

Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers in Solomon Islands

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ABSTRACT

Research shows teacher induction programmes are crucial in supporting new teachers as they move into the profession. Widely implemented in different ways in many countries they have a shared purpose, which is to provide beginning teachers with an effective and supported transition into the teaching profession. In Solomon Islands, beginning teacher induction is yet to be made formal, standardised and systematic.

This study investigated the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands. While there is considerable research on beginning teacher induction in other countries, especially the developed countries, very little research has been carried out in Melanesian countries such as Solomon Islands.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Five themes emerged as central to beginning secondary teacher induction in Solomon Islands: barriers to effective beginning teacher induction; lack of formal beginning teacher induction; mentoring as an induction approach; need for professional development; and the influence of school leadership.

Beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands encounter significant problems and challenges during their first years of teaching and for many they become barriers to success. The absence of any kind of formal induction programme for beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands appears to be a major contributor to the creation of these barriers. However, there was evidence of mentoring being used as an informal induction approach along with varying degrees of professional guidance and support by some school leaders. The positive influence of school leadership support was identified as a further critical factor in the induction of beginning secondary teachers.

The development of an effective induction programme has important implications for beginning teachers in Solomon Islands and those involved in their professional learning. It is recommended that Solomon Islands aim to develop a national beginning teacher induction programme with a strong commitment to ongoing professional development for all stakeholders and an emphasis on professional mentoring as an induction approach.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Teacher Induction in Solomon Islands

Prior to Solomon Islands gaining political independence, teachers in Solomon Islands were trained at the then British Solomon Islands Teachers College (BSITC). Later it became the Solomon Islands Teachers College (SITC). Since Solomon Islands gained political independence from England in 1978, the Solomon Islands education system has been influenced by the English way of doing things. Most Solomon Islands teachers then were trained at SITC. In 1984 the SITC was amalgamated with other local institutions like the Honiara Technical Institute (HTI), the Marine School, the Honiara Nursing School, and other schools to become the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). With the amalgamation of SICHE, the School of Education (SOE) became one of the schools within the SICHE set-up. From 1984 to this date most teachers in Solomon Islands are trained at SOE of SICHE.

BSTs have to undergo two years of teacher training at the School of Education (SOE) of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) before being deployed to schools, where teacher induction programmes in Solomon Islands secondary schools may be formal or informal in nature. Apart from SICHE, other Solomon Islanders attend teacher training either at the University of the South Pacific (USP) or tertiary institutions overseas.

After they graduate from the SOE of the SICHE, new secondary teachers in Solomon Islands enter the teaching profession as secondary probationers. Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) (2007b) defines the term secondary *probationers* as new secondary teacher graduates on their first appointment who shall serve a one year probationary period. Secondary probationers are assessed during their first year of teaching by MEHRD through its school inspectors. Education authorities (EAs) also have the authority to assess secondary probationers. If the assessment of secondary probationers does not take

place during the first year, the assessment should be carried out within the first six months of the second year. There is provision for the extension of the probationary period on the advice of the EA, which will then be approved by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC). If the assessment of a probationer reveals that he or she is professionally unfit and incapable of executing his or her duties, the EA is able to terminate the appointment after issuing one month's notice (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development [MEHRD], 2007b).

Since 2004, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development in Solomon Islands has been implementing an educational reform that sets the direction for the delivery of education services in the Solomon Islands education system. According to the reform, there are four cycles, with one cycle having three years. According to the Education Strategic Framework, (ESF), this current reform will be completed in 2015. The three year cycle of planning is called the National Education Action Plan (NEAP) usually reviewed at the end of a three year cycle. This means that the current cycle of planning is the 2010 - 2012 NEAP (MEHRD, 2009a). One important component in the educational reform that is currently taking place in Solomon Islands is the strengthening of the current Teaching Service Division (TSD) in MEHRD that is responsible for the coordination and management of teachers in the Solomon Islands (MEHRD, 2009a; MEHRD, 2009c). Apart from strengthening the TSD, MEHRD in its futuristic direction has gone one step further to design, plan and develop a system that will be responsible for the training and development of teachers in Solomon Islands.

In realising the importance of teacher training and development in the Solomon Islands education system, MEHRD set up a new division in 2004 within the ministry known as the Teacher Training and Development Office (TTDO). Since its establishment the TTDO division has grown, and in 2010 it had five officers at MEHRD headquarters in Honiara. Additional officers were appointed to the two provinces of Guadalcanal and Malaita. It is anticipated that in the future, all provinces in Solomon Islands will have TTDO officers (MEHRD, 2009d). As such, it seems Solomon Islands may be adopting a similar system which New

Zealand is currently employing, where the New Zealand Teacher's Council (NZTC) has a significant role in teacher development in New Zealand (New Zealand Teachers' Council [NZTC], 2010).

In light of the importance of teacher induction, Solomon Islands appears to be moving in the right direction regarding teacher induction for beginning teachers at the school level. Likewise, other countries have been employing similar teacher induction programmes at the school level. For example, in New Zealand teacher induction initially took an individualistic approach in the 1970s where the quality of beginning teacher was variable. It was later in the mid 1980s that it developed into a more organised system (Main & Hill, 2007). Today, New Zealand has a "well established policy, resourced by Government, for supporting provisionally registered teachers in their first two years of teaching" (NZTC, 2010).

Certainly Solomon Islands could learn from the path which New Zealand has followed in its development of induction programmes for beginning teachers, starting from local settings at school level in the 1970s to the more highly comprehensive system that is currently in place. At present, Solomon Islands has induction programmes for beginning secondary teachers at the school level as determined by each school's principal. As a result of the current reforms in the Solomon Islands' education system, especially in the area of teacher training and development, the TTDO has developed and published its first national policy, which is currently in its implementation period (MEHRD, 2007a). Furthermore, according to MEHRD's semi-annual report 2009, (MEHRD, 2009d), the TTDO is planning to develop a policy on teacher induction, which is expected to be implemented as soon as possible. It is anticipated that when this policy is in place, and upon implementation, there will be an improved and more coordinated induction programme for beginning teachers in Solomon Islands, both primary and secondary.

1.2 Statement of the Issue

The Solomon Islands Government (SIG), through the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), plans to achieve basic education by

2015 (MEHRD, 2007a). Basic Education refers to the primary years up to year 9 in secondary schooling (MEHRD, 2009a; MEHRD, 2009c). This is part of the education reforms in Solomon Islands that began in 2004. In order to achieve this vision, MEHRD is currently embarking on its sector-wide approach (SWAp) programme that is stipulated in the Education Strategic Framework 2007-2015 (MEHRD, 2007a). One of the major components of the framework is teacher training and development. This covers teacher training, teacher deployment, teacher professional development, and teacher professionalism. Teacher induction is part of this component.

The aim of this research is to find out the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands during their induction years in the secondary schools to which they are posted after graduation. Able and more experienced secondary school principals may develop guidelines for an induction programme for beginning secondary teachers but it appears most do not. Due to the lack of any national standardised teacher induction policy and guidelines, secondary school principals and more experienced teachers may not be equipped to provide appropriate professional support for beginning secondary teachers. Consequently, beginning secondary teachers may not receive adequate professional support to enable them to move successfully into the teaching profession ultimately having a detrimental effect on their chosen life long career. This could also be a contributing factor in some secondary school teachers not performing to the required standards while serving in secondary schools.

Therefore, in view of the above observations, particularly in my capacity as the former Chief Education Officer of the Secondary Division in MEHRD, it seemed timely to conduct this study, underpinned by the following research questions:

- (1) What are the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands
- (2) What are senior secondary teachers' (SSTs) views and experiences of induction programmes in Solomon Islands?
- (3) What are secondary school principals' views and experiences of induction programmes in Solomon Islands?

1.3 The Development of my Interest in Teacher Induction

My interest in teacher induction developed when I was first posted as a beginning secondary teacher to my first school in the 1990s. I have spent a considerable time during my career in the education sector in Solomon Islands. I experienced what it was like to be a beginning secondary teacher. Later in my teaching career as an experienced secondary teacher, I realised the importance of the support which I had provided for beginning secondary teachers.

From 2004 to 2008, I served as the Chief Education Officer (Secondary) at the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. Those five years gave me an opportunity to oversee the administration of all secondary schools in the country. From 2004 to 2006, one of my main responsibilities in MEHRD was to post beginning secondary teachers to secondary schools throughout the country.

My interest in undertaking this study was further enhanced when I took the paper “Developing Educational Leadership: through Coaching and Mentoring” at the University of Waikato, as part of my post-graduate studies. Having completed my post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership at the end of 2009, I realised there were factors that influence the induction of beginning secondary teachers. Teacher educational institutions may not prepare beginning teachers sufficiently for the reality of classroom teaching (Wang & Odell, 2002), so it is important that schools provide necessary support in the induction of beginning teachers. An example of this support is school leadership.

To date there has been no study of teacher induction in Solomon Islands although as indicated earlier, it is intended. From reading the literature about teacher induction, I noted that it has been a topic of international research for at least three decades indicating its importance for the education of teachers. According to Main and Hill (2007), teacher induction in New Zealand has been developed into a more organized, humanistic system. Certainly research suggests it is important that teacher induction is organised formally and systematically because beginning teachers, although being new to the profession, are often also expected to perform like experienced teachers (Joerger & Bremer, 2001).

I had an opportunity in 2009, to share with a colleague my interest in researching secondary teacher induction in Solomon Islands. As the former head of school of the School of Education (SOE) of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE), her experiences in teacher education had motivated her to pursue a PhD in Education on the topic “The Self-Perceptions of Beginning Secondary Teachers about their Professional Learning Experiences in the Solomon Islands Context”. My informal interaction with her at the Faculty of Education of the University of Waikato while we were studying together influenced my decision to pursue this topic.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will be useful for secondary school principals in Solomon Islands. They could assist secondary school leaders to put in place more effective induction programmes that will provide the necessary personal and professional support for beginning secondary teachers during their first few years at their new secondary schools. While the secondary schools may have already in place some form of induction programmes to assist beginning secondary teachers settle in, findings from this study could help secondary leaders to design and implement more effective and well supported induction programmes.

Furthermore, the information from this study will be useful for government organizations in the Solomon Islands, particularly, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), in their endeavour to develop and formulate much needed policies and guidelines for teacher induction in the country. As the TTDO Division of MEHRD is currently embarking to design, develop and implement the first ever policy on teacher induction in Solomon Islands, the information from this study could be timely, and used as a body of knowledge to inform the policy. Similarly, the information from this study could be useful for the provincial, church, and private education authorities, and the secondary school boards to develop induction programmes for their schools. In addition, the information that is gathered in this study may contribute to the body

of knowledge on teacher induction in secondary schools in other developing countries in Melanesia.

1.5 The Context of the Study

This section will cover the geographical and physical features, as well the socio-economic and cultural context of Solomon Islands. It is important to understand these features because they are factors that influence the decisions made in the delivery of education services in Solomon Islands.

1.5.1 Geographical and Physical Features

Solomon Islands is a developing country, that occupies 777,000 square kilometres in the southwest Pacific Ocean, between Latitudes 5 to 12 degrees South of the equator and Longitudes 154 and 162 degrees (Stevenson, 1988). It is a small island nation which is made up of a scattered archipelago of islands. The small island nation has six main islands, namely Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Isabel, New Georgia, Malaita, and San Cristobal (Makira). Apart from the six main islands, there are many smaller islands. The capital city is called Honiara, and it is situated in Guadalcanal. Solomon Islands has a total land area of 28,369 square kilometres. The closest neighbour countries of Solomon Islands are Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. It is approximately 1,900 kilometres northeast of Australia (Akao, 2008; Aruhu, 2010; Pollard, 2000).

Solomon Islands has a hot climate throughout the year. All the six main islands have rain forested mountains with deep narrow valleys. These mountains and valleys come from volcanic origins. The coastal parts of the main islands have coconut palms and fringing reefs. Some of the smaller islands are mainly atolls, raised coral reefs and lagoons. These physical features have a significant impact on logistics, transport, communication and the effective delivery of educational services throughout the country (Aruhu, 2010; Malasa, 2007; Vasethe, 2010).

1.5.2 Socio-economic and Cultural Context

Solomon Islands is made up of diverse people with different cultures, languages and customs (Akao, 2008; Aruhu, 2010; Vasethe, 2010). The population of

Solomon Islands is 515, 870 (“2009 Census results unveiled,” 2010), mainly Melanesians and some Polynesians, Micronesians, Chinese, and others. There are approximately 85 different spoken languages in Solomon Islands. English is the official language that is used in government offices, in schools and in the business sector, apart from the Solomon Islands pidgin (lingua franca) being used every day to communicate between different ethnic and island groups. About 84 percent of the population live in the rural areas, and about 16 percent live in urban areas. Christianity is the biggest religion in the Solomon Islands, and the five main Christian denominations are Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM), Roman Catholic (RC), South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC), Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) and the United Church. (Akao, 2008; Aruhu, 2010; Solomon Islands Government, 2000; Vasethe, 2010). Apart from the five predominant denominations, there are small pentecostal movements and religious groups that call themselves the Solomon Islands Full Gospel Association (SIFGA).

Approximately 80% of the population of Solomon Islands live as subsistence farmers and work on the land for their survival. These people do not have formal employment. Instead they sell the surplus from their products (crops and marine resources) to buy their basic needs in order to survive. The extended family network is very important, so family members have certain obligations to their extended family, clan and tribal groupings. The social structure of many tribal groups and communities is mainly egalitarian which places more emphasis on the acquired system of traditional social structure. Most people who live in rural villages promote this traditional social structure which demonstrates village life in Solomon Islands (Akao, 2008; Aruhu, 2010; Malasa, 2007).

1.6 The Education System in Solomon Islands

The education system in Solomon Islands is administered under the Education Act 1978 (Education Act, 1978). This Act defines the roles and responsibilities of the Minister of Education, Education Authorities (EAs), Secondary School Boards, Primary School Committees, Secondary School Principals and Primary School Head-teachers (Akao, 2008; Aruhu, 2010; Education Act, 1978; Vasethe, 2010). Solomon Islands’ education system includes Early Childhood Education (ECE),

Primary Education (PE), Secondary Education (SE) which has the three types of schools, namely Community High Schools (CHS), Provincial Secondary Schools (PSS), and National Secondary Schools (NSS). Furthermore, the Solomon Islands Education system includes Tertiary Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (MEHRD, 2007a; MEHRD, 2009a; Sisiolo, 2010).

1.6.1 Secondary Education

There are three types of secondary schools in Solomon Islands. These include the National Secondary Schools (NSS), the Provincial Secondary Schools (PSS), and the Community High Schools (CHS). All the three categories of secondary school teach the same school curriculum, and administer the same national examinations at form three (year nine) and form five (year eleven). The National Government is responsible for the payment of the salaries of school leaders and teachers across the country (MEHRD, 2007b; Sisiolo, 2010; Vasethe, 2010). In 2008, there were 185 secondary schools in Solomon Islands (MEHRD, 2009a).

The first group of secondary schools in Solomon Islands is known as the National Secondary Schools (NSS). These are top secondary schools and they select and enrol the best academic students on merit as the result of the Solomon Islands Secondary Entrance Examination (SISEE) at the end of year six and on the national Form three examinations at the end of year nine. There are nine NSSs and they enrol students nationally. All the NSSs are boarding secondary schools, except for King George VI School which allows 20% of its intake to be day scholars because it is located in Honiara, the capital city of Solomon Islands. NSSs provide education for forms one to seven (year seven to thirteen). There are nine NSS in total. Two of these NSS are administered and controlled by the National Government, and the rest are administered and controlled by the five main church denominations in Solomon Islands (MEHRD, 2007a; Malasa, 2007; Sikua, 2002; Sisiolo, 2010; Vasethe, 2010)

The second group of secondary schools in Solomon Islands is known as the Provincial Secondary School (PSS). These secondary schools mainly select students within their provincial boundaries through the SISEE at the end of year

six, and they enroll the second best academic students. Students who perform well academically in PSSs during the national form three examinations are selected to do form four (year ten) in the NSSs. All the PSSs are boarding secondary schools, except one which is located in the city of Honiara. This particular PSS called Honiara High School has 100% intake of students as day scholars. The PSS provide education for forms three to six (year nine to twelve). There are sixteen PSS in Solomon Islands. All these secondary schools are administered and controlled by the Provincial Education Authorities. The bigger provinces have two to three PSS, and the smaller provinces have one PSS (MEHRD, 2007a; Malasa, 2007; Sikua, 2002; Sisiolo, 2010; Vasethe, 2010).

The third group of secondary schools in Solomon Islands is known as the Community High Schools (CHS). These secondary schools mainly select and enrol students from within their local catchment areas. This type of school was started in 1995, and they are mostly owned and managed by the local communities (Sikua, 2002; Vasethe, 2010). The majority of the CHS are extensions of existing primary schools, and most of them offer secondary education for forms one to three (year seven to nine). Some have begun to offer secondary education for forms four, five, six and seven (year ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen). CHSs are mainly day secondary schools, however, there are some which have limited boarding facilities (Sikua, 2002; Vasethe, 2010). In 2008, there are 161 CHS in Solomon Islands (MEHRD, 2009a).

1.6.2 Tertiary Education and Technical and Vocational Education Training

In addition, there are three well established tertiary institutions in Solomon Islands, and these the University of the South Pacific (USP) which has a campus in Honiara, the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) Open Campus, and the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, being the only state tertiary institution in Solomon Islands. Other tertiary education providers in Solomon Islands are regarded as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (MEHRD, 2009a; Sisiolo, 2010).

As a regional university, USP has its other campuses in the twelve member countries, so Solomon Islands as a member country has its USP campus in Honiara. USP in Honiara offers preliminary, foundation and degree courses using the distance and flexible learning mode. Through this learning mode, the USP Honiara campus has been able to provide tertiary education for students in remote and isolated provinces in Solomon Islands. Apart from the distance and flexible learning mode, the USP Honiara campus also provides face to face courses to those students who physically reside in the capital city of Honiara (MEHRD, 2009a; Sisiolo, 2010).

Through its intention to expand its delivery of tertiary education to other countries, the University of Papua New Guinea set up its Open Campus in Honiara in March 2009. This took place after SICHE and UPNG signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2008. Since its establishment, UPNG Open Campus in Solomon Islands has been offering formal courses such as a certificate in community studies, and other diploma level courses. Like USP Honiara Campus, UPNG Open Campus also delivers most of its courses through the distance and flexible learning mode. Furthermore, there are also summer courses offered at certain periods (MEHRD, 2007a; Sisiolo, 2010).

The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) provides tertiary education in academic, technical and vocational areas. Its qualifications range from certificate to advanced diploma levels. SICHE has eight schools and these include the School of Education (SOE), the School Finance and Administration (SFA), the School of Industrial Development (SID), the School of General Studies (SGS), the School of Marine and Fisheries Studies (SMFS), the School of Natural Resources (SNR), the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SNHS), and the School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH). The total enrolment of students studying at SICHE in 2009 was 2383 (MEHRD, 2009a; Sisiolo, 2010).

The five main church denominations and other private stakeholders provide the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Solomon Islands. These institutions were formerly known as rural training centres (RTC). Such

institutions offer technical and vocational courses, and these courses are intended for Solomon Islanders who may not have the opportunity to continue their education in the secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Courses at TVET centres are designed to equip students with self reliance skills, self employment skills, and other skills that may be required in other employment sectors of the country. In 2009, there were 32 TVET centres in Solomon Islands, enrolling a total of 2753 students. There were 278 teaching staff (MEHRD, 2009a; Sisiolo, 2010).

