia from the data gathered to inform this study. This conclusion is tentative at best, however, because the subject sample was very small and the data was based on self-reports by the principals interviewed.

# APPENDIX A

## LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT, CONFIRMATION AND THANKS

1992 04 24

Principal

# Elementary

Dear:

Your name has been randomly selected as a potential participant in a Master's thesis study which is being undertaken by one of the district's Vice-Principals, Sandra Kraft. Her study is entitled "The Sex Factor in Administrative Staffing Decisions" and is aimed at determining whether there are differences in administrative decision-making processes in staff selection that can be attributed to gender.

Ms. Kraft has approached the Research and Evaluation Department for approval of her study. We have endorsed it and identified for her a sample of male and female principals. Sandra will call you personally to discuss the study with you and to request your participation. Please be assured that your involvement is voluntary - feel free to raise any issues or concerns with Sandra.

We wish both you and Sandra the best in this interesting project.

Sincerely,

Barbara Holmes

Research Associate

BH/hc:67

15726 McBeth Rd.,  
Surrey, B.C.  
V4A 5X3  
April 23, 1992.

Dear

I am writing to you at this time to confirm your participation in my Master's thesis study, Gender and Discretion in Administrative Staffing Decisions, as discussed in our telephone conversation. The date set for our interview is

, 1992, at p.m., in your school.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of your valuable help. Please do not feel compelled to answer any question or explore a topic with which you are uncomfortable.

The interview will consist of an oral conversation which will be tape-recorded and then transcribed. It is not intended to take more than one hour. After all of the interviews have been transcribed, I will destroy the tapes.

Upon completion of the interview, you will be referred to as a former or recent, male or female appointee to the principalship. In this way your anonymity will be secured.

If you would like, I will supply you with a synthesis of my results upon completion of my thesis.

I am looking forward to our interview and I would like to thank you for your support of this project.

Sincerely,

Sandra Kraft

15726 McBeth Road,  
Surrey, B.C.  
V4A 5X3  
September 8, 1992.

Dear,

Thank you very much for participating in my study of gender differences in administrator decision-making. I know that you are most busy in the late spring, so I am grateful that you allowed me to interview you at that time.

I am now ready to analyze the data collected. Once I have finished this task and completed my thesis, I will share an abbreviated version of the results, in the form of a synthesized paper, with you. Please look forward to this next spring.

I found the interviews to be helpful to me in my role as a new administrator as well as for the purpose of my thesis. Once again, thank you for cooperating with me in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Sandra Kraft

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Interview Questions**

### **A. Psychological Origins:**

This first set of questions is designed to solicit information which will reveal whether the informant reasons through the ethic of justice, care or a combination of both.

1. How would you define the role or the purpose of the school principal?
2. What is important about your school to you?
  - A. What would you like your school to be known for?
3. As a school principal, how would you like to be described?
4. There are union and district policies governing how you do your job. How do you feel about these policies?

### **B. Decision-Making:**

This set of questions is designed to solicit information regarding the ways in which the informant makes decisions.

5. How was your present staff assembled?
  - A. What opportunities have you had to choose staff members that you, personally, want to have work in your school?
6. You may soon be making some decisions regarding staffing for next school year.
  - A. Would you describe to me the process you would go through to make these decisions?
7. If you are in a position to hire a teacher new to your school this spring, how would you go about this?
  - A. Would there be any constraints on how you would do this?

8. What qualities do you, personally, deem desirable in a new teacher to your staff?
  - A. Describe, if you can, your vision of the ideal teacher.
9. If you had two or three candidates to select from, all with similar qualifications and experience, what might influence your decision-making?
  - A. If this has ever happened, would you think back and and describe your experience?
10. In general, how do you go about making decisions?

### **C. Sociological Origins: Gender Differences**

These questions are designed to ascertain whether or not the experiences, motivations, aspirations and career paths of principals can be generalized to gender. These variables will then be examined to see how they impact sections A and B.

11. How did you come to be a principal?
  - A. Please tell me about your background in terms of your career path.
12. What motivated you to become a principal?
  - A. How do you feel about that now?
13. Has anyone stood out in your career as especially helpful to you?
  - A. How does that affect you today?
14. In what ways do you think your gender affects your job?
  - A. In what ways would your job be different if you were a man/woman?
15. What are the most frustrating aspects of the job to you, as an individual?
16. What are some of your future aspirations?
17. How do you feel about your job right now?

# APPENDIX C

## Coding Reorganization

First level comprehensive coding of F.M.1's transcript revealed thirty-four codes. Using these codes, the remaining eleven transcripts were coded in groups segregated by sex and term of principal appointment. Fifteen further codes were added as this process took place. The original codes are listed below in alphabetical order:

ambitions	importance of school
background	interviewing
career path	interviewing candidate input
control over hiring pre-contract	interviewing documentation
control over staffing present	job satisfaction
criteria hiring decisions	job stress
decision-making candidate selection	Master's
decision-making hiring	motivation to become principal
desired qualities in a teacher	motivation to become teacher
early principal selection	motivation to do Master's
family life	opportunities to hire
forced transfer	outside constraints
frustrations of job	parent involvement
future work	personal decision-making
gender affects job	present assignment
hiring procedures contract	principal's self image

purpose of principal	teacher training
putting limits on job	teaching career
reason for Master's	term of principalship
reducing stress	those not selected
role model/mentor	those not shortlisted
selection rationale	union contract
seniority	values of principal
staff composition values	vice-principal appointment
support group	

The codes were then reorganized as follows to fulfill the purpose of this study:

#### THEME ONE: PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS

##### I. The Values of the School Principal

subsuming: parent involvement

principal's self image

##### II. The Purpose of the School Principal

##### III. The Importance of the School

##### IV. Outside Constraints

subsuming: union contract

## THEME TWO: DECISION-MAKING

### I. Professional Decision-Making Processes

#### 1. Opportunities to Hire

#### 2. Staffing Decisions

subsuming: forced transfer

#### 3. Hiring Decisions

subsuming: control over hiring pre-contract

control over staffing present

hiring procedures contract

interviewing

interviewing candidate input

seniority

staff composition values

#### 4. Criteria Decisions

#### 5. Desired Qualities in a Teacher

#### 6. Candidate Selection Decisions

subsuming: interviewing documentation

selection rationale

those not selected

those not shortlisted

### II. Personal Decision-Making Processes

## THEME THREE: SOCIOLOGICAL ORIGINS

### I. Administrative Behaviour

1. Term of Principalship
2. Gender Affects Job Performance
3. Frustrations of the Job

subsuming: putting limits on the job

4. Job Stress

subsuming: reducing stress

support group

5. Job Satisfaction

6. Future Aspirations

subsuming: future work

ambitions

### II. Career Paths

1. Motivation to Become Principal

subsuming: Master's

motivation to become teacher

motivation to do Master's

reason for Master's

2. Background

subsuming: teacher training

### 3. Road to the Principalship

subsuming: career path

present assignment

teaching career

### 4. Vice-Principal Appointment Process

### 5. Principal Appointment Process

subsuming: early principal selection

### 6. Role Model/Mentor

### 7. Family Life

Finally, twenty-four codes were used to analyze the data, as outlined above.

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