The management of school based staff development in Australian secondary schools

Gregg Stewart Rowland

University of Wollongong, gregg@uow.edu.au

Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong.

Recommended Citation

NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.
THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL BASED STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

GREGG STEWART ROWLAND

Bachelor of Education (Physical and Health Education, with Distinction)

Master of Education

Faculty of Education 1999
DECLARATION

I certify that work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for a degree in any other university or educational institution. This thesis contains entirely my work.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

Signed

..........................................................
GREGG ROWLAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Few things in life are achieved without the support and encouragement of others. This project was no different. To my wife Lyn and daughters, Jade and Skye, I say thanks from the bottom of my heart for your support and understanding over the past years. To my good friend and colleague, Professor John Patterson, thank you also for your support, encouragement and guidance.

A special note of thanks is also extended to the late Professor Russell Linke who provided the impetus and guidance in the early stages of this research project and to Peter Keeble for his continual assistance, suggestions and friendship.

Finally, I would like to give special mention to Dr. Norm McCulla (NSW), Althea Hurwood (Queensland) and John Kitt (Tasmania) for their assistance in the formulation of the survey and its distribution. To all the teachers who participated in the piloting and final completion of the survey, many thanks.
ABSTRACT

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s in Australian education, two consistent themes have emerged, among others, in the professional literature, viz. the need for increased emphasis on the training and development of teachers; and the increased devolution of responsibility for decision making to the school.

Training and development, especially in the education sector, was seen as a part of a national economic readjustment. Improved educational outcomes were considered vital for the economic development and general prosperity of the country. As a consequence, Australian Commonwealth and State governments gave the training and development of teachers a higher priority and contributed substantial funds towards the improvement of Australian schools through teacher training and development programs.

Concurrently, most State governments devolved responsibility for education decision making and resources, including training and development to the school level. Such a shift in responsibilities required that schools develop organisational structures and management practices to ensure effective resource usage and to satisfy accountability mechanisms that were established.

Although the study of best practice with regard to the staff development of teachers has been researched both nationally and internationally for some time, few studies have reviewed the organisational structures and management practices within a school based context that may either have enabled or constrained teachers as they strove to master the complexities of classroom practice.

Given the dearth of information related to school based staff development, four questions which guided this study emerged. Firstly, to what extent was school based staff development regarded by teachers as an integral part of their professional life? Secondly and thirdly, within in each State what are the organisational structures and the range of management practices used by secondary schools for implementing school based staff development? Fourthly, which organisational structures and management practices were
perceived by teachers as being the most effective in meeting their staff development needs?

A research methodology was implemented in three Australian States: New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, to respond to these questions. The theoretical basis of the study and the foundation for the questionnaire were found in key concepts identified from the staff development literature, related government reports, and information provided by state level and school administrators. Distillation of the information from these sources led to seven principles of best practice identified as the basis for the study: teacher commitment to continuous improvement; organisational structures for managing school based staff development; planning for school based staff development; selection of staff development content; strategies for the delivery of staff development; allocation of resources for staff development and the evaluation of staff development.

Two questionnaires were constructed: the Teacher Questionnaire and the Coordinator of Staff Development Questionnaire and distributed to teachers every public secondary school in NSW, Queensland and Tasmania. The data provided by both questionnaires were analysed with descriptive statistics, cross tabulations and the Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks. Data were also obtained from the analysis of school development planning and staff development policy documents submitted by staff development coordinators.

This study showed that staff development was highly valued by both teachers and school administrators. The majority of schools from all States established extensive and highly structured coordinating mechanisms to ensure maximisation of the staff development enterprise. Schools, even in the initial phases of implementing school based staff development, gave considerable thought to planning and other management practices. For example, schools established effective mechanisms for identifying the content of staff development programs, providing for a variety of delivery strategies to be utilised by teachers, developing criteria by which the budget could be fairly distributed throughout the school and evaluating the effects of specific staff development activities. In this sense, the study provided information about organisational structures and practices which underpinned a large management undertaking by schools, of which very
little was known before the implementation of school based staff development. The findings therefore, represented an important contribution to the staff development literature.

There is nothing in the recent professional educational literature in Australia that suggested school systems will move away from a school based management framework or that staff development will cease to be valued by teachers or schools. Teachers as a part of the education sector have repeatedly been recognised as essential to the quality of schooling and the cornerstone of quality education. In turn, staff development has been seen as the best possible way to enhance the quality of teachers through providing new knowledge and skills.