1.7 Overview of the Thesis

In this first of six chapters, I have introduced the thesis and have stated the reasons why I considered the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands a topic worthy of study. Chapter two contains the literature review and examines the current literature about the induction of beginning secondary teachers. The third chapter presents the research design for this study and includes the research methodology, method and ethical considerations. It also includes a description of the research process. The fourth chapter presents the findings of the research and illustrates the themes and ideas that emerged through the study. The fifth chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature in this topic. Finally, the sixth chapter is the conclusion. It summarises the research findings, highlights the limitations of this study, and provides suggestions for further research. My recommendations to initiate change in the education system in Solomon Islands are presented

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this literature review attention is drawn to literature pertaining to the induction of beginning teachers into the teaching profession. Factors identified as being important to effective beginning teacher induction are examined. It is intended that it will guide the scope of my study about the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands. There is very little literature on this topic in the context of Solomon Islands therefore most of the literature reviewed has originated from studies in other countries. Given the lack of research in Solomon Islands, this review of international literature on beginning teacher induction should serve to provide valuable information and insight into the kinds of induction programmes which may be significant for the future development of a beginning teacher induction programme for Solomon Islands.

The review considers and critiques the literature using the themes of: problems and challenges for beginning teachers as they transition into the profession; the characteristics of beginning teacher induction; the purpose of beginning teacher induction; beginning teachers' professional learning and development; mentoring as an induction approach; mentoring for professional development and learning; and the influence of school leadership on induction.

After student teachers graduate from their initial teacher education institutions they are appointed to schools where they will most likely complete the probationary period, which varies among different countries in length. During this part of the professional life of beginning teachers the process of induction into the teaching profession is critical to their professional learning and development.

Different countries have their own systems of teacher induction (Alhija & Fresko, 2010). For example, in Switzerland, teacher induction begins during the student teaching period and is completed when they move into classrooms where observations between beginning teachers and experienced teachers occur (Wong, Britton & Ganser, 2005). In New Zealand, induction programmes may also be termed ‘advice and guidance’ programme. This refers to the comprehensive and educative framework of support provided to provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) as they begin their teaching practice in classrooms (NZTC, 2010). PRTs have a reduced teaching load, and the induction programme is intended to provide support for PRTs during the two year period which leads to their full registration as secondary teachers (NZTC, 2010). In Papua New Guinea (PNG), beginning teacher induction varies from school to school. Common induction activities include in-service courses, consultations with experienced professionals, and school visits. Induction activities take place during unofficial school hours and during school breaks. Unlike New Zealand teachers, PNG beginning teachers do not receive release time and also have heavy workloads to manage (Deruage, 2007).

In Solomon Islands, most teachers graduate from the School of Education (SOE) of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). After graduation, they are posted to schools in which they serve their probationary year (MEHRD, 2007). It is during their probationary year that beginning teachers in Solomon Islands should be participating in induction programmes in their respective schools. However, beginning teacher induction programmes in Solomon Islands only take place at the school level, with most occurring in informal ways and according to school leaders’ own understanding and experiences of teacher induction. Therefore, the main factors that influence the socialisation and professional development of beginning teachers in Solomon Islands is the local context (Alhija & Fresko, 2010), where the culture of each school and its community have a significant impact on the induction of beginning teachers.

A number of studies such as those by Bubb and Earley (2006); Cameron, Baker and Lovett (2006); and the OECD (2005) have emphasised the important role

induction plays in the success of beginning teachers. More recently beginning teacher induction has been further investigated in studies by Langdon (2007) and Piggot-Irvine, Aitken, Ritchie, & Ferguson (2009).

2.2 Problems and Challenges for Beginning Teachers

While the main focus for this literature review is the induction of beginning secondary teachers, it is important to note there are commonalities between the problems and challenges for both primary and secondary teachers. A number of studies have indicated that all beginning teachers (both primary and secondary) experience some common problems during their first years of teaching (Brook & Grady, 1996; Deruage, 2007; Lang, 1996; Tillman, 2005). In particular, Lam (2005) revealed that beginning teachers can encounter significant problems and challenges during their first year of teaching.

Lam (2005) found that problems and challenges for beginning teachers arose from four sources; personal adaptability, classroom teaching, administrative and support structure, and relationships with others. Three decades ago Veenman (1984) identified one of the most common problems faced by beginning teachers as classroom management. Perhaps not surprisingly more recently Tillman (2005) and Simpson (2006) highlighted classroom management as still being a common problem for this group. According to these authors beginning teachers encounter the problem of classroom management during their first years of teaching because they do not yet have sufficient experience (Gold, 1996), and managing Parkinson and Pritchard (2005) have identified dealing with the behaviour of students as a particularly common issue for beginning teachers. A second common problem for beginning teachers according to Simpson (2006) is the lack of teaching and learning resources. Both Deruage (2007) and Lang (1999) encountered this problem in their beginning teacher research.

The lack of support from their more experienced colleagues is a third common problem frequently referred to in the literature (Cameron, 2009; Deruage, 2007; Simpson, 2006). According to McCann and Johannessen (2008) and Goodlad

(1984) this lack of support can lead to isolation, with beginning teachers often spending considerable time in their classrooms which Lang (1996) has suggested can cause stress and tiredness. In addition, Le Maistre and Pare (2010) have revealed that first year teachers frequently have a feeling of isolation when they do not know who to seek help from. Yet isolation can be minimised if beginning teachers are able to take the initiative to connect themselves with their more experienced colleagues through for instance, regular meetings and informal discussions (McCann & Johannessen, 2008).

As well as facing these more common problems, beginning teachers face additional ones such as time management (Simpson, 2006), dealing with parents (Brook & Grady 1996) and dealing with the issues that arise in the day to day life of a school. Given such problems as those described, it would be unreasonable to expect beginning teachers to always perform consistently and competently during their first years of teaching without effective guidance from experienced teachers.

While not the case in New Zealand where PRTs are given a reduced teaching load to enable them to attend induction programmes and professional development activities (NZTC, 2010), Wang and Odell (2008) have highlighted that often ‘first-year teachers assume responsibilities similar to those of experienced teachers while learning their job with limited experience and preparation’ (p. 133). Both Deruage (2007), and McCann and Johannessen (2008) have pointed out that even though beginning teachers lack the necessary experience, they often have a heavy workload. Amongst their many challenges, beginning teachers may also be given a wide range of non-academic duties and responsibilities (Gordon & Maxey, 2000) such as “collecting money and forms, completing administrative paperwork, and serving as surrogate parents” expressed (Deruage, 2007, p. 20). Furthermore, beginning teachers, especially in secondary schools, may also face challenges when they are required to teach subjects they are unfamiliar with (Fidler, as cited in Deruage, 2007). In addition, Howe (2006) has stated that beginning teachers are sometimes given the most challenging classes to teach, with more lessons to teach, as well as having more extra-curricular activities to do than their experienced colleagues.

A particular challenge for beginning teachers is the transition from initial teacher education to the school and classroom (Deruage, 2007). Langdon (2007) has described this transition as being one of, from students of teaching to teachers of students that requires beginning teachers to become responsible for classrooms of students. Alhija and Fresko (2010) have also highlighted that the transition which beginning teachers go through comprises a critical part of their teacher development as they begin to face the realities and responsibilities of their work.

In their first year of teaching, beginning teachers are faced with the complex expectations of teaching. This complexity raises the issue of how they are able to survive their first year of teaching. Beginning teachers bring with them their anticipations (Moir, 1999) and expectations of teaching (Deruage, 2007), with the realities of the job appearing as they experience actual classroom teaching. Described aptly by Veenman (1984) as ‘reality shock’ (p. 143), Huberman’s (1993) assertion that beginning teachers who are able to swim can survive, and those who are not might sink along the way is unfortunately also true on occasion. Beginning teachers cannot do their work without professional support, and it is this element of beginning teachers’ transition to teaching that is the focus of this next part of the literature review.

2.3 Teacher Induction

The intent of induction for beginning teachers is to support the transition to teaching through the provision of an effective programme which promotes these teachers’ professional learning and development. It has been established that there is a “positive relationship” between “induction and retention” as well as the “relationship between experiences in the early years of a teacher’s career and future practice” (Langdon, 2007, p. 1).

Globally, teacher induction programmes have been developed and implemented in different ways over time with formal and systematic teacher induction programmes developed in the 1970s and 1980s (Stephens & Moskowitz, 1997).

According to Brooks (2005) teacher induction was necessitated in the United States when teacher quality and working conditions became of great concerns to the education authorities. In Japan, teacher induction was initiated in 1988, while in China, teacher induction was formalised in 1994 (Stephens & Moskowitz, 1997).

Teacher induction in New Zealand was initially developed in the 1970s employing an individualistic approach in but in the mid 1980s was developed into what Main and Hill (2007) have termed a more organised, humanistic system. New Zealand now has a well established induction programme with a recent pilot programme leading to substantial changes due to be implemented in 2011 (NZTC, 2009). New Zealand's teacher induction programmes for all education sectors are funded by the government to provide support for provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) during their first two years of teaching (NZTC, 2010).

Langdon (2007) has defined teacher induction as a process that provides support for beginning teachers to advance their teaching and learning in schools while Wong et al., (2005) have described it as a "highly organised and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and components, that typically continues as a sustained process for the first two to five years of a teacher's career" (p. 379). The National Governor's Association's (2002) definition similarly defines it as the "process of socialization to the teaching profession, adjustment to the procedures and mores of a school site and school system, and development of effective instructional and management skills" (p. 3). And more recently the New Zealand Teachers' Council (2010) has defined beginning teacher induction as the "comprehensive and educative framework of support provided to provisionally registered teachers as they begin their teaching practice in real situations" (p. 1).

2.4 Purpose of Teacher Induction

Different professions employ different strategies to support new graduates in getting settled into their new work environment. For instance, Kelley (2004)

highlighted examples of such professionals such as ‘residents in medicine, interns in architecture, and associates in law’ (p. 438). Nurses have to undergo a certain practical period and induction before completing the required standards in order to be certified as registered nurses. For example, during their initial period of employment in the first six months of employment Kelly and Ahern (2008) reported that nurses also face some form of induction experience. While it is a contested view, teachers do belong to a profession. As professionals, beginning teachers are required to achieve certain standards during their induction programmes. For example in New Zealand PRTs are expected to fulfil the requirements needed to obtain the status of a fully certified teacher, and also they need to demonstrate a high level of professionalism (NZTC, 2010). Therefore, teacher induction fulfils the purpose of assisting beginning teachers so they can realise their potential to become part of the teaching profession. As stated previously teacher induction is intended to prepare beginning teachers in their transition into their new roles.

Howe (2006) contended it is important to provide effective induction programmes for new teachers because effective teacher induction has benefits for the teaching profession. These benefits are identified as ‘attracting better candidates; reduced attrition; improved job satisfaction; enhanced professional development and improved teaching and learning’ (p. 287). Furthermore, it is crucial for an effective teacher induction programme to consider the ‘aspirations and needs’ of beginning teacher and be ‘responsive’ to the profile of the beginning teachers (NZTC, 2010, p. 2). The above attributes and principles are seen as benefits of effective teacher induction can also be interchangeably viewed as intentions or purpose of teacher induction. Considering the limits of this study, the purpose of induction to be covered in this literature review will focus on two attributes; these are the enhancing of professional development, and improving teaching and learning which is related to student achievement.

Brooks (2005) highlighted nine common features of teacher induction; orientation, mentoring, adjustment of working conditions, release time, professional development, collegial collaboration, teacher assessment, programme evaluation,

and follow-up. In addition Stephens and Moskowitz (1997) noted that the most commonly used teacher induction strategies of mentoring and in-service workshops and trainings were effective. Other strategies might include internships, model-classroom observations, evaluations and observations, informal guidance, and handbooks and orientation.

2.4.1 Enhance Teachers' Professional Development

Wong et al., (2005) emphasised that teachers should be lifelong learners. This indicates that teachers need to be professionals who continuously engage in learning to advance their teaching practice. As such, one purpose of teacher induction should be to enhance the professional development of teachers. Furthermore Howe (2006) states that teacher induction is intended to assist teachers to construct “professional identity” (p. 292) which helps to identify them as members of the teaching profession.

In New Zealand, a teacher induction programme might also be called an advice and guidance programme (NZTC, 2010)). This programme is considered to be a significant contributor to the new professional life of these teachers. It implies that professional development is part of life for teachers, and is indeed a lifelong journey. The NZTC has documented that PRTs in New Zealand are to be given the opportunity to ensure they are provided with the professional development activities to enhance their practice. Some examples of New Zealand's professional development activities include:

observing other teachers and learners in another learning centre; discussions with other teachers such as guidance counsellors, senior staff or with advisers or specialist education services; studying professional material, analysing your own professional needs and development, and planning for better teaching; participating in courses and meetings, which require release from your teaching duties. (NZTC, 2010)

In order for PRTs in New Zealand to participate in professional development activities they are given release time from their teaching. In the first year PRTs receive a 0.2 allowance and second year PRTs receive a 0.1 allowance. These allowances are given to allow PRTs to engage in professional development

activities (Cameron, Baker, & Lovett, 2006; NZTC, 2010; Wong et al., 2005). Somewhat differently, in Japan, beginning teachers are given 125 days of professional development during their first year under the supervision of mentor teachers and senior teachers (Howe, 2006).

2.4.2 Improve Teaching and Learning for Student Achievement Through Acculturation

Induction activities are meant to familiarise the beginning teachers with the teaching culture and the culture of their school. This process has been highlighted by Howe (2006) as ‘teacher acculturation’.

When the process of teacher acculturation (Howe, 2006) takes place effectively in schools, beginning teachers settle down and effectively plan and teach their lessons. However, when the process of teacher acculturation does not occur, beginning teachers start to face challenges in their classroom teaching. Interestingly, Wang and Odell (2008) argue that enabling beginning teachers to settle down in their new schools does not necessarily lead to helping them become effective teachers. It is in this regard that properly designed induction programmes for beginning teachers is vital - they need to receive appropriate support to enable them advance in their teaching career. Howe (2006), Cameron (2009), Langdon (2007) and others have identified such induction support as being in the form of orientations, mentoring, observations and in-service workshops. According to the NZTC (2010) mentoring is a common component to induction but is not the only component. Howe (2006) has also pointed out that the focus of the support from mentor teachers should be ‘on assistance rather than assessment’ (p. 293). Mentoring as an induction approach is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

When beginning teachers participate in professional development activities as part of on-going learning, they can contribute to the success of their practice and be supported to become effective teachers (Howe, 2006). Wong et al., (2005) reported that when beginning teachers participate in induction programmes their participation enables them to learn collectively, as well as enhancing their teaching practice thus enhancing their students’ learning.

Research shows that if new teachers are well supported in their induction activities they will be able to provide effective teaching that has the potential to improve student achievement (Langdon, 2007). As Wang and Odell (2008) have reported, in order to achieve high student achievement there has to be effective teaching, and effective teaching has been shown to take place when beginning teachers in particular regularly engage in professional development activities (Wong et al., 2005) and activities that support the acculturation process. Hence it is vital that comprehensive and well supported induction programmes are designed for beginning teachers (NZTC, 2010).

2.5 Beginning Teacher Learning and Development

Research from Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman (2005), has shown that teacher learning is a critical element for teachers and students in schools (as cited in Langdon, 2007). According to Flores (2003) beginning teacher learning first takes place in school contexts and cultures and second, it is socially constructed by each person with others. In addition, Flores (2003) highlighted that as beginning teachers learn, they also make sense of the world by their constant social construction of knowledge. They do this by relating to their past experiences and knowledge which they have acquired previously in a range of ways.

2.5.1 Learning and Development in Stages

Kagan (as cited in Langdon, 2007) analysed the notion of learning to teach by relating it to the stages of pre-service student teachers and beginning teachers. From this analysis, Kagan further synthesised Berliner's model of professional development which suggests that learning to teach has five stages of professional growth.

As reported by Langdon (2007) the first stage of professional growth takes place when meta-cognition increases and beginning teachers become familiar with their students and classroom settings. From this point beginning teachers start to

change their knowledge and beliefs. The second stage of professional growth is the beginning teachers' acquisition of knowledge about their students. As beginning teachers acquire knowledge about their students, beginning teachers also change their own views about themselves. The third stage of professional growth refers to the time when beginning teachers changed their attention from themselves as individuals to their commitment to planning and creating their lessons for the learning of their students. The fourth component of professional growth is when beginning teachers are able to strengthen their delivery of lessons and their management of classrooms. And the fifth component of professional growth is the beginning teachers' ability to solve problems.

Apart from highlighting Berliner's model of professional development, Langdon (2007) also reported on Fuller's model of teacher development, which proposes three components of teacher growth: "prospective teachers during early pre-service are concerned about their own progress as teachers (self concerns); during early field experiences their concern is about survival (task concerns); later in teaching their focus is on successful teaching experiences (impact concerns)".

According to research by Achinstein and Barrett (2004) and Feiman-Nemser (2001) models of teacher learning and development in stages have the potential to impact the learning of beginning teachers. These studies argue against Fuller's three component model of beginning teachers' professional growth, which emphasises the initial concerns of teachers. Pigge and Marso (1997) cited in Langdon (2007) report that teachers go through three stages of growth.

In their study Pigge and Marso's (1997) results indicated that teachers' development stages take place early in their careers. During these periods, teachers develop a relationship between their concerns and how they feel about their concerns. The study also indicated that the way in which changes take place are different according to the teachers' own capabilities. This implies that the changes happen according to the individual teacher's way of doing things.

2.6 Mentoring as an Induction Approach

Much of the literature and policy documents suggest that mentoring is an approach frequently used in induction programmes and is a way to address some of the challenges faced beginning teachers and address concerns about teacher retention (Langdon, 2010). The NZTC (2010) defines mentoring as “the provision of an experienced colleague who is skilled and resourced with time, recognition and training to guide, support, give feedback to and facilitate evidence informed, reflective learning conversations with the PRT” (p. 1).

Brook and Grady (1996) noted that mentoring is an integral part of any induction programme because beginning teachers need the service and support of a mentor during their induction. Research has since shown that a mentor does in fact nurture beginning teachers to be effective in their first year of teaching (Gold, 1996; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Villani, 2002). It is important to note that a mentoring programme needs to have an “educative mentor” (NZTC, 2010, p. 1) because mentoring is not merely to provide emotional support and give quick information to the new teacher, but to provide highly skilled and highly valued support in the teaching profession (NZTC, 2010).

On the other hand, some researchers have argued that much of the research on mentoring is overwhelmingly optimistic (Little, 1990; Martinez, Conroy, Balding & Williams, 2003). These authors contended that the role of a mentor can be both positive and negative even though most studies tend to highlight the positive impact of mentoring. It appears there needs to be more systematic research on mentoring to indicate the actual consequences of mentoring on the practices of beginning teachers. In support of this argument Cullingford (2006) contended that many studies concentrate only on how to design, develop and implement mentoring, but did not analyse what actually happens as a consequence of mentoring. Furthermore, Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) argued that many studies on mentoring have limitations. It also appears that some mentoring programmes are not delivered effectively, so there are issues of sustainability. As a result, Le

Maistre and Pare (2010) argued that many beginning teachers still do not receive the support from well designed induction and mentoring programmes.

Nevertheless, there are also well structured, sustained and comprehensive induction and mentoring programmes in some parts of the world that have been effectively implemented and monitored (Wong et al., 2005). Such induction and mentoring programmes enhance the learning of beginning teachers. Mentors in a mentoring programme provide emotional support for beginning teachers. An example of this emotional support is contained in the OECD report (2005, p. 121) which describes a mentor as a “good role model” who supports beginning teachers to become professional teachers. Good role model mentors have the necessary skills and knowledge to impart this to both experienced and beginning teacher colleagues. Despite this advantage of mentoring, Le Maistre and Pare (2010) also argued that at times it is difficult to expect a mentor to support beginning teachers. However, advocates of mentoring argue that there are mentoring strategies which promote transformation of schools and enhance learning of students (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). In addition, Le Maistre and Pare (2010) highlighted that a mentoring programme helps the “school to be a learning community” (p. 560).

Langdon (2007) reported that policy makers at the government level and school administrators view mentoring as a strategy to improve teacher quality and retention. According to a study conducted by Ingersoll and Smith (2004) mentoring does make a difference to the retention rate of beginning teachers. However, Langdon (2007) questioned whether mentoring really has an impact on the quality of beginning teachers and the learning of students. Nevertheless, various researchers have indicated that mentoring is an important approach to teacher induction programmes (Black, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Owen, 2004). In addition, Ingersoll (2007) and Wong (2004) highlighted that mentoring is the most common strategy of induction programmes.

Despite being applauded as the most common strategy to teacher induction research has also indicated that some teacher induction programmes conduct

mentoring in a shallow manner. Such mentoring programmes limit their support to beginning teachers, and only address basic questions when beginning teachers arrive at school. In order to provide a better educative mentoring, Norman and Feiman-Nemser (2005) suggested that mentors need to come up with their reason for good teaching. In this way mentors will view the beginning teachers as learners. However, Carver and Katz (2004) argue that they expect educative mentoring to challenge beginning teachers' practice, but they have not proven this expectation. They propose that educative mentoring should be tailored so that standards based assessment of beginning teachers is also taken into consideration.

2.7 Mentoring for Professional Development and Learning

One important consideration when mentoring beginning teachers in an induction programme is to realise that individual beginning teachers are entering the teaching profession with unique needs. According to Brook and Grady (1996), individual beginning teachers have diverse needs and the different school contexts influence the settling in of beginning teachers. Therefore, orientation and induction programmes for beginning teachers need to be tailored to the unique needs of beginning teachers. Furthermore, Tillman (2005) highlights that mentoring of beginning teachers is also affected by the context and culture of schools. For instance, mentors in a collaborative school context are more effective than mentors in an individual school context (Williams & Prestage, 2002). This implies that school contexts may either impede or enhance mentoring (Langdon, 2007). Despite the negative experiences, mentoring as one induction approach enables both mentors and beginning teachers to learn from one another (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000).

Smith (2002) reported that mentoring benefits both novice teachers and veteran teachers. This is supported by Owen (2004) who claimed that mentoring enhances the professional development of teachers. Professional development fosters the learning of new skills and understandings, and this is evident when mentors receive training of how to properly nurture the mentee. Brook and Grady (1996) had earlier argued that the lack of training of mentors could be problematic and

that this issue should be resolved before embarking on the mentoring programme. Nevertheless, when mentors are properly trained, they have the potential to provide very good mentoring for beginning teachers. As such, Moir and Bloom (2003) emphasised that one important factor to implementing a successful mentoring programme is the proper selection, training and professional development of mentors. Furthermore, Lam (2005) stressed that the ‘selection and training of mentors is a crucial part of mentoring’ (p. 15), where mentors require to have ongoing sessions on effective mentoring.

It is important that mentors are professionally prepared before they take up mentoring roles. According to Holloway (2001) to have someone just as a mentor is not enough. If a mentor is present, but he or she does not have the necessary skills and experience, the delivery of the mentoring support may not be effective, because the skills of providing proper guidance are vital to the success of beginning teachers. Everton and Smithey (2000) reported that novice teachers who had been guided by professionally trained mentors achieved higher level of teaching skills than novice teachers who had been guided by non trained mentors. Therefore, as Andrews & Martin (2003, p. 8) emphasised “prospective mentors should participate in professional development activities to learn about the mentoring process and what is expected of them before assuming the role of mentor”.

In re-iterating the necessity for promoting professional development activities for mentors, Feiman-Nemser (2003) highlighted that formal mentoring that emphasises the need to nurture a beginning teacher is a professional practice that can be learned. Mentors should undergo about a week of background training. This type of training should provide the mentors with continuous opportunities for study and problem solving. As guidance for practitioners, Bowden (2004) provided a top ten list for being an effective mentor. These are establish reciprocal collaboration through trust, offer a shoulder of support, share the contents of your toolbox, open the treasure chest of community resources, provide on-the-spot answers, model effective strategies, reconsider your own practice, be available

over time, demonstrate professionalism, and gain new ideas and enthusiasm for the job.

Successful mentoring programmes indicate that mentoring has to be collaboratively carried out, so that the process may have allowance for individual participation and active engagement (Owen, 2004). Through collaborative partnership, the relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher should be reciprocal and established upon trust and respect for each other (McCord & Bowden, 2003), so the relationships between each other are positive (Bowden, 2004). In earlier research, Brennan, Thames and Roberts (1999) also highlighted that the establishment and development of positive relationships between beginning teachers and experienced teachers promote a spirit of collaboration, and this signals the importance of mutual respect in the teaching profession. However, Lam (2005) contended that mentoring depends on full participation of both mentors and novice teachers. If they work together sincerely, they will benefit from mentoring programmes, however, if they are not cooperating well, it may just be a forced relationship and may not achieve what they intended to achieve.

Nevertheless, mentoring relationship requires careful planning and coordination. Before a mentoring relationship is confirmed, there needs to be a proper matching between mentors and mentees (Lam, 2005). They need to believe and have trust (McCord & Bowden, 2003), for each other. Then they will establish good relationships between themselves. Apart from establishing and maintaining good relationships between beginning teachers and veteran teachers, mentoring also promotes professional development through proper coordination between relevant professional bodies that organise mentoring seminars and workshops. However, Keller (2006) noted that there may also be weaknesses in any process, when there is poor communication between any mentoring programme and the supporting authority, or when there is limited collaboration between the mentors and other concerned professional organisations.

Thomas (2007) reported that an example of a professional body that offers such professional development programme is the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA),

which hosts the annual conference for beginning teachers in the States. This conference focuses on the needs of the beginning teachers in their first year of teaching. Although McCann and Johannessen (2008) suggested that such conference is advantageous in connecting the beginning teachers with a bigger professional body, the approach is also viewed to be of less value by some practitioners. This is because when a conference hosts too many participants, it may not meet the needs of individual members. In this way, Keller (2006) noted that mentoring programmes which involve mentees attending big conferences and workshops can be ineffective. According to Bredeson and Scribner (2000), participants leave conferences with enthusiasm, but with minimal understanding, and may not apply new ideas to their work places. Furthermore, Spillane (2002) claimed that after conferences, there is little support and follow up at the local level.

However, Owen (2004) contended that conferences have a role to play in the professional development of teachers. She reported that it is important:

to connect workshops and experiences to other events such as teams and whole school directions to ensure transfer of learning and educational change. Through the common focus and beliefs, it is important that individuality is not stifled but that new ideas are accommodated through members' involvement in overlapping communities and accommodating the multiple tensions, with action and change in teaching practice subsequently occurring. (p. 11)

Finally, Owen (2004) highlighted that the learning that takes place in teams and whole school programmes contribute to the professional development and learning of teachers. It is collective and collaborative learning which enables beginning teachers to enhance their professional capacities when they participate in such programmes.

2.8 School Leadership and Induction

School leadership at whatever level (principal, senior leadership team – SLT, head of department, classroom teacher) is expected to provide professional support for beginning teachers. Although Brook and Grady (1996) reported that principals are instructional leaders, there seems to be minimal emphasis on the role of principals in the induction of beginning teachers. As such, principals may not provide the support expected of them to beginning teachers. In justifying this weakness, principals claimed that they were not provided with sufficient information to guide them in their work to support beginning teachers. Despite this generalisation, school leadership is very crucial in the induction of beginning teachers. For example, in New Zealand, the NZTC (2010) emphasised that school leaders play an important role in the induction of PRTs.

One area which school leaders can provide leadership support is in relation to the support that will enable beginning teachers to teach their lessons. Although beginning teachers are expected to learn the contents of their teaching subjects, as well as the teaching methodologies at their teacher education institutions, they still need to make the transition to classroom teacher as beginning teachers. They need to adapt the teaching methodologies learned at their teacher education institutions to suit the specific needs of their new school (Brook & Grady, 1996). Furthermore, teacher education institutions may not prepare them sufficiently for the reality of classroom teaching (Wang & Odell, 2002). This is where principals need to be key players in such induction programme, so they should be prepared to professionally support beginning teachers in their classroom teaching. Furthermore, Feiman-Nemser (2003) reported that new teachers need to receive professional support from school leaders.

However, some research also contends that principals should not become key players in the induction of beginning teachers. Instead, they should only play a passive role. Gasner (2001) supported this notion by expressing the view that the role of mentoring should be given to a teacher appointed to be the mentor, and not the principal. Nevertheless, as Moir and Bloom (2003) suggested, principals as

overall school leaders need to be well versed with, and have the experience to make connections between curriculum, instruction, student work, and assessment of students. These are examples of the duties of beginning teachers, so principals also need to be equipped with the appropriate skills to deliver the necessary support for new teachers. Furthermore, the role of principals in mentoring and teacher induction is more than just appointing a mentor and orientating beginning teachers at the beginning of the academic year. Principals should ensure that professional support is provided throughout the induction of beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). In addition, Lam (2005) highlighted that principals have a crucial role in the induction of new teachers. Their role is very important in the leadership to develop teachers as well as improve schools.

As school leaders, principals need to be visionary and be equipped with the necessary skills and experience to lead their schools in the right direction so that they can deliver the appropriate conditions and resources that beginning teachers need in the schools. Brown and Schainker (2008) emphasised that these conditions and resources include ‘shared decision making on substantive issues, collaborative work with others to reach shared goals, and expanded teacher leadership capacity’ (p. 14). Principals need to demonstrate high standards of professionalism, promote the importance of student learning at all times, and ensure to be the focal point of all decisions. Furthermore, Brown and Schainker (2008) highlighted that principals should:

maintain an open door and a visible presence throughout their schools and encourage and support collegiality among all teachers while providing nurturance, guidance, and leadership when needed. By fostering official or unofficial professional learning communities, principals can reduce teacher isolation; increase teacher responsibility and understanding; improve teacher satisfaction, morale, and commitment; and influence teacher retention. (p. 14)

When principals provide nurturance, guidance and leadership in their schools, there is very likely to be a fulfilment of full mentoring support in the induction of beginning teachers, and this process benefits both parties. Similarly Brennan et al., (1999) earlier noted that when experienced teachers participate as mentors in a

systematic organised mentoring system, designed to provide professional support for beginning teachers, the former also learn important leadership roles. This has further enhanced their professional practice. This is supported by Smith (2002), that mentoring provides positive results for both beginning teachers and experienced teachers. Even so, designing such a systematic, organised induction and mentoring programme can be a very expensive exercise. This could have been the reason for Indiana to remove funding assistance to its mentoring programme (Freemyer, Townsend, Freemyer, & Baldwin, 2010) Developing countries, for example, Solomon Islands might not have the financial resources to develop and sustain such an expensive exercise.

Nevertheless, when countries prioritise the importance of advancing their induction systems, they will have to consider the design of comprehensive induction and mentoring programmes. Developed countries that have the resources are in a better position to undertake such an exercise. One example of a country that has a comprehensive induction and mentoring programme is New Zealand, where the government is providing funds to support beginning teachers (PRTs) in their first two years of teaching (NZTC, 2010). Another example is the Santa Cruz New Teacher Center (California), which designed a comprehensive induction programme for its beginning teachers. Results have proven that the programme not only enhanced experienced teachers, but also developed a new group of school leaders (Moir & Bloom, 2003).

While appreciating the successes of the examples of comprehensive induction programmes from New Zealand and California (USA), most countries still do not consider the training of mentors to be a priority. According to the OECD (2005), two countries have consistently provided training for their mentors, but only at the primary sector. These countries are France and Switzerland. Despite the claim by OECD (2005), there are certain countries in the world that have comprehensively designed induction programmes to provide the necessary support for their beginning teachers. These induction programmes consider training of mentors as part of their induction programmes. Wong et al., (2005) highlighted the five countries namely Switzerland, Japan, France, New Zealand, and China (Shanghai)

as examples of countries that have best practices in beginning teacher induction programmes.

The literature highlights the importance of effective teacher induction to support the professional learning and development of beginning teachers. It emphasises the critical nature of such support to assist pre-service teachers in their transition to the classroom and school environment. As the studies mentioned show, induction programmes need to be thoughtfully designed and implemented to ensure beginning teachers' learning is effective and ultimately has the desired impact on their students' learning.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

A research project's design guides the research, particularly in the theoretical, analytical and practical underpinnings which provide the framework for the research (Creswell, 2003). Researchers are persons who have different views of the world. Therefore, a research process that begins from "conceptualising a problem, to collecting and analysing data, to interpreting the findings" (Merriam, 1988, p. 53) is in many ways unique to the researcher and the specific research question. Hence the researcher is able to make decisions about the research design before and during the conduct of the study. For this study, I chose to conduct qualitative research about the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands.

This chapter examines the study's research methodology, the ethical considerations and research method employed in the study. The specific focus for this research has surfaced from the following key questions:

- (1) What are the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands
- (2) What are senior secondary teachers' (SSTs) views and experiences of induction programmes in Solomon Islands?
- (3) What are secondary school principals' views and experiences of induction programmes in Solomon Islands?

3.2 Research Methodology

This study is grounded in a constructivist-interpretive methodology. The approach seemed best suited to generate context-based understanding of issues that human beings encounter in the social world, and its epistemological perspective would enable the researcher to conduct and interpret the events that affect participants from their perspectives (Taylor, 2008). The paradigm which guides the methodological framework for this study is a social construction of reality paradigm which assumes that people construct their own subjective meanings of the world in which they live and work, based on their prior experiences and as a result of their actions and interaction with others in the community and the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Thus from this study, with the participants I was able to construct understandings of induction experiences in Solomon Islands secondary schools through an interview process, and analyse the data which represented their views.

The social construction of reality paradigm from which the constructivist-interpretive methodology has emerged holds that the construction of knowledge is done socially. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007), epistemologically the knowledge is always attached to the knower. This paradigm is also known as post-positivism because it emerged in the early 1980s. The participants in research which uses this paradigm construct the meanings in the data they provide. Social construction of reality also accommodates several other approaches including interpretivism, critical theory, feminist theory, and emancipation amongst others (Cohen et al., 2007),

Yet despite the strengths of the social construction of reality paradigm, there are critics who challenge this perspective. One criticism is the researcher's use of the interview method to collect data. It is considered likely that the researcher will impose his or her power over the participant (Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, because the interview method is interactive, it may also be very subjective, leading to researcher bias thus affecting the validity of the research. It is claimed that researchers might behave in a way that affects the responses of the

participants. In highlighting this weakness, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) have argued that the results can be more easily “influenced by the researcher’s personal biases and idiosyncrasies” (p. 20). Nevertheless, a constructivist-interpretive methodology was considered appropriate for this study because it was important that the participants constructed their own meanings in the context of the interview.

3.2.2 Qualitative research

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) have recently defined qualitative research as an activity which puts the observer in the world with the understanding of interpreting certain phenomena. Generally, qualitative research employs methods which collect descriptive stories of the ordinary life experiences of the participants which enable them to understand the meanings of special phenomena (Mutch, 2005). In other words, qualitative research aims to bring to light the lived experiences or constructed interpretations of the research participants. Qualitative research can illustrate stories by examining the words and actions of participants (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), and is multi-disciplinary. As emphasised by Denzin and Lincoln (2003) qualitative research consists of many methodologies:

Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. It crosscuts the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Qualitative research is many at the same time. It is multiparadigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretive understanding of human experiences. At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions. (p. 11)

This is re-iterated by Creswell (2003) who claims that qualitative research is developed further and this is demonstrated in the growth of the methods of data generation. Qualitative research is highly subjective due to, for the most part, the active involvement of participants, but it is also mindful of the ethical issues, including the sensitivities of the participants in a study. As Merriam (1988) noted, qualitative data is obtained through human instruments, that is, qualitative researchers physically go to the people, environment, and institutions for data collection. For instance, for this study, I had to physically go to the four secondary

schools in Honiara in Solomon Islands and collect data from beginning secondary teachers, senior secondary teachers and secondary principals. Their induction experiences and stories of their leadership related support were the sources of the study's qualitative data.

In light of the nature of qualitative research, a researcher in any study requires the participation of his or her participants during the data collection process. Furthermore, a researcher looks forward to establishing a good relationship and credibility with the participants. In doing so, a researcher "systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). According to Creswell (2003) through this sensitivity and the recognition of bias, values and interests, qualitative research is considered appropriate in circumstances where qualitative data is obtained.

A qualitative approach was therefore appropriate for this study. The qualitative nature of the study in terms of the paradigm and the method of generating data allowed the beginning secondary teachers, the senior secondary teachers and the secondary principals opportunities for maximum participation.

3.3 Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness

It is important to consider quality when doing research, because it will contribute to the effectiveness of the research. According to Cohen et al., (2007), quality can be achieved by maintaining validity and reliability throughout the research project. Cohen et al., (2007) further point out that validity originally meant measuring a result of an activity using a particular instrument. This means that research studies must have results that can be trusted. In qualitative research, validity has taken many forms, such as trustworthiness, credibility, honesty and depth.

As a researcher, I ensured that my participants trusted me because my approach and presentation might affect the data collection and the interpretation of the data which I obtained from the study. Furthermore, this may have an effect on the validity of the research. Wolcott (cited in Hall, 1996) recommends nine ways to ensure validity. Some of these are “offering informed interpretations; reporting fully; being candid; seeking feedback; rigorous subjectivity; and writing accurately” (p. 20).

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), reliability in quantitative research refers to the extent of accuracy and comprehensiveness of the coverage of the study, thus it is worth noting that reliability may only be appropriate to maintain quality in quantitative research, and not in qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2007). Reliability checks whether the data recorded by the researcher are the same as what has actually happened in the context being studied. For instance, Silverman (1993) suggested that one way of achieving reliability in research is to design a highly structured interview, which has the same format and order of words and questions for each interviewee. And Oppenheim (1992) considered that wording is an important consideration in attitudinal questions as opposed to factual questions. He emphasised that changing the wording undermines reliability. However, Scheurich (1995) argued this is not normal social interaction, and controlling the wording does not guarantee control of the interview. He contended that it is important to have open-ended interviews, because they offer the participants an opportunity to indicate their perspective of viewing the world, and their definition of the situation. It is further suggested by Silverman (1993) that a suitable question sequence for one participant may be less appropriate than for another, hence open-ended questions can raise unanticipated issues.

While I anticipated that participants might have some issues with open-ended questions, it was also important to note that as the researcher, I brought my own experiences into the research process. I ensured that I was able to accommodate the views of the participants.