The results of this study inform practice and provide information to scaffold managerial policies and practices at both the state and school level. The findings assist in macro policy development, leading to state level policies that enable rather than constrain schools. In addition, this study provides information for schools on organisational structures and management practices to be established that lead to better outcomes for teachers and ultimately the students they teach.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract i  
Table of Contents iv  
List of Figures vii  
List of Tables vii  
List of Appendices xv  

## CHAPTER ONE
An Introduction to the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Overview of the Chapter</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Words</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER TWO
Staff Development in Australia and the Framework for the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Overview of the Chapter</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Reform in Australia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Increasing Emphasis on Staff Development in the Teaching Profession</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Need for Staff Development</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Framework for this Study</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Conclusion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER THREE
The Context for School Based Staff Development in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Overview of the Chapter</th>
<th>31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Devolution of Responsibility and Move to School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Move to School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolution and the Organisation of Schooling in New South Wales - 1993</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School Based Staff Development Policy Framework in NSW</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolution and the Organisation of Schooling in Queensland - 1993</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School Based Staff Development Policy Framework in Queensland</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolution and the Organisation of Schooling in Tasmania - 1993</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CHAPTER FOUR

Review of Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Overview of the Chapter</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Commitment to Staff Development</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Structures for Managing School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Staff Development Content</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies for the Delivery of Staff Development Content</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation of Resources for School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER FIVE

Research Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Overview of the Chapter</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Questionnaires</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaires</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sampling Technique</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Analysis of Data</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER SIX

Analysis of the Survey Results - NSW

| Framework for the Analysis of Survey Results for all States | 119 |
| Case Study One - NSW (1993)                                | 120 |
| Research Question One                                      | 124 |
| Research Question Two                                      | 130 |
| Research Question Three                                    | 138 |
| Research Question Four                                     | 157 |

### CHAPTER SEVEN

Analysis of the Survey Results - Queensland

| Case Study Two - Queensland (1993)                        | 182 |
| Research Question One                                    | 186 |
| Research Question Two                                     | 192 |
| Research Question Three                                   | 202 |
| Research Question Four                                    | 222 |
CHAPTER EIGHT

Analysis of the Survey Results - Tasmania

Case Study Three - Tasmania (1993) 247
  Research Question One 251
  Research Question Two 257
  Research Question Three 266
  Research Question Four 287

CHAPTER NINE

Discussion and Conclusions

An Overview of the Chapter 313
Introduction 313
Discussion - Research Question One 314
Conclusions - Research Question One 316
Discussion - Research Question Two 316
Conclusions - Research Question Two 320
Discussion - Research Question Three 321
Conclusions - Research Question Three 334
Discussion - Research Question Four 336
Conclusions - Research Question Four 350

CHAPTER TEN

Epilogue 352

REFERENCES 355
APPENDICES 372
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1  Principles of Best Practice in Staff Development 28
Figure 2  Stages of Data Collection 103

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1  Principles of Good Practice 20
Table 2  Best Practice In Professional Development 22
Table 3  Best Practice In Professional Development 23
Table 4  Context, Process and Content Standards 26
Table 5  Distribution of Staff Development Coordinators According to Regions 121
Table 6  Distribution of Teachers According to Regions 122
Table 7  Distribution of Teachers According to Selected Variables 123
Table 8  Staff Development Priorities within Schools 125
Table 9  The Importance of Staff Development in the Appointment and Promotion of Teachers 126
Table 10  The Importance of Participation in Activities Related to the Teaching Function 127
Table 11  Willingness to be Involved in Staff Development Activities According to Time of the Week 129
Table 12  Responsibility for Specific Staff Development Management Functions According to the Existence of a Staff Development Committee 131
Table 13  Distribution of Staff Development Coordinators According to Selected Variables 133
| Table 14 | Number and Percentage of Schools Where Various Personnel Are Represented on School Staff Development Committees | 135 |
| Table 15 | The Determination of the Content of Staff Development Programs | 143 |
| Table 16 | The Determination of Local School Needs | 144 |
| Table 17 | The Determination of Individual Teacher Needs | 145 |
| Table 18 | Number of Days Per Year Involved In Staff Development Activities | 146 |
| Table 19 | The Extent of Use of Specific Delivery Strategies | 147 |
| Table 20 | Personnel Utilised in the Delivery of Staff Development Activities | 149 |
| Table 21 | Source of Funds for School Based Staff Development | 150 |
| Table 22 | Distribution of Schools According to Amount of Staff Development Funds Per Person | 151 |
| Table 23 | Methods for School Based Staff Development Funding Distribution | 152 |
| Table 24 | Approval Policies Utilised by Schools | 153 |
| Table 25 | The Use of Staff Development Funds | 155 |
| Table 26 | Length of Staff Development Evaluation Cycle | 156 |
| Table 27 | Reporting Requirements for Teachers Involved in School Based Staff Development Activities | 157 |
| Table 28 | Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function | 159 |
| Table 29 | Staff Development Coordinator's Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function | 160 |
| Table 30 | Effectiveness of the Staff Development Committee According to Method of Formation | 162 |
Table 31 Teacher Perceptions of the Level of Support and Encouragement Offered by Various Personnel 164

Table 32 The Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Teachers 166

Table 33 Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Students 167

Table 34 Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in the Determination of School Priorities 169

Table 35 Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in Identifying the Needs of Teachers 170

Table 36 Level of Satisfaction with Delivery Strategies for Staff Development 172

Table 37 Teacher Satisfaction with Personnel Used in the Delivery of Staff Development Activities 173

Table 38 Teachers’ Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods 175

Table 39 Staff Development Coordinators’ Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods 176