As a Solomon Islander, an educationist and education administrator, I was able to be an insider to the study. I know most of the participants, and they were free to share their induction experiences because they realised that I also went through similar experiences. As such, my personal “insider status should not be seen as a dangerous bias but a necessary prerequisite condition for the sharing of intimate information” (Strachan, 1993, p. 76). My insider status built trust between the twelve participants and me.

3.4 Interview as a Qualitative Method of Data Generation

Researchers use different methods when they conduct research. One of these methods is the interview and is frequently used in qualitative research. There are several types of interviews. One is the semi-structured interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), which was used for this study.

According to Cannell and Kahn (1968), *interview* is defined as a conversation between two people, the interviewer and the interviewee, and Kvale (1996) explains that an interview is an exchange of views between two or more people. This interchange of information is done within a particular topic of mutual interest. The interviewer initiates the conversation purposely to collect research data using a systematic method.

An interview should take place in a quiet environment which has no disturbances. It is recommended that the researcher sits across from the interviewee with a tape recorder between them. This is to allow the tape recorder to capture both voices well. Usually an interview comprises three stages. The first includes introductions. This provides the overview of the process and builds trust between the researcher and the participant. The main part of the interview is where the useful data are taken. In this part, the researcher maintains the discussion, focusing on the topic. The last part of the interview is a summary of the respondent’s responses. This allows for the respondent to confirm or add further information (Michelle, 2001).

3. 4.1 Strengths and Weaknesses of Interview Method

Like other research methods, the interview has its strengths and weaknesses. One of the main advantages of the interview is its adaptability. Bell (1999) explains that an experienced interviewer will have the expertise and skill to follow up ideas expressed by the interviewee. In support of this, Cohen et al., (2007) highlight that the researcher can probe the responses and may go into great depth if misunderstandings arise. Other research methods, for example, surveys, cannot do such investigation, because feedback received must be taken at its face value.

Another advantage of the interview method is its very nature of being a flexible method of data generation. Cohen et al., (2007) note that the interview is appropriate in using “multi-sensory channels”(p. 349), such as verbal, non-verbal, speaking and hearing. It allows the researcher and the participant more room to interact, as it is seen as a “talking” situation, and “talking is natural” (Dale, 2005, p. 36). Sade (2002) too, emphasises that the interview is a flexible research method because it promotes cooperation and creates an opportunity to set up relationships between the persons involved (Cohen et al., 2007).

The interview method also has some disadvantages that researchers need to be aware of. One such weakness is that it takes considerable time (Michelle, 2001). Hannabus (1996) found that the actual face to face interaction in an interview can take thirty minutes or longer, and of course the greater the number of interviewees, the more time the interviewer must spend in the process. In addition Dale (2005) alludes to the data analysis which also contributes significantly to the amount of time to be spent in the entire process.

Another weakness of the interview method is its interactivity, thus its subjective nature referred to earlier (Bell, 1999). This can affect the validity of the study with an increased likelihood of bias by the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2007). For instance, interviewers might behave in a way that affects the responses of the interviewees. Furthermore, it can be difficult to uphold anonymity, especially in non-Western contexts. Shaibu (2007) commented that when she conducted one

interview, relatives and neighbours of the participant came and sat close to the participant. Similarly in Solomon Islands, it is sometimes difficult to uphold anonymity. There are informal social networks in which discussions may happen openly between members of the social group and researchers. The ethical considerations that follow addressed the potential for such situations.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

It cannot be guaranteed that a research project will not encounter unexpected situations. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) claim there is no or little relationship between ethical approval (University of Waikato, 2008) and what happens at the time of research. They claim that “procedural ethics” may or may not have an impact on the actual carrying out of research. It is therefore important to consider the other dimension of ethics called ethics in practice. This refers to unexpected ethical issues, which the researcher may be facing. Such situations are called ethically important moments, as they require the researcher to respond ethically (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

3.5.1 Informed Consent

It is a requirement in educational research that informed consent is obtained from the participants before the researcher begins to collect data (University of Waikato, 2008). Informed consent is one of the most important ethical principles. It is a way in which the researcher shows respect to the participants. Hence, the researcher must provide the participants with detailed information about the research. (Wilkinson, 2001). However, Ruane (2005) argues that providing large amount of information to participants may have a tendency to bias the results of the study. She has pointed out that it may be better to maintain the integrity of the research rather than to disclose it fully.

For this study, I was guided by Wilkinson (2001). The participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures and the ethical issues in relation to the study to ensure they were aware of the nature of the research and any possible impact it might have on them. All potential participants received an invitation to

participate in the study. There was also a verbal discussion with the selected participants prior to the actual interviews. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time during the research. Furthermore, participants were informed that they could withdraw their data up to a specified time but that once data had been transcribed and checked they could not be withdrawn. Once fully informed, potential participants were allowed to decide whether they wanted to take part in the study.

It was also important to note that potential participants who then declined to be involved were not coerced in any way, and were not identified to schools principals or other officials. Those who chose to participate were given a consent form to sign. The consent form described the purpose of the study, the protocols, risks and discomforts, the benefits, and other ethical principles (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Burns, 2000; Mutch, 2005). The signing of the consent forms ensured that participants' rights were protected during the data gathering process and provided evidence that participants were fully informed and had given their consent to participate in the study.

3.5.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

It was important to protect the confidentiality of the participants by obtaining signed documents. As Cooper and Schindler (2001) have recommended, such documents indicate “non-disclosure of the research, restricting access to data which identify respondents, seeking the approval of the respondents before any disclosure about respondents takes place, [and] non-disclosure of data” (p. 117). However, Shaibu (2007) claims that it is not always possible to maintain confidentiality during the actual conduct of the research. She stresses that the formal approval of the ethics committee “does not guarantee that all the ethical principles will be adhered to” (p. 503).

To my knowledge, confidentiality was upheld throughout the research. It was acknowledged, though, that schools might be identified, therefore they needed to be made aware of this. All information collected was treated responsibly. When participants said potentially damaging comments about others or said things that

could negatively affect either themselves or their institution, this information was not included in the data analysis.

3.5.3 Social and Cultural Sensitivity

Another important consideration while conducting the research was to realize the essence of cultural sensitivity. Shaibu (2007) asserts that tensions and conflicts arise when trying to follow Western practices in conjunction with the need to be sensitive to one's own culture. For example in Solomon Islands, if a researcher conducts a research in a village, the chief will select the participants, who would mostly be males. This is because females do not always feel comfortable talking to male researchers. If the researcher is interviewing the participants, the researcher should not look into the eyes of the participants because this is offensive. If the researcher is a female, she would not be permitted to interview a male participant privately. Someone must be present to witness the interview.

While there are more than 80 different languages in Solomon Islands, English is the official language. However, Solomon Islanders are more comfortable using the Solomon Pidgin (lingua franca) in everyday communication, and in the case of my study, this was ascertained and agreed upon as part of the informed consent process before the actual interviews began.

The participants' cultural values and practices were highly regarded at all times during the interviews and throughout the research, especially when dealing with participants from different ethnic backgrounds. The school principals were informed of all the planned visits to their schools and I reported to the principal of each school on my arrival and departure.

3.6 Research Process

In this section, I describe the research process that was followed when the research was conducted. It includes information about access to institutions, the research participants, and the tools used to generate and analyse data.

3.6.1 Access to Institutions

In order to meet the research protocols and the overall legal requirement, a letter was written to the Permanent Secretary (PS) of MEHRD, seeking permission to conduct the research in Solomon Islands. Usually, the Under-Secretary (US) of MEHRD grants such research approval on behalf of the PS of MEHRD. During the first week of my research, this approval was granted. Other letters were written to the following institutions.

First, a letter was written to the Head of School (HOS), of the School of Education (SOE), of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). Most BSTs in Solomon Islands graduate from this teacher education institution. The letter informed the HOS that I would be conducting a study on the induction experiences of BSTs in Solomon Islands. In preparing for the field work, I needed to know the names of the BSTs who graduated from SOE/SICHE in 2008. Therefore, I requested from SOE the list of 2008 graduates who are now serving in secondary schools. I personally had a very brief meeting with the head of school of SOE.

Second, a letter was written to the Director of the Teaching Service Division (TSD) in MEHRD for the 2010 posting of teachers in Solomon Islands. With the list of 2008 graduates from SOE/SICHE and the posting from TSD, I identified the schools in which BSTs were teaching. These schools are administered and supervised under different Education Authorities (EAs).

Third, letters were written to the specific EAs (Honiara City Council & Central Province), informing them that the study will be about the induction of BSTs in Solomon Islands. A few of the BSTs who subsequently participated in the study were teaching in schools within their EAs, so I needed to seek permission from these EAs. However, when I arrived in Solomon Islands to conduct the study, it was not practical to personally meet and obtain permission from the Chief Education Officer (CEO) for the Central Province, because he was on tour in the

most remote parts of the province (Russell Islands). Unfortunately, there was no telephone communication access between Honiara and this group of islands.

Because of this my supervisor advised that I request the Ethics Committee for permission to collect my data in Honiara City Council (HCC) schools only. Upon receiving approval from the Ethics Committee for the change, I confirmed to the CEO of HCC that I would need to collect data from four of the secondary schools under his EA. The CEO then selected the four schools, all from this single education authority, that I eventually visited.

Letters were also written to the principals of the specific secondary schools in which the BSTs were teaching and which had been identified by the CEO for HCC. I sought consent from the principals and informed them that my research needed to have a total of three participants from each school. These would include one BST who graduated from SOE (SICHE) in 2008, one senior secondary teacher, and the principal. Potential participants (BSTs and SSTs) were given an information sheet about the study, and those who were willing to participate indicated this by giving their names. From the list of interested participants, I selected the participants. The intention was to make the selection as objective as possible.

Following the selection of the beginning secondary teachers and the senior secondary teacher participants, I gave them an invitation letter and an informed consent form. The letter informed the participants of the details of the study, and the informed consent form was used to seek their permission to be participants of the study.

3.6.2 Research Participants

I visited a total of four secondary schools in the Honiara City Council Education Authority. These secondary schools are Success College, Opportunity College, Faith College and Learning College. (Pseudonyms were used for the names of the four secondary schools). The CEO for HCC selected these secondary schools because BSTs were posted there when the study was conducted. In each

secondary school, there were three participants. These were: one beginning secondary teacher, one senior secondary teacher, and the school principal. The total number of participants who participated in the semi-structured interviews was twelve.

There were four BSTs, four SSTs and four secondary principals. In the study, pseudonyms were used instead of the real names of the participants.

Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs)

The four BSTs are Solomon Islanders and they come from two different provinces. Alison teaches home economics at Success College, and she comes from Malaita Province. Nancy teaches science at Opportunity College, and she comes from Malaita Province. Lynslyn teaches English at Faith College, and she comes from Choiseul Province. Tom teaches maths and business studies at Learning College, and he comes from Malaita Province. Although Alison, Nancy and Tom come from Malaita, they all come from different parts of the province.

Senior Secondary Teachers (SSTs)

The four SSTs are Solomon Islanders and they come from three different provinces. Ellah teaches home economics at Success College, and she comes from Choiseul Province. John teaches science at Opportunity College, and he comes from the Western Province. Agnes teaches English at Faith College, and she comes from Malaita Province. Peter teaches maths and business studies at Learning College, and he comes from Malaita Province.

Secondary Principals

The four secondary principals are Solomon Islanders and they come from two different provinces. Moses is the principal of Success College, and he comes from Malaita Province. Mirrial is the principal of Opportunity College, and she comes from Malaita Province. Betsy is the principal of Faith College, and she comes from Malaita Province. Andrew is the principal of Learning College, and he comes from Isabel Province. Success College and Learning College have male principals. Opportunity College and Faith College have female principals.

Whilst I had earlier planned that there would be one senior secondary teacher participant at each school, I realised that these senior secondary teachers were the

heads of departments. In other words, their first and foremost role is to be responsible for their departments, and they also perform the role of associate secondary teachers. Another realisation was that the term now commonly used is Senior Secondary teacher (SST), so in the sections that follow, this term will be used interchangeably with terms like head of department (HOD).

The participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures and the ethical issues in relation to the study. This was to ensure the participants were knowledgeable about the nature of the research and any possible impact it might have on them. All the potential participants received an invitation asking whether they were willing to participate in the study or not. The researcher also had a verbal discussion with the participants prior to the actual interviews. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time during the research if they did not feel comfortable. They were also informed that they could withdraw their data up to a specific time only because data that had been transcribed and checked could not be withdrawn. Participants were given an opportunity to decide whether they wish to be part of the study after the researcher had fully informed them of the nature of the study.

3.6.3 Data collection: Semi-structured Interviews

The participants were involved in one procedure: a tape recorded semi-structured interview. During this time, they were asked open-ended questions.

A semi-structured interview means that “questions are predetermined, but the interviewer is free to ask for clarification” (Dale, 2005, p. 36). This flexibility enabled me to ask for further clarification from the participants when there was need to do so. This is important so that I as the researcher could obtain the correct information from the participants. During the interviews, there were certain times that I had to ask for clarification.

The flexibility of the semi-structured interview provided the opportunity for me to find out more about complicated issues and also to follow up issues that might not have been mentioned during the interview. While Bell (1999) states that the nature of open-ended questioning “requires a great deal of expertise to control and

a great deal of time to analyse” (p. 138), she also points out that body gesture, “tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation, etc., can provide information that a written response would conceal” (p. 135).

When the interviews were conducted every effort was made to ensure no psychological or physical harm to the participants. Interviews were conducted at times convenient to the participants, and care was taken not to place them in any situations that were uncomfortable and stressful. I ensured that questions were not intrusive and personal. All selected participants were available for their respective interviews during the day and at times specifically allocated for the interviews. At Success College, the BST and the SST were interviewed in the Home Economics classroom, and the principal was interviewed in his office. At Opportunity College and Faith College, all the six participants were interviewed in the principals’ office. At Learning College, the BST and the SST were interviewed in the Deputy Principal’s office, and the principal was interviewed in his office.

All interviews were carried out face-to-face. The interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes in duration. The interview questions (refer to Appendices 10, 11 and 12) were derived from my three core research questions as highlighted earlier in this chapter.

In all, twelve interviews were conducted (three beginning secondary teachers, three senior secondary teachers and three secondary principals). Because all the participants preferred to use the country’s lingua franca, Solomon Pidgin, rather than English all interviews were conducted in this language. This was ascertained and agreed upon as part of the informed consent process.

3.6.4 Data Transcription

Individual interviews were transcribed. This process was time-consuming as it involved the dual task of transcribing the interviews as well as translating the Solomon Pidgin (lingua franca) transcriptions into English.

3.6.5 Data Analysis and Strategies

According to Cohen et al., (2007) there are five ways to organise and present data analysis. These are: *organising and presenting data analysis by groups; by individuals; particular issue; research question; and by instrument*. The advantages of organising data analysis *by groups* are that it reveals themes, patterns and similarities. However this process may result in the loss of the integrity and coherence of the participant. On the other hand, organising data analysis *by individuals* maintains the coherence and integrity of the participant, but the researcher needs to combine the issues across the participants, which will require a second analysis.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) describe two common data analysis strategies. The first strategy involves the researcher becoming familiar with the data. This means reading through notes several times, repeatedly listening to tapes, or re-reading the transcripts of the interview. As the researcher becomes more familiar with the data, categories should become clear. The second strategy requires the researcher to come up with meaning by using categories. This creation of categories is usually done prior to conducting the interview (Dale, 2005). For this strategy, Wolcott (1995) emphasises that there should be a hypothesis behind each question in a research interview.

Dale (2005) points out that the above strategies “coexist on a continuum” (p. 36). When research is very exploratory, the researcher will search for substantial categories appearing from the data. On the other hand, if the intention of the study is known, there is likely to be heavy reliance on the preselected categories. Miles and Huberman (1993) highlight five steps in data analysis: listening to the tape and transcribing the interview; re-reading the transcripts; coding the interview; summarising the coded data; and interpreting the data. May (1996) summarises the analysis as the processes of interaction, transcription, and interpretation. These steps have been challenged, in that the process condenses the large amount of raw data to just the meaning of what has been mentioned and thus results in data reduction (Dale, 2005).

Since this study was qualitative in nature, it was important that qualitative data analysis was adopted. According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996), qualitative data analysis focuses on meaningful talk and action. For this reason, Burns (2000) emphasises its appropriateness because the validity of the data can be checked by making comparisons with the literature. For the purposes of this study, the data analysis approach adopted was thematic. This approach was suitable because it puts emphasis on themes that surfaced from the study and behaviour of living beings (Aronson, 1994). According to Mutch (2005), the thematic data analysis approach is a qualitative strategy which derives its categories from the data. Thematic analysis is a popular approach and is well known in the research field. It is appropriate for analysing and presenting personal qualitative data from interviews. Therefore, I have used the thematic data analysis approach in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study investigated the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands. The study is the first of its kind in Solomon Islands. The study was carried out in Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands, so while it represents the induction experiences of BSTs in urban secondary schools in Solomon Islands, it does not necessarily represent the induction experiences of BSTs in rural secondary schools. In addition, the study was conducted in four secondary schools overseen by one particular education authority (Honiara City Council). It may not reflect the induction experiences of BSTs in Honiara overseen by other education authorities.

The three questions that guided the study were:

- (1) What are the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands?
- (2) What are senior secondary teachers' (SSTs) views and experiences of induction programmes?
- (3) What are secondary school principals' views and experiences of induction programmes?

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather a range of data. The data collected in the interviews were based on questions from three different interview schedules for the three groups of participants (BSTs, SSTs and principals). The data was analysed and themes that appeared to be significant were developed. As the data was analysed it also became obvious that some themes were specific to each group, however there was also considerable overlap. Thus it was not difficult to separate the themes. It quickly became apparent that they were interrelated.

Common themes which emerged from the Beginning Secondary Teachers' interviews were perceived barriers for this group that relate to the classroom environment, information technology (IT) access and literacy, classroom management, and preparation, planning, and lesson delivery. These barriers affected their beginning teacher induction in significant ways. Another theme which surfaced from the BST interviews was the recognition of, and desire for mentoring to be an approach or strategy within an induction programme. A recurring theme in all interviews was the lack of a national induction programme for BSTs in Solomon Islands.

Themes identified by the second group of participants, the Senior Secondary Teachers (SSTs) were perceived barriers for BSTs. These are lack of teaching and learning resources, and the delay in processing the salaries of BSTs to enable them to travel to their schools every day. Further themes identified by the SSTs were the need for ongoing professional guidance and support, and issues related to the role of the associate teacher being performed by heads of department (HOD) or senior secondary teachers (SSTs).

Finally, themes which emerged in the interviews with the third group, the Secondary Principals, were once again barriers for BSTs, which included BSTs displaying attitudinal problems; inadequate skills to obtain information from source materials such as text books; lack of teaching and learning resources; limited skills to manage resources; high student enrolment, which resulted in very large classes and made it difficult for BSTs to manage students in the classroom; and delay in the processing of BSTs' salaries. Other themes were the need for professional guidance and support for the SSTs and BSTs, as well as the need for ongoing professional development for principals. Lastly, the theme of the influence of school leadership came to the fore for this group in particular.

In the following section, I present the findings from the three different groups of participants in separate sections.

4.2 Views of Beginning Secondary Teachers on their Induction Experiences

In the following section, I present the findings relating to the induction experiences of BSTs.

4.2.1 Barriers for Beginning Secondary Teachers

A theme which became evident through the interviews with the beginning secondary teachers were the barriers they believed they faced. All of the BSTs in the study encountered barriers as they began their teaching careers in their respective schools. These barriers have been categorised into four areas: classroom environment, information technology (IT) access and literacy, classroom management, and preparation, planning and lesson delivery.

Classroom Environment

The particular aspects of classroom environment which were of primary concern to participants were the physical environment, access to resources, and students' physical size.

Physical Environment

It was emphasised by all of the BSTs that one of the barriers for them was the uncomfortable physical environment of the classroom. Lynslyn commented that it affected the quality of her teaching and the concentration of her students. She believed that the physical environment of the classrooms was not conducive to teaching and learning:

students are too many, very high enrolment. So that is one problem. And I think mmm the classroom's physical environment, I mean the setting of the classroom. It's very hot inside some of the classrooms, so when you go and teach, the lesson is still not half way, but the students are already complaining, saying it's very hot. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Another BST also stressed that the physical conditions of the classrooms were deteriorating, and needed maintenance. Furthermore, there was inadequate furniture in the classrooms:

we do not have enough desks and chairs in the classrooms for our students. Some of the furniture really needs repairing. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

Access to Resources

The lack of teaching and learning resources was a significant barrier faced by BSTs. While most schools in Solomon Islands do not have sufficient and adequate teaching and learning resources, these BSTs were concerned about the impact on the quality of their induction in to teaching and on their classroom teaching:

the most common problem here is resources, we do not have adequate resources at school. Even we stay in town, but when we go and ask in those places, they say, it is not available. They do not have any resources for us to use. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Nancy, a BST at Faith College, commented that the most common barrier she faced during her induction in her school was the lack of teaching and learning resources. She said her school lacked the appropriate resources and equipment to teach her subject (science):

okey, mmm, for this question. Yeah, I mean, I think in every field of work, we face challenges and problems. Teaching, I mean, in Solomon Islands, I think one thing that makes me sometimes not performing to my best effort is the lack of resources in schools. In our class here, we mostly do theory theory teaching only. The subject I'm teaching is science, and we do not really go into practicals and things like that. May be only the form 5s are doing the practicals. In junior classes, we do not really do the practicals. This situation is not really motivating. Sometimes I want to do some work which is outlined and expected in the syllabus, but when resources are not available, I'm not willing to work. I can see that many schools in Solomon Islands, this is one of the main problems. That is the lack of adequate resources in schools. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

Students' Physical Size

The lack of necessary skills to manage and handle student behaviour was another barrier identified by the BSTs exacerbated by some students' physical size. This was a particular concern because some teachers are physically smaller in size than their students. One of the BSTs revealed that this is a common challenge for BSTs in Solomon Islands. Tom said that this was also compounded by his lack of skill to be able to manage inappropriate student behaviour:

I think when I look at those problems I mentioned, a how I look at it, in terms of solving student problems is a job for me. Sometimes looking at my size, I'm small almost just like students. So may be students look at my size and they might say, this particular teacher is just the same as our size. May be they think that way. So may be when I approach them during any incident, they might think that way. This teacher is not, although he is a teacher, they look at my size, it's very small, so they might think that way, that is why when I intervene during certain problems, sometimes I find it very difficult. They do not even listen to me, they just go ahead until any teacher above me comes around, for example principal, deputy, then they stop. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

And BST Alison reported that being a female teacher along with her lack of appropriate skills to manage and handle student behaviour was a concern for her:

At times I found it challenging to talk to the bigger boys in the classroom, and more especially when they are physically strong and bigger than me, and also me being a female, sometimes I feel insecure too. (Alison, Interview, 26/03/10)

Information Technology (IT) Access and Literacy

BSTs felt that an important barrier was the lack of access to information technology and also their lack of literacy in this area. As Nancy commented:

I think the teachers should be computer literate. Everyone should know some basic knowledge about computer. For myself, I find this a

challenge. As a beginning secondary teacher who has no knowledge about computing, or things like this, it is a little bit of a problem when I do my preparation, such as typing, and when I don't know it, I might have to give it to another person who might be busy. Then, he or she might not have the time, and that is another problem. Most teachers are not good at computer. Therefore, the school of education should introduce computer studies as one subject, so that when teachers graduate from college, and when they come out into the field, they know some knowledge about computer. I face this problem. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

BST Tom revealed that the lack of computing skills was a barrier for him:

I wish if I had taken a course in computer at college while I did my studies. This will really help me. For now, I just have to do what I can do, but my problem is I do not really have the skills in computer. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

Classroom Management

The particular aspects of classroom management which were primarily highlighted by the BSTs were managing learning, overcrowding, and behaviour management.

Managing Learning

A significant barrier for BSTs in the study was managing learning. Alison, the BST at Success College pointed out that while she faced a number of barriers, the main one was managing learning:

okey, some challenges and problems I face is especially with students. The students, a like, a when you talk to them, some of them, when you talk or, some challenges that I come across with students is that, mmm, some of them when you teach, they do not, although you try your best to explain clearly to them, students do not understand what you are trying to get across to them. And also some problems I find with students is that

a, one problem is that, in terms of grasping concepts quickly, it is a little bit hard. And even when you teach, some students do not concentrate. Some problems I face, some students do not concentrate when you teach. Some students like problems I face problems with them too, in terms of a, they do not listen too. They do not listen, and I'm not sure if they have problems with their hearing, or something like that, but when you try to teach them, students some students still talk, and do other things that I do not expect. I find it hard to manage the classroom. (Alison, Interview, 26/03/10)

Similarly, another BST said her main barrier was the managing of students' learning because of their behaviour:

when the students make noise, I found it difficult to control them. Sometimes, they are too noisy in the classroom. Also some of them found it hard to understand what I tried to teach them. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

Overcrowding

A major factor which contributed to the BSTs' problems with classroom management was the physical state of overcrowding in the classrooms. Nancy from Opportunity College claimed that for her overcrowding was a particular challenge because the number of students in the classrooms was more than the classrooms could accommodate. When the classrooms were over-crowded these teachers found it difficult to teach effectively. Nancy commented that this was a national issue and she would like the Ministry of Education to consider addressing the problem. Not surprisingly when classrooms were over-crowded, BSTs found it difficult to manage the learning and learners in their classrooms. It was not easy, if at all possible to address the individual needs of students. In particular the BSTs found it challenging to monitor a large number of students at one time:

Overcrowding in classrooms is a very big problem we face here in this school. Since last year and this year, I'm also facing that problem. In the

classroom, you don't have the time to assist every student. It would be good if the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development could put a number which each school should enrol. Like in some classrooms here, there are 60 students. 60 students and only one teacher to supervise them in the 40 minutes or 80 minutes, it is problematic. Students can't comprehend, and I even find in assessments which I give them. When they return the assessments, some students don't even comprehend what I explained, even if I asked them to come and see me privately if they have problems, because I can't teach them to the level that suits everyone. If I teach detail by detail, some bright ones will be bored and like that. Overcrowding in classroom is a very big problem for us here at this school. I find it a very big problem. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

Alison also commented that overcrowding was evident in her school. She said the classrooms had more students than they can accommodate and this situation had significantly affected her students:

yes, in terms of classroom management, it's one of the problems. It's overcrowded and students are very overcrowded, especially the girls, like there should be less than 20 girls for the home economics class, but it is well above. Even students do not have enough space for them to sit down, and write and like that. So it affects their concentration. (Alison, Interview, 26/03/10)

Behaviour Management

The lack of necessary skills to manage and handle student behaviour was another common barrier identified by the BSTs. This was a concern because some teachers are physically smaller in size, and students might be physically bigger than teachers (a finding presented earlier). One BST stated that this was one of the barriers to effective induction all BSTs faced in Solomon Islands. He highlighted that his lack of skill for managing student behaviour was a major issue for him:

I think when I look at those problems I mentioned, a how I look at it, in terms of solving student problems is job for me. Sometimes looking at my size, I'm small almost just like students. So may be students look at my size and they might say, this particular teacher is just the same as our size. May be they think that way. So may be when I approach them during any incident, they might think that way. This teacher is not, although he is a teacher, they look at my size, it's very small, so they might think that way, that is why when I intervene during certain problems, sometimes I find it very difficult. They do not even listen to me, they just go ahead until any teacher above me comes around, for example principal, deputy, then they stop. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

Lynslyn also highlighted that managing the behaviour of students was a key concern for her:

sometimes, I found it difficult to handle the behaviour of students in the classroom. Some of them displayed inappropriate behaviour which I sometimes had to refer to the senior teachers because I mmmm, I do not know how to handle such thing. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Preparation, Planning and Lesson Delivery

The findings highlighted that living a long distance from school, BSTs' lack of experience in lesson preparation and delivery affected their ability to carry out these tasks:

Living a Long Distance from School

BST Nancy said that living a long distance from school was affecting her work performance as she had to travel long distances to get there:

living far away from school, and things like that. We sometimes arrive late at school because we reside far away from school. Staying long distances from school can also cause problems to the beginning secondary teachers. I think it would be good if I teach at a school close to where I reside. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

BST Tom concurred and reported that living far away from school was a barrier for him:

when we consider my location in town, I face some barriers. I had to use two buses on my way to school. Firstly, it is time consuming, and also it affects my preparation. If I stay close to the school, it would be better for me. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

Lesson Preparation

BSTs' lack of experience in lesson preparation was of concern to all of them. And without an effective or consistent induction programme they were not easily able to seek support:

for me as a beginning secondary teacher, when I arrived here, another challenge I encountered is my work preparation, my work preparation. When we first arrived here, we tried to adapt. We tried to adapt to the system. So as a as a new beginning secondary teacher, I found it a little bit tough for me, in terms of preparation of my work. And as beginning secondary teachers, we also prepare to be assessed. So I find it tough in my preparation. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

This was further highlighted by Lynslyn:

sometimes I'm not quite sure whether I'm doing the right preparation. Especially during my first few weeks, I found it a bit challenging for me as a new teacher, and also to prepare for different lessons to be taught in one day. The more lessons, more preparation for me to do. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Lesson Delivery

Along with the challenge of lesson preparation, Tom also had problems with the delivery of his lessons. He stated that as a beginning secondary teacher he at first found this difficult:

I think another problem which I can add to the mentioned problems is – as it is my first time to come into the system, a in terms of the curriculum areas which we teach. I come across some challenges there, like how do I teach them in class. It's not an easy task. I need to know the concepts before I can present them to the students. So presentation of the areas or subjects we teach is one difficult task for me, how I transfer knowledge to the students. Even if you know the content, but you do not know how to present it, it is again another problem for you. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

4.2.2 Lack of Formal Standardised Induction Programme

Most of the participants in the study referred to the lack of a formal standardised induction programme in their schools. The BSTs commented that if they did not have a formal standardised induction programme in their schools, then they doubted if there were any such induction programmes in other schools throughout the country.

Nancy commented that there was no induction programme in her school. She had very high expectations for a well designed induction programme and thought that it would be a formal requirement which would involve proper documentation and professional support:

for this question about an induction programme in the school, we do not have it, but informally, I mean, they show me what to do, and expectations in classroom work and things like that. But for any programme on paper where they put it for us to follow, so far here since I began my work as a beginning secondary teacher in this school, they did not show anything like this for me. They just informally, I mean, as my head of subject in science, he just told me, oh do this thing, classroom

expectations are like this. I mean he just informally inform me about these things. We do not have a set programme to follow in this school. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

In discussing her induction experiences, Lynslyn of Faith College also said there was no ‘proper’ induction programme at her school. Senior secondary teachers, who also had the role of associate teacher, supported BSTs in their own ways but not necessarily through a thoughtfully designed programme:

when I left college and came to this school, it's like, there was no induction programme that took place or happened. So I do not know how induction used to happen in this school. Nobody came and say you should be doing something like this. So I mean, I ask my other colleagues and they said the same thing happened to them. Here no proper induction took place, but I mean the associate teachers only do what they think. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

This participant also talked about her expectations of the kind of induction programme which she had anticipated:

for me as a beginning secondary teacher, I think I will say, if the induction is from the head as the principal, for example, I will feel like I come here to teach at the first place when I first arrived, because induction is from the head. However, it was only the associate teacher who gave me what to do, and it was myself who find out and how to go about my teaching. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Most of the BSTs thought there would be clear directives from their school’s leaders, and that information would be passed on to them as BSTS, new to the school but discovered this was not the case.

4.2.3 Mentoring as an Induction Approach

Most of the BSTs considered that mentoring was a good induction strategy and reported that they were to some extent involved in mentoring. This mentoring

programmes was not designed as part of a school programme but only initiated among the teachers themselves. Although it was not designed to be as effective as they would have liked, the BSTs felt nonetheless that they were contributing to their own and each others' professional learning experiences.

In addition, Alison of Success College, had experienced some form of mentoring in the school, especially from her SST. She considered that support she received from her SST to a certain extent had guided her in her settling in at her new school:

some of the things she helped me with include, she gave me the plans. I teach home economics, so she gave me the plans that I should follow when I teach. Although I learnt them at college, but since I come to this school, she showed me some of the plans that she used to follow in her teaching. When I came here, she prepared the programmes, the outlines, and she helped me to work. She highlighted her experiences. If there are aspects that we need to change in the plans, we would sit down and discuss them together, and make the changes. She also helped me in my teaching, especially in practicals. She helped me to set up my practicals. She advised me which practicals to do with forms 1. So she really helped me in my teaching. (Alison, Interview, 26/03/10)

Furthermore, Alison said that her SST provided mentoring support in her teaching:

the teacher that supported me the most in my teaching is my senior secondary teacher. She really helped me in my teaching. When I find it a bit hard in my teaching, I come to ask her, and anything for me to do, I go back to my SST, and I go back to her, and ask her, for this practical, what do I do. So she really helped me, she contributes very much in my teaching. (Alison, Interview, 26/03/10)

And Nancy of Opportunity College stated that she had experienced some form of mentoring in her school from her Head of Department (HOD). In this instance, her HOD was the senior secondary teacher (SST):

for me, the person who has supported me the most is my boss, the HOD. He is the one. Though he is not doing it in a proper formal way, but informally, when I face problems and things like that, how I should go about my work outline that does not follow the right timing and things like that, but he does come and assists. He guides me how to do things. I think my HOD supported me the most, in informal way, not in paper. He advises me. When he sees I'm short of time, he suggests ways to handle such situations. He says, cover a few concepts in one lesson. Also, objectives can be covered in 2 or 3 lessons. Informally, that is how he supports me. (Nancy, Interview, 07/04/10)

Lynslyn of Faith College had also realised there was an element of mentoring in her school, although at a very minimal level. This mentoring came about through the support which she received from her senior secondary teacher:

my associate teacher usually guides me, or helps me in my subject area. And if I have any problem, or don't know how to go about things especially when I first teach, she tells me how to do things. She writes the year outline, programmes and checks the programmes. (Lynslyn, Interview, 14/04/10)

Tom of Learning College also experienced some form of mentoring as he worked together with his SST in the Mathematics Department. Although this mentoring may not have been recognised formally, Tom recognised and valued the guidance he received from his SST. Through their daily association, Tom felt that the support he received from his SST did contribute to his induction as a BST in the school:

I think all teachers in the school have really helped me. I'm not saying one particular teacher, but all teachers are helpful. So, but in terms of I mean particularly, the one I stayed with, my HOD in Maths, whom I associate with everyday. We live together. Any problem I come across, I seek advice from him, or seek his assistance. (Tom, Interview, 23/04/10)

The next section addresses the findings related to the views of SSTs about the induction experiences of BSTs in Solomon Islands.

4.3 Views of Senior Secondary Teachers on Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers

The themes which were strongly evident in the views of the SSTs include common barriers for BSTs and were categorised into two areas; namely classroom environment, and preparation, planning and lesson delivery. The particular aspect of classroom environment frequently mentioned was access to resources. A factor which indirectly affected the BSTs' preparation, planning and lesson delivery was the delay in the payment of their salaries. Other themes that were revealed by the SSTs and which are presented in this section are professional guidance and support provided by the SSTs for the BSTs, and the practice of SSTs performing the role of associate teachers in most secondary schools in Solomon Islands.

4.3.1 Barriers for Beginning Secondary Teachers from SSTs' views

The senior secondary teachers observed that BSTs faced barriers during their first year of teaching.

Classroom Environment

The single aspect of classroom environment most often commented on by the SSTs was access to resources.

Access to Resources

According to the SSTs, the main barrier for BSTs during their first year of teaching was the lack of teaching and learning resources in schools. Ellah said:

The most common challenge that beginning secondary teachers face are things like, resources like books. For them to gather information from. In our department, we do not have enough of that. So with the small number of resources we have, we have to try our best to make sure in a way that fit the students. We do not have enough resources/textbooks, so sometimes we do not put notes for students. Only some books provide us with adequate and appropriate information for students. Some books do not give full information, so we try our best to use our own words, add our own information, and then we deliver it to the students. (Ellah, Interview, 26/03/10)

John, the SST at Opportunity College, agreed with Ellah's observation. He said that the lack of teaching and learning resources in schools was a big concern because BSTs needed materials to prepare their lessons:

this question reminds me of when I was also in their same shoes because once upon a time, I was also a BST. I think in terms of teaching and learning, materials is a big problem. As a teacher, if you do not prepare to prepare your lesson, it means you will find a hard time to go and stand at the front of the class. You must be fully prepared before you do so. So it needs teaching and learning resources. If teaching and learning resources are available, things will be possible, but if they are not available, it will be very difficult. (John, Interview, 07/04/10)

And Agnes, the SST at Faith College, confirmed Ellah and John's views that BSTs' most common barrier was lack of resources, though she pointed out that they were faced with other challenges as well:

one of the challenges is getting to know their way around in the school. When they come, they find a hard time how to get along with their other colleagues, and then because they think that the knowledge they have is not enough, so many times they feel inferior. They might say we do not know because we have just graduated, we haven't done that. And another

thing is as I said, the resources which they select to use is not enough, so many times they get frustrated because of that. (Agnes, Interview, 14/04/10)

Preparation, Planning and Lesson Delivery

It was revealed in the study that there were certain factors which indirectly affected the BSTs' preparation, planning and lesson delivery. These factors may not be professional in nature as far as the BSTs' work is concerned, but they can be seen to be relevant to the overall performance of BSTs. One of these factors was the delay in the processing of the BSTs' salaries.

Delay in Processing of Salary

According to the SSTs in the study, the BSTs also faced barriers in relation to their preparation, planning and lesson delivery. For example, because of the distances and transport-related issues in Honiara, the BSTs needed money to pay for their transport costs to schools. When their salary was not processed in time, they did not have the money to travel to their schools every day, and this situation had affected their attendance.