Table 40 Effectiveness of Approval Policies Utilised by Schools 177

Table 41 Importance of Forms of Support to Teacher Involvement in Staff Development Activities 179

Table 42 Usefulness of the Reporting Process 180

Table 43 Distribution of Staff Development Coordinators According to Regions 183

Table 44 Distribution of Teachers According to Regions 184

Table 45 Distribution of Teachers According to Selected Variables 185

Table 46 Staff Development Priorities within Schools 187

Table 47 The Importance of Staff Development in the Appointment and Promotion of Teachers 188
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>The Importance of Participation in Activities Related to the Teaching Function</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Willingness to be Involved in Staff Development Activities According to Time of the Week</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Responsibility for Specific Staff Development Management Functions According to Existence of Staff Development Committee</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Distribution of Staff Development Coordinators According to Selected Variables</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Number and Percentage of Schools Where Various Personnel Are Represented on School Staff Development Committees</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>The Determination of the Content of Staff Development Programs</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>The Determination of Local School Needs</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>The Determination of Individual Teacher Needs</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Number of Days Per Year Involved In Staff Development Activities</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>The Extent of Use of Specific Delivery Strategies</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Personnel Utilised in the Delivery of Staff Development Activities</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Source of Funds for School Based Staff Development</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Distribution of Schools According to Amount of Staff Development Funds Per Person</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Methods for School Based Staff Development Funding Distribution</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Approval Policies Utilised by Schools</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>The Use of Staff Development Funds</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Length of Staff Development Review Cycle</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 65 Reporting Requirements for Teachers Involved in School Based Staff Development Activities 221

Table 66 Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function 223

Table 67 Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function 225

Table 68 Effectiveness of the Staff Development Committee According to Method of Formation 227

Table 69 Teachers' Perceptions of the Level of Support and Encouragement Offered by Various Personnel 228

Table 70 Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Teachers 230

Table 71 Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Students 232

Table 72 Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in the Determination of School Priorities 234

Table 73 Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in Identifying the Individual Needs of Teachers 235

Table 74 Level of Satisfaction with Various Delivery Strategies for Staff Development 236

Table 75 Teacher Satisfaction with Personnel Used in the Delivery of Staff Development Activities 238

Table 76 Teachers' Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods 240

Table 77 Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods 241

Table 78 Effectiveness of Approval Policies Utilised by Schools 242

Table 79 Importance of Forms of Support to Teacher Involvement in Staff Development Activities 244
Table 97  Source of Funds for School Based Staff Development  279
Table 98  Distribution of Schools According to Amount of Staff Development Funds Per Person  280
Table 99  Methods for School Based Staff Development Funding Distribution  281
Table 100  Approval Policies Utilised by Schools  282
Table 101  The Use of Staff Development Funds  284
Table 102  Length of Staff Development Review Cycle  286
Table 103  Reporting Requirements for Teachers Involved in School Based Staff Development Activities  286
Table 104  Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function  288
Table 105  Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Management Function  290
Table 106  Effectiveness of the Staff Development Committee According to Method of Formation  292
Table 107  Teacher Perceptions of the Level of Support and Encouragement Offered by Various Personnel  293
Table 108  The Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Teachers  295
Table 109  Effectiveness of Specific Priorities in Meeting the Needs of Students  297
Table 110  Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in the Determination of Local School Priorities  299
Table 111  Usefulness of Various Sources of Advice in Identifying the Individual Needs of Teachers  300
Table 112  Level of Satisfaction with Various Delivery Strategies for Staff Development  302
| Table 113 | Teacher Satisfaction with Personnel Used in the Delivery of Staff Development Activities | 304 |
| Table 114 | Teachers' Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods | 306 |
| Table 115 | Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Fairness of Budget Distribution Methods | 307 |
| Table 116 | Effectiveness of Approval Policies Utilised by Schools | 308 |
| Table 117 | Importance of Forms of Support to Teacher Involvement in Staff Development Activities | 310 |
| Table 118 | Usefulness of the Reporting Process | 311 |
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Coordinator of Staff Development Questionnaire</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Validating Committee</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>Validation Questionnaire</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E</td>
<td>Letter to Principal</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F</td>
<td>Responsibility for Specific Staff Development Management Functions Where Staff Development Committee Does Not Exist (NSW)</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G</td>
<td>The Content Focus of School Based Staff Development Activities</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H</td>
<td>Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J</td>
<td>Responsibility for Specific Staff Development Management Functions Where Staff Development Committee Does Not Exist (Queensland)</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix K</td>
<td>The Content Focus of School Based Staff Development Activities</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix L</td>
<td>Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix M</td>
<td>Staff Development Coordinators' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix N</td>
<td>Responsibility for Specific Staff Development Management Functions Where a Staff Development Committee Does Not Exist (Tasmania)</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix O</td>
<td>The Content Focus of School Based Staff Development Activities</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix P</td>
<td>Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Q</td>
<td>Staff Development Coordinators’ Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Organisational Structures According to Global Perceptions of the Staff Development Program</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>