At Learning College, SST Peter was responsible for guiding and supervising BST Tom. Peter did not mention resources as a common problem for BSTs; instead, he considered that a major problem was that their pay was not processed on time. He said that BSTs needed money in order for them to travel to their schools every day. In Honiara schools, most teachers did not reside at school, but travelled to school by public transport. When BSTs' salaries were not processed quickly, they found it difficult to meet their daily travel expenses:

some of the challenges which I observe they face, I think I observe they try their best to settle in, and try their best to be on time during their class time, and make sure they are not absent from their duty. One main challenge I see is this, I think it's normal for all teachers that, a when you enter the profession, I think sometimes it will go almost half of the year, you will not get paid. That is what I see as the main challenge. So if

a teacher stays close to the school, I think you will be fine. But that is one main challenge, that most postings are not done following where you stay, but on according to what the authority decides. Or you, or this school depending on the establishment, where, what subjects you need at school so they just look at their paper, and say you go to this school. Not considering your location in town, whether you are close to the school or not. So, most of our teachers here face this same problem. When I started, I faced the same problem. I had to go through two, two ways of transport before I get to school, and I still experience that today. (Peter, Interview, 23/04/10)

Another SST revealed that BSTs faced issues with transport when their salary was not processed in time. Agnes said:

One of the BSTs' barrier is related to a non-classroom issue. It is the delay of the salary. When this happens, they do not have the money to travel to school every day. (Agnes, Interview, 14/04/10)

The barriers described above were raised by SSTs as those which BSTs in Honiara usually faced during their induction. Interestingly they are significantly less than those raised by the BSTs and this will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.3.2 Professional Guidance and Support

Senior Secondary Teachers (SSTs) considered that their role in the school's induction programme, if one existed, for BSTs was to provide professional guidance and support. This guidance and support was very important because BSTs were new to the school system, and they needed someone at their new school to be at their side all the time. The guidance and support which SSTs provided was intended to have an impact on the BSTs' induction programme:

I guide them in their plans. Some of them when they arrive, they may be shy, or its their first time to come out to the teaching field, or they are not

really aware of what to do, and in this case, I guide them. I show them some plans, and guide them how to do their plans. I help them to collect their notes. I also observe them when they teach. Sometimes I sit down somewhere, but for this particular beginning secondary teacher, I still have not written the report on paper, but just observe her for purpose of supporting her teaching. I usually avail myself to assist them, how to make their assessments, how they should assess students. I guide and discuss with them. (Ellah, Interview, 26/03/10)

Ellah further explained that her professional guidance and support for her BST is one of her main roles as the HOD (SST) in the school. She ensured that her BST received this professional guidance and support every day:

I meet her daily, everyday. Every day when she comes we meet each other. We use this place as our work place and office. Each time when she is not sure of what to do, she asks me, and I assist her. If she is preparing to do any practical, she informs me. Then, we discuss it before she actually goes to do it in class. (Ellah, Interview, 26/03/10)

Agnes of Faith College also described how she provided professional guidance and support to the new BSTs who came to the school at the beginning of every year. At the time of this study, Agnes had one BST within her sphere of influence and responsibility:

usually when the new beginning secondary teachers come into the secondary schools to teach, because they are new, I can see that, with regards to the subjects they teach, some of them do not have the in depth knowledge of their subject areas. Others come in with fear otherwise they do some mistakes. As soon as they come in, I let them know about their areas of responsibility in my department. I always make sure that they know my expectation in the department. And then, I let them know about how far they should go about what they would need to teach in the classroom. (Agnes, Interview, 14/04/10)

Peter, the SST at Learning College was the HOD for the Mathematics Department in the school. As the HOD, he also performed the role of the SST. He believed that he provided professional guidance and support to his BST in the Mathematics Department:

I think the first thing is to help the beginning secondary teachers settle in as my colleague teachers. And then at the same time, I must make sure that they follow my programmes as the senior secondary teacher. I set for which ever class or form I gave them. So I will always give them too, the programmes which they should follow. And then at the same time, I look after them, assist them in other extra-curricular programmes, which they might be assigned to do in the school. (Peter, Interview, 23/04/10)

That professional guidance and support is provided by SSTs for BSTs is clear. Whether this level of professional guidance constitutes induction will be explored in the discussion chapter.

4.3.3 Role of Associate Secondary Teacher

The four SSTs were not only as associate secondary teachers, they were Heads of Departments (HODs) or Secondary Teacher (SST). This is a position given to a teacher who is responsible for looking after a department. In the study, the SSTs revealed that as heads of departments, it was part of their responsibility to perform the functions of associate secondary teachers. They did not have separate associate secondary teachers who performed only as associate secondary teachers.

John, the SST at Opportunity College, said they only had a very few teachers in each department in the school. One department may have only two or three teachers. He explained:

currently, our practice is for the head of department to support the beginning secondary teacher as an associate teacher. When I took up the position of head of department here, there were a few beginning secondary teachers. So I believe that a beginning secondary teacher cannot support another beginning secondary teacher. Since I have been

teaching here for quite a while, I worked as an associate secondary teacher at the same time as head of department as well, doubling these two. But if one of my teachers stays here longer, I will give him or her that responsibility to carry out. Usually in this small school, there may be only two science teachers, the head of department and another one, so it is not really applicable. May be if untrained colleague teachers come, I might consider that one as an option. (John, Interview, 07/04/10)

Agnes of Faith College said that the system they operated in the school was that the teacher who held the post of the head of department was also responsible for the supervision of the BST, as an associate secondary teacher:

at the moment, it's the associate secondary teacher and head of department in one person. I think I would go for separate ones, where you have the head of department separate from the associate secondary teacher because the head of department will have a lot of responsibilities already. He or she oversees the department. The associate secondary teacher should be answerable to the head of department with regards to his or her beginning secondary teacher. (Agnes, Interview, 14/04/10)

At Learning College, Peter the senior secondary teacher who was in charge of assisting BST Tom, said that in his school they did not have the separate associate secondary teacher to look after BSTs. He stated that as part of their responsibility, the HODs were also given the task of looking after the new BSTs:

I think in my view, the idea of having a separate associate teacher is a good idea. Where you see other countries are doing. At the moment, we do not do that. We practice HOD looking after this group of teachers (BSTs). I think it is a good idea for us to have that one. Because this HOD I think is involved mostly in the leadership of the department, and also involved with the principal in administration, so the load might be too much. So it would be good for those teachers, if we introduce this

idea of separate associate teachers in the department. (Peter, Interview, 23/04/10)

These findings revealed some disparity between the views of BSTs and SSTs about induction and the role of the associate teacher and will be explored further.

4.4 Views of Secondary Principals on Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers

In the following section, I present the findings relating to the induction experiences of BSTs, as described by the Secondary Principals. The themes which were strongly evident here include barriers for BSTs. These barriers were categorised into four areas: attitudinal problems; classroom environment; classroom management; and preparation, planning and lesson delivery. Other themes which were also emerged during the interviews with the secondary principals were: the lack of a formal standardised induction programme; professional guidance and support provided by secondary principals for BSTs; the need for teachers and school leaders to have ongoing professional development programmes; and the influence of school leadership support in the induction of BSTs.

4.4.1 Barriers for Beginning Secondary Teachers from principals' views

The barriers for BSTs identified by the secondary principals were attitudinal problems, classroom environment factors, classroom management, and preparation, planning and lesson delivery.

Attitudinal Problems

As human beings, BSTs also have their own weaknesses and limitations. The principals however, considered some had attitudinal problems which were not supposed to be countenanced in the teaching profession. These were general comments that did not appear to be specific to the BSTs in the study but were clearly a concern for school leaders. The principal of Success College said:

in professional terms, there are many challenges. I mean if a beginning secondary teacher comes into school, and if he or she is a smoker or betel-nut person, it will be very challenging for him or her. For example, in a school which I look after where I discourage these things, you will find it very hard and very challenging. You have to try to. I try to discourage them from these kinds of ways. I try to stop them, and to do away with smoking. To do away with betel-nut. If they come with their red lips, I have to please them physically and talk to them. It's a very big thing, very challenging, and so it's it's a problem. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Another example of an attitudinal problem quite common among the BSTs in Solomon Islands was to do with school attendance, although this was an increasing problem not only with BSTs but with other teachers as well. There were a number of reasons for this high teacher absenteeism, which this study reports briefly on here but does not intend to explore further. In summarising her observation of this attitudinal problem, the principal of Faith College elaborated:

I can see conflict of interest, for example, today I see a lot of teachers are always absent, both experienced and beginning secondary teachers. Absenteeism is a very huge problem, and since looking after the beginning secondary teachers, only two out of the seven of them are showing good attendance. The rest do not show good attendance in their classes. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

In addition to many BSTs and teachers having attitudinal problems, these principals said that BSTs faced other problems which affected their teacher induction. One of these was classroom environment.

Classroom Environment

The particular aspects of classroom environment which were frequently highlighted by the secondary principals were access to resources, and financial constraints that led to unavailability of resources,

Access to Resources

Teaching and learning materials were lacking in the secondary schools in Solomon Islands. This was expressed by school teachers and principals. In expressing his view on this problem in schools, which affected the work of BSTs, the principal of Learning College said:

one problem which is in the community high schools in Solomon Islands, a, one is in terms of materials. Materials is one big thing, which we try to, for example, at the moment I tell the teachers. If you have any problem with teaching materials, you come up with if you have a copy of that book, bring it we go and photocopy following the number. So try to help them that way. So when they come with a, they would like to photocopy one or two pages inside the book, I do not encourage photocopying, because they will give it away to students, and then we will photocopy again next time. So I said to them, we photocopy once, and then let the students have a copy, or draw whatever you can ask them. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

In relation to the issue of lack of access to resources, findings from the study suggest that BSTs themselves lacked skill in managing resources. Most secondary schools in Solomon Islands did not have adequate and sufficient teaching and learning resources. This may have been caused by several factors with one of the main causes being the poor management of resources. The principal of Success College also said that BSTs needed to learn how to manage resources:

another common challenge is having to find resources, because, hey year after year, I always see this in our departments. I check and the dictionaries are no longer there. The students do not return them. Some dictionaries are lost. Some textbooks are now lost. It means there is also lack of coordination, so I have to talk to the teachers. Oh department heads try to control your, a, when you issue books, try to control it. Be sure that, what I expect is that so that when the next teacher comes to use it next year, things will be available for him or her. Materials must be available. But if at the end of the year, there are no materials, this means

when they come in the new year, there will be no materials. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Financial Constraints limit Access to Resources

It is crucial that secondary teachers in Solomon Islands, both experienced and BSTs, learn how to manage the teaching and learning resources effectively. Given that these materials are expensive to purchase, most schools found it difficult to allocate money in their annual budget for new materials every year. The principal of Opportunity College made it clear that financial constraints led to lack of resources in secondary schools:

one of the problems we as a school, and the BSTs face is something to do with money. I mean to have a well set up department, I mean materials in their departments. For them to have a good set up in their departments, they need money. Like I see that sometimes we do not have enough because the cost of materials or whatever is very expensive. (Mirrial, Interview, 07/04/10)

The principal of Opportunity College also revealed that teaching and learning resources are expensive, and they do not have the money to purchase new materials every year:

Like if I talk on elective subjects, elective departments, it is very expensive to purchase the materials, so we do not always purchase them every year. This means when we operate the school, one thing that I observe is that we do not really set it up properly, in a way that, like we supposed to have a constitution or policies or things like this to guide us in order for us to do things according to what people expect. (Mirrial, Interview, 07/04/10)

Classroom Management

The particular aspect of classroom management most often mentioned by the secondary principals was high enrolment causing overcrowding.

High Enrolment causing Overcrowding

The principal of Learning College reported that in his school another very common challenge for BSTs was the very high student numbers in the school. This situation caused overcrowding in the classrooms, which BSTs found difficult to withstand, especially when dealing with students in the classroom. The principal of Learning College said:

enrolment in this school is so high. When I came in last year, some classes were almost 60, in each particular class. So when I came in last year, I tried to reduce the enrolment, and so now the only classes that are still big are form 3 and a form 5. But form 1, form 2 and form 4 now, we create 2 streams each now. So when parents come, and they see the classroom is big, then they say to me, we would like to enrol our children. Then I said to them. Number is too big. Then they said, as long as he or she attends school, children go to school. Then I said to them. You look at this. One period is only 40 minutes. And if a teacher spends one minute with one student, the teacher will no longer teach. He or she will only assist. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

Preparation, Planning and Lesson Delivery

The aspects of preparation, planning and lesson delivery which were primarily highlighted by the secondary principals were BSTs' inadequate skills in obtaining information from source materials, and the delay in processing of BSTs' salaries.

Inadequate Skills to Obtain Information from Source Materials

It was revealed during the study that BSTs have inadequate skills to obtain information from source materials, for example, from text-books:

actually the beginning secondary teachers lack the knowledge, understanding and experience in summarising information from books. It is still hard for them. So information must be readily available for them all the time. They have just started, so having to write things of their own, and to think about things quickly, and to write things their own, trying to summarise information is tough for them. So you have to tell

your associate teacher to prepare their notes properly so that they give the right notes to them. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Furthermore, the principal of Success College revealed that when BSTs did not know how to summarise their own notes, SSTs had to assist them. Sometimes information was not available in the school, so they had to source materials from outside the school:

when these notes are unavailable, it is a big challenge for them. So it is important that the associate secondary teachers who look after them, I mean the beginning secondary teachers have the right information. If the information is unavailable, we have to pay it for them, at the shops. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Delay in Processing of BSTs' Salaries

According to the Principal of Faith College, BSTs also faced barriers related to their preparation, planning and lesson delivery. For example, the BSTs needed money to cover transport costs to their schools. When their salary was not processed in time, they did not have the money to travel to their schools every day, and this situation affected their attendance. The delay in the processing of BSTs' salary caused a huge problem. Betsy said:

Upon taking up their duty, I mean the beginning secondary teachers, the government does not pay them for two months or four months. They are without salary for that number of months. So I support them in terms of finance as much as possible, so that they can come to attend their classes. But then when it is hard like this time, some of my teachers are now absent for two weeks, because of the delay in the payment of their salary. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

Furthermore, the principal of Faith College commented that when BSTs did not turn up to school, it affected the students:

So it also affects the students. The students are without classes for one or two weeks. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

Some of the barriers outlined by the principals were also common in the findings of the other two groups. They certainly seemed aware of those barriers impacting on the effective induction of BSTs into their schools.

4.4.2 Lack of Formal Standardised Induction Programme

The principals who participated in the study reported that there was no national formal induction programme for BSTs in Solomon Islands. The principals tended to do whatever they thought was appropriate based on what they knew about induction and this differed from school to school. There were no obvious guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development to guide the process.

However Moses, the principal of Success College, said that despite the lack of proper guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, with his experience he was able to work out how to support the BSTs in his school:

induction of beginning secondary teachers in school, especially in my experiences and in this school, its sort of, its sort of, its not that really, what, what shall we say, its sort of a loose, loose kind of a, a, what, loose relationship only. It means its not that really intact in a way that you have to stick to this and that and that. It means teachers come and you sort of tell them what to do and they carry it out according to their own pace, according to their own structure, according to their own something...It is sort of a relationship that is not really strict. The atmosphere is free, and the atmosphere is sort of a loose atmosphere where you you you leave them to do whatever they want to explore in their teaching. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Mirrial, the principal of Opportunity College, mentioned that there were no clear policy guidelines from MEHRD about BST induction programme. Secondary principals, especially the new ones may lack the experience to design the induction programme for BSTs in their schools. As new principal, Mirrial commented:

I do not really a get into that yet, even when I came in, I did not have a kind of information which is in place somewhere that would give me an idea of how, how I should do induction for the beginning secondary teachers who work under my department and in the school. (Mirrial, Interview, 07/04/10)

Betsy, the principal of Faith College was in the same category as Mirrial. They were both in their second year as secondary principals. Betsy said that they did not really have an induction programme for beginning secondary teachers in her school:

actually we do not really have any any programme for that induction. I mean in the induction for the new beginning secondary teachers, but I only help them a little bit in what their roles are as class teachers. During the first week, I gave them their responsibility areas. And also what the Inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development expects them to have, especially the files, lesson plans, scheme of work and the related ones which I give them. And then, a, I mean actually we do not really do a good induction in this school. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

As the principal of Learning College, Andrew was well qualified and had wide experience in school leadership positions. With his qualifications and experience, he seemed to know what to do in terms of the induction of beginning secondary teachers. He stressed that although he has the qualification and experience, there still needs to be proper information from MEHRD:

how I look at, we have a duty statement which is given out in the teaching service handbook (TSHB). But I think that there should be additional information or guidelines that should come from the authorities. Because not all principals have done administration, educational planning. For example, most or some principals who graduated from the University of the South Pacific, they come and look after schools. When they did their training at the University of the South Pacific, they did maybe curriculum strand or counselling. So not all principals in schools have that experience, but anyway, coming back to our story, even though that guideline which I talk about is missing, my responsibility first of all is, I see that a beginning secondary teacher or someone new to the profession is a very important person. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

The principals appear to have an awareness of the need to develop induction programmes for BSTs. The issues around this are discussed in the following chapter.

4.4.3 Professional Guidance and support

The four secondary principals who participated in the study believed that their professional guidance and support contributed to the induction of BSTs even if there was no formal programme in their school.. As school leaders, they saw their roles as very important - they were responsible for the overall supervision of the school, and the rest of the teachers depended on them for the success of the programmes in the school.

Moses, the principal of Success College was clear that he was the overall leader in the school. Therefore, he was responsible for guidance and support in the school. He made sure that school programmes and activities were well supported in order to enhance the teaching and learning programmes in the school:

my responsibility here is more like the overall person to oversee what is going on in this school. It means that the department heads who look after the beginning secondary teacher will give me the need of the

beginning secondary teacher who is teaching under their care. The needs in terms of materials, the needs in terms of class timetable, class schedule, in time-tabling, duties and so on. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Andrew, the principal of Learning College, said that as the principal of the school, he was tasked with providing professional guidance and support to the teachers of the school. His immediate professional guidance and support went to the heads of departments. From there, he delegated and expected the heads of departments to professionally guide and support the BSTs and other staff:

one which I already went through with them is professional code of conduct and staff requirements. I must tell them that they must see themselves as teachers. That is on that one, and then I must also have a session with the head of departments. They must guide the beginning secondary teachers. Make sure they have their teaching programmes. I must make sure that they are familiar with a, how to use the syllabus. I must make sure that they have assessment programmes. And I must see that they do it. That is on that one. And next week, I will visit the departments. Just to check out after I already told them, and gave some work which I expect them to carry out. And I will go around and visit them. Whether they do it following my expectation, and when they did not do it, I will not quickly penalise them. But I will make sure that they know. Even to extract learning outcomes from syllabus and things like that, and then, so that they must have confidence in themselves, and anything that they are not very familiar with, I think, it is the responsibility of this office and the head of departments to must make sure that we put in some help first. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

4.4.4 Need for Ongoing Professional Development

The four secondary principals believed that ongoing professional development should be promoted in their schools in order to continually enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching profession. They thought that BSTs like other teachers, needed to be involved in professional development programmes.

Mirrial, the principal of Opportunity College claimed that organising professional development workshops for teachers was important to update them with the latest information on aspects of teaching. She had planned and organised a workshop for teachers in her school the previous year:

in fact I remember during the one week break last year, I invited the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development officials to come and conduct a workshop on the Teaching Service Hand Book....the school planned the workshop, so we invited them. But I did not do it this year because we did not settle down properly. For example, teachers posting was not finalised until about week six. Our starting this year was not good. I think it may be late now, but we can do it sometimes during the year. (Mirrial, Interview, 07/04/10)

Mirrial also said that principals also need professional development workshops so that they can learn more about their roles as school leaders. She considered that new principals might not be well-versed in their roles as principals, therefore, they need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills as they take up their new posts:

First I talk from my experience when I carry out this responsibility of a principal. There are other things which we principals need to know, that kind of information is a little bit, we are little bit lack of, or may be who should feed us with that, is some of the things we need to know, before we can do whatever (laugh). So I think it's best that even the new ones, because we are not experienced in taking up that kind of role, so we as principals for the new ones especially, like I talk on behalf of the new principals on the post, we also need a kind of support about what are the policies of MEHRD and things like that. How will we run schools effectively, and things like that too. (Mirrial, Interview, 07/04/10)

Betsy, the principal of Faith College, had also organised a workshop for her teachers the year before. She said that this was part of the school's ongoing

professional development programme to keep teachers up to date with the information they needed from the education authorities. Betsy said that she relied on outside support for this undertaking. She had invited the MEHRD officials to facilitate the workshop:

In fact, last year I invited them. They came and talked about their expectation and the code of ethics for teachers. What they expect from the teachers to do, and how the teachers should behave, and also and also and also how they should assess probationers, I mean the beginning secondary teachers. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

And Andrew believed that teachers need professional development at all times. In his school, they had a weekly professional development programme for all teachers, including the BSTs. This appeared to be the only secondary school amongst the four secondary schools which I visited to have this kind of ongoing, regular (in this case weekly) professional development programme. Andrew described the professional development programme in his school:

every Tuesday we call the Staff Development Programme (SDP). Some basic areas we usually look at are, how to develop a lesson plan, we even review ourselves about blooms taxonomy. Then we go into areas like making up blue print or things like that, we must make sure that what they do, so that when they prepare their unit tests and like that, they must use what we learn before going into teaching. Make sure they prepare specific questions. Make sure their tests, and then we also a try to slowly, we do not really go into it, but we just start to introduce for us to see, make sure they understand why they give out assignments and things like that. May be we just go through that giving assignments is not only to collect marks, but it is also to help us for effective planning. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

4.4.5 The Influence of School Leadership support

All secondary principals who participated in the study stressed that school leadership support was very important in secondary schools and for the BSTs as

they began their teaching career. Moses, the principal of Success College gave an example of leadership support provided to the BSTs in his school:

their department heads or teachers will come to the administration, and mostly these kinds of work, I delegate to my deputy, and he will disseminate information concerning school programmes, and like for example, time tabling. In terms of materials, they submit their needs in black and white, and then I purchase it for them. They might have need in work books, their need in terms of text books, and other materials from time to time. When they need it, they come and I meet it for them, especially in terms of payment of those things. I do it for them. If their seniors or department heads or associate teachers (those who look after BST) find difficulty, they come to me, and I give them guidelines. Things that they find difficulty in solving for them, like may be anything to do with their confidence, anything to do with student relationships, or anything to do with staff relationships. Generally, I work as an overall person overseeing what's going on in the school. (Moses, Interview, 26/03/10)

Leadership support was stressed that being important for the teacher by Betsy and in the induction programme for BSTs:

I can see that it is important too that I should really make a good programme that should provide the BSTs with appropriate information, and when I give them what they need, this also helps me too in my leadership role, like I delegate work to seniors, they too help the beginning secondary teachers, in terms of supervising them, and also in terms of myself, this gives me more time to really make a programme, which will help the beginning secondary teachers as well. Like, in terms of help, it makes me to feel the importance of having leadership in an induction programme for all the schools. (Betsy, Interview, 14/04/10)

Support from school leaders was viewed as crucial by Andrew, and he considered this to be so especially for an organization such as a secondary school. In terms of the induction of BSTs he considered that leadership support was an important aspect that set the direction for an induction programme:

when the new beginning secondary teachers came in, and after I welcomed them, the next person I saw was the head of department. I told them that I'm on the supervisory role, and they had a very big responsibility to play in guiding and helping the beginning secondary teachers, make a programme, to help them. So the next person whom I met was the head of department. And then we also conducted departmental meetings. And that was, I wanted to check every department, how they carried out, and then we also, when I came here, I created what we call the school academic committee. And that school academic committee, its responsibility is to look after the academic welfare of the students. To make sure they plan, for example, like an internal assessment. Like an internal assessment, we try as much as possible to balance the assessment. At least it looks good. At every department in one semester, we agree to give 3 assignments. Everyone must give 3 assignments. By that way, they can go down and help the beginning secondary teachers. (Andrew, Interview, 26/04/10)

These findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

As the study developed, five main themes emerged. The first theme which focuses on the barriers to effective teacher induction for beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands have been categorised into five main areas: classroom environment; information technology access and literacy; classroom management; and preparation, planning and lesson delivery; and attitudinal problems. Teacher induction in Solomon Islands secondary schools was the second theme. This highlighted the lack of formal teacher induction which revealed the lack of any kind of formal standardised teacher induction, the appointment of BSTs, and the school level induction as determined by the principal. Mentoring as an induction approach was the third theme. It included the structure of mentoring programmes, support and training of mentors, and mentoring issues for the future. The fourth theme was professional development and has been discussed under the sub-headings of professional development for secondary principals, professional development for SSTs, and professional development for BSTs. The fifth and final theme was the influence of school leadership support, and drew attention to the kind of support by each school, and the role of secondary school principals.

The research method for this study was the semi-structured interview. It proved to be a highly effective method. The semi-structured interviews became a critical element of the study as they provided the participants with an opportunity to articulate their thinking about their own beginning secondary teacher induction. Most importantly, the interviews provided an excellent starting point to identify the themes. As the literature has stated, the semi-structured interview can be a rich source of data because there was active involvement of participants (Creswell, 2003). The researcher can probe responses and go into greater depth if misunderstandings arise (Cohen et al., 2007), or further information is required. In

this study, the interview method allowed me and the participants more room to interact, as we created “talking” situations together which became natural (Dale, 2005, p. 36). Furthermore as Sade (2002) has emphasised the interview was a flexible research method because it encouraged this two way opportunity for both the researcher and the interviewee to interact promoting a kind of cooperation and collaboration thus creating an opportunity to set up relationships between those involved (Cohen et al., 2007).

5.2 Barriers for Beginning Secondary Teachers

As stated previously the barriers for BSTs became a theme from which four categories emerged: classroom environment; information technology (IT) access and literacy; classroom management; and preparation, planning and lesson delivery. These are discussed in the next section.

5.2.1 Classroom Environment

All participants commented on a number of classroom environment barriers.

The BSTs in particular made reference to the fact that the *physical environment* of the classrooms in which they taught had considerable impact on their lesson delivery. For example, classroom temperatures were high and not conducive to effective teaching and learning. They claimed their students often complained about the heat and found it difficult to learn in such environment. Given this type of working and learning environment, the work of BSTs was affected. Langdon (2007) has asserted the work environment of teachers can have both a positive and negative impact on them. This is because the “physical environment” clearly affects the feelings and behaviours” (Bromfield, Deane and Burnett (2003, p. 25) of people. When classroom temperatures were high, it impacted on the feelings and behaviour of BSTs towards their work.

Neither the SSTs nor the secondary principals mentioned the physical environment as having an on BSTs’ teaching. It was probable the secondary principals did not mention physical environment as a barrier for BSTs because secondary principals did not have daily contact and meetings with BSTs.

Secondary teachers who were supposed to be in daily contact and having regular meetings with the BSTs were the SSTs. Interestingly, they did not mention physical environment as a barrier for BSTs. A possible reason for SSTs not mentioning this barrier was that the SSTs are experienced teachers and they might already have found ways to manage such situations and overlooked that the BSTs were new, and that they might still need sometime before they can handle such an unpleasant classroom environment.

Access to resources was the most frequently mentioned barrier in the study for BSTs. It was revealed by the BSTs to be one of their main barriers. The SSTs also highlighted that access to resources was a barrier for the BSTs in secondary schools and the lack of teaching and learning resources in schools was of particular concern. This finding has been confirmed by Tillman (2005) as a common problem for new teachers. Simpson (2006) also reported that lack of teaching and learning resources is a common problem for beginning teachers, hence it is a barrier during their induction. Deruage (2007) also revealed that beginning teachers faced problems associated with lack of teaching and learning resources during their first years of teaching. In Solomon Islands secondary schools the lack of teaching and learning resources was one of the most prevalent issues faced by the educators (MEHRD, 2009b). The secondary schools visited for this study are located in Honiara, the capital city of Solomon Islands. It would seem if these city secondary schools did not have adequate teaching and learning resources, then the rural secondary schools would most certainly be in a far more precarious situation (MEHRD, 2009b).

Furthermore, the secondary principals in the study revealed that BSTs found it quite challenging in their first year of teaching because this lack of access to resources. Since all three groups of participants mentioned this as a barrier for BSTs, it appears to be a national problem. According to Deruage (2007) and Tillman (2005) the lack of access to teaching and learning resources is ranked as the second most common problem for new teachers. It impedes their preparation and lesson delivery, and can have a long term effect on their development as classroom teachers.

It appeared there was a specific certain factor that contributed to the lack of access to resources in the Solomon Islands secondary schools. It was revealed by the secondary school principals that one of these factors was *financial constraints*. While the BSTs and the SSTs did not mention that financial constraints had led to lack of access to resources, this is most likely because the BSTs and SSTs are not responsible for dealing with school finance in secondary schools in Solomon Islands, thus were unaware of the issues. However, the principals commented that teaching and learning resources were expensive to purchase, and that they found it difficult to allocate money in their annual budget for new materials every year. Nevertheless, secondary principals in Solomon Islands have the responsibility for ensuring that they allocate money in their school budget to purchase new resources every year (MEHRD, 2007b). As an important aspect of classroom environment, Bromfield, Deane and Burnett (2003) noted that teaching and learning resources should always be made available in schools.

5.2.2 Access to Information Technology and Literacy

Access to information technology and literacy was reported by the BSTs to be a barrier for them. Interestingly, the SSTs and the secondary principals did not make mention of this. It is possible that because the SSTs and secondary principals had spent a considerable number of years in the teaching profession, they thought that access to information technology and the associated literacy skills were not essential to the work of BSTs. However, Pita (2010) found out in his study that information technology is important in Solomon Islands' secondary schools, and information technology has benefitted the work of experienced and new teachers.

It is likely that as the BSTs were recent graduates from their teacher education institutions, and with their recent learning as student teachers, they valued access to information technology and were literate in this area. Therefore, their expectations of adequate access to information technology during their induction were not unreasonable. This is supported by Pita's (2010) study which revealed that teachers in Solomon Islands realised the need to have access to the use of

information technology, as well as the need to enhance their information technology skills. Certainly it appears to be an area in need of attention in Solomon Islands schools and teachers' professional development.

5.2.3 Classroom Management

The findings showed that the BSTs considered their most common barrier was *managing learning* as the work of both Deruage (2007) and Tillman (2005) have found. Somewhat surprisingly, the SSTs and secondary principals did not mention managing for learning as a barrier for BSTs. It is possible the secondary principals did not recognise this because they did not usually have direct contact with the BSTs. Furthermore, they are focused more on the overall leadership and management of the school, and not directly involved in supervising the BSTs. Nevertheless, it was of some concern that the secondary principals overlooked managing for learning a significant barrier for BSTs.

Whilst the secondary principals have substantiated reasons for not having regular contact with the BSTs, the SSTs who were supposed to have direct daily contact with the BSTs also neglected to comment on this issue. One would expect the SSTs to be in a better position to realise the likely and potential barriers for BSTs. A possible explanation could be that they may not have regularly observed the classroom teaching of BSTs, hence they could not make any kind of assessment or evaluation about the BSTs' teaching. Of the four SSTs in the study, only one mentioned that she carried out some observation of the BST, not for assessment but to support her teaching. "I also observe them when they teach. Sometimes I sit down somewhere, but for this particular BST, I still have not written the report on paper, but just observe her for purpose of supporting her teaching" (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10).

However, no mention was made of the BST's effectiveness in managing learning. The SSTs were not therefore in a good position to comment on the elements of their teaching which the BSTs needed to improve in their classroom, or needed help with.

Overcrowding was a further barrier for BSTs. This was identified by the BSTs and also the secondary principals. However the SSTs did not mention overcrowding as an issue. In reality, the BSTs had to manage the daily classroom activities, thus they had direct experience on the issue of overcrowding in their classrooms. They saw the main cause of overcrowding as being the result of the high enrolment of students. Certainly the secondary principals realised as administrators of their secondary schools that high enrolment was a concern yet seemed unable to address the issue to support BSTs.

Deruage (2007) and Tillman (2005) have argued that overcrowding is common barrier for new teachers. However, it would be generalising to say that all BSTs in Solomon Islands face the barrier of overcrowding. This study was conducted in four secondary schools in Honiara, and according to MEHRD (2009a) secondary schools in Honiara had high enrolment because there was influx of students coming from the provinces to the city. As a result of this influx of provincial students to Honiara, there might be less students in the provincial secondary schools. Thus BSTs teaching in those schools, especially in the rural areas, might not be dealing with overcrowding (MEHRD, 2009a).

It was revealed during the study that *behaviour management* was a barrier for BSTs. While this was alluded to by the BSTs, the SSTs and the secondary principals did not mention behaviour management as a barrier for BSTs. Possibly the SSTs and secondary principals did not realise behaviour management as a barrier for BSTs because they did not observe in the BSTs' classrooms every day. And for outside classroom activities, the SSTs and the secondary principals might not have been directly associating with the BSTs, therefore they did not witness this issue.

Even though the BSTs highlighted behaviour management as a barrier for them they tended to see it as a challenge. When BSTs stressed that their lack of skills to manage student behaviour was a common barrier for them, they confirmed Tillman's (2005) study. Furthermore, it was not surprising when BSTs in the study faced barriers associated with student behaviour because Parkinson and

Pritchard (2005) also reported that managing the behaviour of students is always a common issue in schools. Even experienced teachers face the problem of student discipline in schools all over the world, so BSTs in Solomon Islands were no exception.

The physical size of students was a significant concern for the BSTs. This concern was referred to only by the BSTs but was not mentioned by the SSTs or the secondary principals. The BSTs felt they lacked the necessary skills to manage and handle the behaviour of students, especially when the students were physically bigger in size than them. This is affirmed in Tillman's (2005) study where BSTs lack of skills for managing student behaviour was identified a common barrier. Veenman (1984) and Gold (1996) reported that new teachers faced the problem of behaviour management as a component of classroom management. Even experienced teachers find it challenging to manage the behaviour of students, and it is the most serious obstacle that inhibits the work of teachers (Galton & MacBeath, 2008).

5.2.4 Preparation, Planning and Lesson Delivery

All three groups of participants made references to preparation, planning and lesson delivery as barriers for BSTs. These comprised BSTs' lack of experience in lesson preparation, and their lack of confidence with lesson delivery. Interestingly, delays in the processing of BSTs' salaries and the distances they lived from their schools were also factors indicated as barriers. While the first two barriers were professional and classroom related, the last two barriers though not directly classroom related, did affect the induction and work ethics of BSTs.

It became apparent that a significant barrier for BSTs was their *lack of experience in lesson preparation*. One example of the BSTs' lack of experience in lesson preparation was their lack of skills in being able to obtain information from source materials, such as text books. Surprisingly, the SSTs did not mention this as a barrier for BSTs as the SSTs would be expected to have a better and closer working relationship with the BSTs. In the later part of this thesis the support provided by the SSTs on a daily basis in a mentoring relationship is discussed, but even so they did not realise the BSTs' lack of skill in this area. Instead, the

secondary principals who might not have daily contact with the BSTs were aware that BSTs lacked the skills to obtain information from source materials.

A barrier in the classroom for BSTs was their *lack of confidence in lesson delivery*. Surprisingly, neither the SSTs or the secondary principals mentioned this barrier. This particular revelation by the BSTs was to be expected because it expressed a reality of teaching and lesson delivery for most beginning teachers. Their newness to the teaching profession suggests there is a high probability they will lack confidence in their lesson delivery. Moir's (1999) five phases of beginning teacher development indicate that this lack of confidence should not be surprising given that the second and third phases are named the survival and disillusionment phases (the first in anticipation). These phases are where a beginning teacher begins to doubt they can do the work of a teacher – the “realities of teaching catch them off guard” (p. 20) and can lead to low morale. Given the limited nature of induction for the beginning teachers who participated in the study it could be argued they might remain in the survival and disillusionment phases for longer and possibly with little guidance to be able to emerge successfully from them.

On the other hand, the SSTs and the secondary principal participants had been in the profession for a number of years. They would have long ago exited Moir's (1999) phases of beginning teacher development thus neglecting to consider this element of their beginning teacher's development. The in-school practicalities of supporting a beginning teacher might have also contributed to the inability of the SSTs and the secondary principals to observe the teaching practice of the BSTs, therefore, they were not witness to the difficulties facing the BSTs in their classrooms.

The delay in the processing of BSTs' salaries was also highlighted during the study. While not necessarily an induction issue, according to the SSTs this was of great concern as they claimed it affected the work ethic of the BSTs in their schools. Furthermore, the secondary principals supported the BSTs regarding the delays in the processing of their salaries yet interestingly the BSTs did not mention it as a barrier for them. However, when the salaries of BSTs were not

processed in a timely manner they were unable to travel to their schools. The delay in the processing of BSTs' salaries is an example of an employment factor which Cameron, Baker and Lovett (2006) believed to affect the induction of new teachers. In Honiara, where the majority of these teachers do not reside at or near the school they travel by public transport. Thus when their salaries were not processed quickly they found it difficult to meet their travelling expenses to school. It is possible that the BSTs might only view their induction experiences in light of those activities directly related to their work hence their non-identification of it as a barrier, even though it had a significant impact on their performance.

The delay in processing teachers' salaries is a national problem in Solomon Islands for many teachers and can be viewed as an employment issue (Cameron et al., 2006). Nevertheless, the BSTs have been placed in a situation which is frustrating and demoralising and beyond their control.

A similar issue commented on by the BSTs was that of having to *live long distances from their schools*. It indirectly had a significant effect on their work and performance. As stated above many of the BSTs travelled to their schools by public transport (mainly bus). Although there are many public buses, the poorly planned road system in Honiara does not allow for the easy flow of traffic in the mornings. Furthermore, some BSTs had to take two buses before they reached their schools, which took up significant amount of time meaning that sometimes they arrived late at their schools. This late arrival had negative effects on the work of BSTs. For example, when they were time-tabled to teach the first lesson of the day, they might miss half of the lesson time or on occasion the whole lesson. Then they had to find time later in the day to compensate the time lost. Even when BSTs were not time-tabled to teach the first lesson, their late arrival still impacted on their work for the rest of the day.

The secondary principals raised the issue of BSTs' *attitudes* creating barriers but the BSTs and the SSTs did not. It was not surprising that the secondary principals highlighted attitude as a barrier for BSTs because as the leaders of their respective schools, they are committed to maintaining professionalism.

As teachers directly responsible for supporting the BSTs it was expected that they would have noticed if BSTs were exhibiting negative attitudes in the work place, however they did not comment on this issue at all. The SSTs may have considered they needed only report on aspects of their support and guidance for the BSTs. And perhaps the BSTs did not mention any attitudinal problems because they might have perceived their induction experiences to relate mainly to their classroom teaching activities. Furthermore, they might not have realised that their attitudes also have an effect on their professional development. They might endeavour to leave personal issues at home but ultimately they will impact on their work. In addition, if beginning teachers are dealing with what has been termed ‘reality shock’ as the enthusiasm of their first weeks teaching diminishes (Corcoran, 1981; Veenman, 1984) they may begin to feel unsupported, or become ill.

5.3 Lack of Formal Teacher Induction

After they graduate from their initial teacher education institutions beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands enter the teaching profession as secondary probationers. The term secondary probationers is defined by MEHRD (2007b) as those new secondary teacher graduates on their first appointment who are to serve a one year probationary period. Secondary probationers should be assessed during their first year of teaching by MEHRD by its school inspectors. Education authorities (EAs) also have the authority to assess secondary probationers. If the assessment of secondary probationers does not take place during the first year, the assessment is required to be carried out within the first six months of the second year. There is provision for the extension of the probationary period on the advice of the EA, which will then be approved by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC). If the assessment of a probationer reveals that he or she is professionally unfit and incapable of executing his or her duties, the EA is able to terminate the appointment having issued one month’s notice (MEHRD, 2007b).

Despite the processes described above, the majority of participants in the study commented on there being *no formal standardised teacher induction programme for beginning teachers* in Solomon Islands due to a lack of national policy

guidelines. An induction programme that is “a highly organised and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and components, that typically continues as a sustained process” (Wong et al., 2005, p. 379) is missing for beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands. Mirrial the principal of Opportunity College commented on the lack of national policy documents to support the induction of BSTs in their schools:

When I came in, I did not have a kind of information which is in place somewhere that would give me an idea of how, how we should do induction for the BSTs who work under my department and school. (Mirrial, Principal, Interview, 07/04/10)

Nevertheless, the lack of national policy guidelines on teacher induction in Solomon Islands need not be used as a justification by school leaders and SSTs to overlook the development of effective induction programmes for their BSTs. Although it is ideal, teacher induction does not have to be formal and standardised (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), it can also be informal. In this study, the principal of Opportunity College mentioned that informal sharing benefitted her BSTs:

I think one thing which I experience is sometimes I make some kind of educational thing like awareness, not in a...in a formal way, just informally. Informally, I see that teachers do come and it helps them in their work because some things might be new to them. (Mirrial, Principal, Interview, 07/04/10)

This is reflected in Smith and Ingersoll’s (2004) suggestion that informal induction programmes can exist which involve unstructured activities. Examples of less structured activities appear to be observations, informal sharing and peer support. While these activities can also part of formal induction programmes in Solomon Islands they were drawn variably and in informal ways by the participants.

The notion of informal induction activities is further supported by Stucki et al., (2006).in that informal support can also come from peers, the family and the wider community. These authors have argues that it can be rewarding for new

teachers to interact with students and the wider community in different situations. For new teachers in Solomon Islands, it appeared that having informal interactions and support from the family and the wider community was important in their informal induction.

However, the informal nature of BSTs' induction meant that in reality there was a lack of consistency and a variable quality to any induction experiences offered. There was no evidence of carefully and thoughtfully developed induction programmes.

Most participants in the study claimed that the *process of the appointment of BSTs* had an impact on the BSTs settling down at their new schools, especially during the induction period. This was generally because the appointment process took a long time and the BSTs did not have the resources to allow them to travel to their schools prior to school beginning. According to the Teaching Service Hand Book, secondary “probationers shall apply to Education Authorities for appointment in the normal appointment process” (MEHRD, 2007b, p. 20). Upon receiving applications from BSTs, the EAs recruit BSTs to fill in vacant positions in the schools within their jurisdiction. However, it is argued that the EAs do not directly appoint probationers because the submissions are further forwarded to the Teaching Service Office of MEHRD (MEHRD, 2007b).

The Teaching Service Office (TSO) of MEHRD acts as the secretariat of the Teaching Service Commission, which confirms the appointment, and facilitates the salary payment for the confirmation (MEHRD, 2007b). Legally, the EAs are the employers of BSTs, but the confirmation of their appointment and facilitation of their salaries are done by the TSO of MEHRD. This sometimes causes confusion as to whether the EAs are the employers or MEHRD. Arguably, the EAs are the employers but they do not have the capacity and resources to handle the task of facilitating teachers' salaries. Hence, the TSO of MEHRD acts as an agent on behalf of the EAs.

Once an appointment has been made, the BSTs take up their positions at their schools in which the EAs have posted them. During the one year probation period, the BSTs are frequently expected to perform all the tasks performed by their more experienced colleagues. This is not uncommon. As Zepeda and Mayers (2001), and Patrick (2007) found, in some schools new teachers are often given the most responsibilities. Tome, the BST at Learning College said that despite being in his first year as a BST, he was expected to perform all responsibilities of an experienced teacher:

I think every responsibility in school which teachers carry out, I involve in them. Like duty. We have a duty roster which means that when your turn comes, you must carry it out. When it's my turn to be on duty, I'm carrying it out. Or when it's time to guide students during work line, when on duty, we look after students. So I carry out every responsibility in the school. Whatever responsibility is there, I involve in. (Tom, BST, Interview, 23/04/10)

With the high expectation upon BSTs in Solomon Islands to perform as their experienced colleagues do, it can become overwhelming for them. This is affirmed by McCann and Johannessen (2008) who assert it is not uncommon for beginning teachers to have a heavy workload that is too great for their level of experience. Many BSTs in Solomon Islands have a full teaching load. Nancy, a BST at Opportunity College was in her second year of teaching, and she was given the responsibility to teach year 10 and 11. She explained “when I teach years 10 and 11, this makes me to do more study and do more research to prepare lesson for them” (Nancy, BST, Interview, 07/04/10). By comparison, in New Zealand for example, there are limitations to the extra roles and responsibilities of provisionally registered teacher (PRTs). In their study which comprised 20 case studies, Piggot-Irvine et al., (2009) reported there is “little evidence of excessive overload” (p. 189). And in New Zealand, PRTs are entitled to be released from their teaching duties in order to attend to preparation and planning, and participate in induction courses and meetings (NZTC, 2010). Similarly, in England new teachers also receive released time from teaching duties (Harrison, 2002).

Since there are no national policy guidelines on teacher induction in Solomon Islands there is no national standardised induction programme for the BSTs in secondary schools. Instead, schools may formulate their own induction policies and implement their own induction programmes at the school level.

However, Solomon Islands has begun its journey towards developing a national teacher induction programme and the findings of this study have indicated it has begun in varying ways at the school level. For example, the principal of Learning College confirmed that despite the lack of national induction policy guidelines, his school had taken the initiative to develop a model for supporting the BSTs:

Though that guideline is missing, my responsibility first of all, I see that BSTs as very important persons. Because they are new persons in the field, I make sure that I have a session with them...I can identify the areas which I think I should assist in. I try to come up with a teachers' handbook. (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 26/04/10)

Another point worthy of acknowledgement is that not all secondary principals in Solomon Islands appear to have the knowledge, skills and experience to initiate teacher induction programmes. Andrew highlighted this "not all principals in schools have that experience" (interview, 26/04/10). The more experienced principals seemed more able to provide the leadership to initiate their school's teacher induction programmes. As a result it was the less experienced principals in the study who claimed not to have any induction programmes in their schools. For example, Betsy the principal of Faith College, who was in her second year as principal said, "actually we do not really have any programme for that induction. I mean in the induction for the new BSTs...I mean actually we do not really do a good induction in this school "(Betsy, Principal, Interview, 14/04/10).

Given the above observations, the evidence suggests that teacher induction in Solomon Islands secondary schools is largely driven by principals. This is likely due to their realisation that their duties are "to be the overall person in control of all aspects of the school including administrative, professional, community liaison, pupil welfare and school affairs" as stipulated in the Teaching Service Hand Book (MEHRD, 2007b, p. 70). These principals had a strong sense of professional responsibility to the teachers and the BSTs in their schools. While

they did not necessarily have access to the resources (including time) to support the BSTs, for the most part they were aware of the need to do so and endeavoured to provide at least some through the SSTs and other means.

5.4 Mentoring as an Induction Approach

An aspect of induction that was revealed during the study was that mentoring of an informal nature was employed as an induction approach between the BSTs and SSTs. This indicated that to a certain extent, not only did mentoring take place in the four secondary schools but possibly in other secondary schools in Solomon Islands.

Through informal mentoring the BSTs and SSTs were able to learn from each other and appeared to benefit from these mentoring relationships. Such learning experiences confirm Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) belief that both mentors (in this case the SSTs) and beginning teachers learn from one another. Similarly, Smith (2002) reported that mentoring has benefits for both the beginning and experienced teacher. Thus the BSTs and SSTs developed a reciprocal relationship based upon trust and respect for each other (McCord & Bowden, 2003) resulting in the development of a positive relationship (Bowden, 2004). However despite these positive relationships, the study also indicated that the informal nature of the mentoring meant it lacked consistency, varied in quality and irregular.

As the BSTs claimed, they had a *loose structure for mentoring* due to there being no formal approach to induction in their schools and therefore to mentoring. Instead, mentoring was initiated by the SSTs because they had identified the need to have a closer relationship with their BSTs. This reflects Forsbach-Rothman's (2007) view that it is important to "enhance the relationship between" (p. 245) teachers who provide the support and the new teachers.

Despite the mentoring approaches employed being somewhat haphazard and not planned in a comprehensive manner, the BSTs confirmed that the mentoring support they received from their SSTs had been worthwhile:

The teacher that supported me the most in my teaching is my senior secondary teacher. She really helped me in my teaching. When I find it a bit hard in my teaching, I come to ask her, and anything for me to do, I go back to my SST, and ask her, for this practical, what do I do. So she really helped me, she contributes very much to my teaching. (Alison, BST, Interview, 26/03/10)

And from the SSTs' perspective, they too felt their support for the BSTs was important because they saw their role as supporting these teachers in order to provide professional and sometimes personal guidance. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) have emphasised that the main objective of beginning teacher mentoring is to provide them with guidance by the experienced teachers. Ellah, an experienced teacher provides an example of this:

I guide them in their plans. Some of them when they arrive, they may be shy, or it's their first time to come out to the teaching field, or they are not really aware of what to do, and in this case, I guide them, I show them some plans, and guide them how to do their plans. I help them to collect their notes. I also observe them when they teach...I guide and discuss with them. (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10)

It was quite clear that the mentoring taking place in the four secondary schools was not planned and organised systematically and comprehensively. Long (2009) has highlighted that one aspect of such formalised induction programmes where mentoring approaches are employed, is the selection of mentors. Piggot-Irvine et al., (2009) has also emphasised that it is very important to allocate competent mentors to be responsible for supporting beginning teachers. For example, set programmes should be followed and the mentor and mentee should meet regularly with a clear purpose for the meeting. And Stanulis and Floden (2009) suggest that study groups are created which mentors facilitate every week for the purpose of enhancing and enriching the relationship with the beginning teachers.

It is possible that given the demands and the nature of a comprehensive induction programme in which mentoring is a critical element, it may not be practical in the current Solomon Islands context. As stipulated in the Solomon Islands Teaching Service Hand Book (MEHRD, 2007b), secondary schools are allocated certain

number of teachers according to student enrolment. This means that for the four secondary schools which were visited for this study, each department would only have two to three teachers. There are probably not enough experienced teachers in a school to be considered as mentors. The teachers in the study whom the BSTs saw as their mentors were the Head of Departments (HODs), commonly known as SSTs. Initially these teachers were not identified as mentors, but still had to provide support to the BSTs to fulfil their duties as HODs (MEHRD, 2007b). As such, while experienced in their curriculum areas, these “teachers may lack the experience as mentors” (Forsbach-Rothman, 2007, p. 245).

Nevertheless, it was apparent that as they carried out their duties, the HODs realised they had begun to establish very good relationships with the BSTs. These connections were very important (Stanulis & Floden, 2009) and further enhanced if they meet regularly. A regular meeting between Ellah and her BST provides an example of this:

I meet her daily, everyday. Every day when she comes we meet each other. We use this place as our work place and office. Each time when she is not sure of what to do, she asks me, and I assist her. If she is preparing to do any practical, she informs me, then, we discuss it before she actually goes to do it in class. (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10)

The above daily meeting between Ellah and her BST provided a clear example of the use of a mentoring approach which, while not comprehensive in nature was effective given the circumstances and opportunities to meet. According to Ingersoll and Smith (2004), mentoring programmes vary in that they can be single sessions or highly structured programmes. Although the mentoring provided by Ellah may be perceived as not comprehensive, she certainly believed that her interactions with her BST contributed to their professional development.

The study revealed that the *support and professional development of mentors* will be vital to support a formal, systematic and comprehensive induction programme. Long (2009) has emphasised that one important component of an induction programme is the identification of potential mentors. School leaders might ask for

volunteers to become mentors but sometimes specific teachers might be identified for such professional development. Piggot-Irvine et al., (2009) found that the mentors in their study had very little training or professional development sessions. Instead they capitalised on their experiences and qualifications to inform their mentoring role. Similarly, the SSTs in this study whom the BSTs claimed as their mentors relied for the most part on their experiences and qualifications. These SSTs rarely if ever participated in any professional development to enhance their teaching practice in general, or for specific mentoring development. Ellah confirmed this:

since I left college, I have not attended any workshop. I only attended other workshops organised by NGOs, but for any workshop organised by CDC, so far not yet. Since I became SST, we only went for national exam marking, but that is marking alone. It is not a professional development workshop. (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10)

This suggests that the SSTs in the study mainly performed their mentoring roles within the parameters of their existing departmental roles instead of specifically performing their mentoring roles as qualified mentors.

SSTs are paid at higher level than assistant teachers and probationers (MEHRD, 2007b) thus if a formal induction programme is formally introduced in Solomon Islands, with mentors trained to perform specific mentoring roles to guide and support BSTs, such a development will have financial implications. According to a report which reviewed the induction and mentoring programmes in Switzerland, Japan, France, New Zealand and Shanghai China, substantial financial support was poured into induction and mentoring programmes for beginning teachers (Wong et al., 2005). In Solomon Islands this may not be a sound or possible economical decision because the government does not have the financial resources to fund such programmes.

Yet it would be worth taking the initiative. For example Indiana, another developing country, endeavoured to make provision for funding its induction and mentoring programmes some years ago. After an evaluation, it was decided the

programme was too expensive to be sustained with the result that “financial support for mentors and mentor training was eliminated in 2005” (Freemyer et al., 2010, p. 3). This should not deter Solomon Islands’ decision-makers. A scaled-down induction programme would be better than no programme. And the goodwill among teachers and school leaders which currently exists would surely assure initial success as the programme became established.

The study suggests that for a beginning teacher induction programme in Solomon Islands to be developed and progress effectively in the future, mentoring must become an approach within it.

Langdon (2007) has reported that policy makers at government level and school administrators view mentoring as an important strategy to improve teacher quality. Given this emphasis it would be beneficial for Solomon Islands education system if education policy makers consider this seriously. The principal of Faith College commented that the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development needs to take a leading role in promoting the importance of an induction and mentoring programme in Solomon Islands schools (Betsy, Principal, Interview, 14/04/10).

For mentors in a mentoring programme to effectively perform their mentoring roles, and for new teachers to participate in mentoring, release time needs to be made available ((Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009) so that mentors and beginning teachers can have time together. However, this may not be practical in Solomon Islands because secondary schools do not have relieving teachers (MEHRD, 2007b) because currently there are not enough trained and qualified secondary teachers in Solomon Islands (MEHRD, 2009b).

5.5 Professional Development

This study has highlighted that it is crucial for all teachers to engage consistently and frequently in professional development programmes because teaching requires teachers to be continuously informed. Moreover, it is a critical element of “ongoing teacher growth” (Poskitt, 2005, p. 140). The main purpose for teachers’

professional development is most often to enhance their teaching and learning practice. As such, Sparks (2003) has emphasised that professional development programmes must benefit the participants. In thinking about professional development in relation to teacher induction, it is clearly important that newly qualified teachers are well supported (NZTC, 2010) as they transition into the profession.

The study revealed that *secondary principals need to attend ongoing professional development* programmes. As professional leaders, secondary principals in Solomon Islands need to regularly update themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills in order to perform their duties and responsibilities professionally. Given that principals are the leaders in their schools, they need to be aware that one of their roles is to ensure the provision of quality professional development for teachers, especially as a part of the induction programmes for the BSTs. Mirrial the principal of Opportunity College stated:

there are other things which we principals need to know, that kind of information is a little bit lacking, I mean we are little bit lack of, or may be who should feed us with that, is some of the things we need to know, before we can do whatever (laugh). So I think it's best that even the new ones, because we are not experienced in taking up that kind of role, so we as principals for the new ones especially, like I talk on behalf of the new principals on the post, we also need a kind of support about what are the policies of MEHRD and things like that. How will we run schools effectively, and things like that too. (Mirrial, Principal, Interview, 07/04/10)

Just as the principals in Brook and Grady's (1996) study claimed they were not provided with sufficient information to guide them in their work to support beginning teachers, Mirrial believed she lacked the necessary information about how to support BSTs. She stressed the importance of principals participating in specifically organised professional development where special topics such as the role of school principals in the induction of BSTs were addressed. According to Mirrial, when a new principal is appointed, and especially during the first two years, professional development should be provided for them. Principals can then come together and share their learning about what to do when inducting BSTs. Stanulis and Floden (2009) offer an example of an induction programme for

which principals were required to attend three workshops where the emphasis was on learning how to help beginning teachers.

There is evidence that Solomon Islands is addressing the professional learning needs of its educators. With the establishment of the TTDO division at MEHRD a few years ago, there has been good progress in terms of policy formulation for teacher training and development in Solomon Islands. According to the 2009 MEHRD Semi-Annual Report, TTDO has conducted school leadership and management workshops for 59 primary school headmasters and secondary principals during the first half of 2009, in South Malaita and Shortlands. Furthermore, TTDO plan to continue “conducting of professional development programmes in provinces” (MEHRD, 2009d, p. 64). Despite the TTDO’s achievement in conducting the leadership and management workshops in South Malaita and Shortlands, as well as its intention to continue this programme in the rest of the country, most principals in Solomon Islands still do not have access to such professional development programmes. From example, the principal of Opportunity College indicated that it would be to her benefit if she was able to consistently and regularly attend professional development programmes, “it would be good to have professional development programmes such as workshops” (Betsy, Principal, Interview, 14/04/10).

It is important to appreciate that secondary principals in Solomon Islands may not be able to attend professional development due to the scattered geographical nature of the country (Malasa, 2007). Given this situation among other reasons, the principal of Learning College mentioned during the interview that as principals, they “have a duty statement which is given out in the teaching service handbook” (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 26/04/10). According to the teaching service hand book (TSHB) which spells out twenty one duty statements for secondary principals, one statement is “to be the overall person in control of all aspects of the school including administrative, professional, community liaison, pupil welfare and school affairs” (MEHRD, 2007b, p. 70). However, many secondary principals in Solomon Islands do not have copies of the TSHB and even if they do it does not provide sufficient information to enable them to do

their jobs effectively without ongoing professional development. The principal of Learning College stated:

But I think that there should be additional information or guidelines that should come from the authorities. Because not all principals have done administration, educational planning. For example, most or some principals who graduated from USP, they come and look after school, when they did their training at USP, they did may be curriculum strand or counselling. So not all principals in schools have that experience. (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 26/04/10)

When planning and organising any kind of professional development for secondary principals in Solomon Islands it will be important to identify a clear purpose and scope to ensure principals' professional learning needs are being met. In this way principals have the potential to become more significant leaders and contributors to the development of induction programmes in their schools.

While considering the importance of professional development for secondary principals, findings from the study revealed that the *SSTs also need continuous professional development*. There are no specifically designated mentor teachers in the four secondary schools visited for the study. In Solomon Islands these teachers also perform the roles of associate secondary teachers and are regarded as mentors for BSTs. The SST at Success College explained her role thus:

I meet her daily, everyday. Every day when she comes we meet each other. We use this place as our work place and office. Each time when she is not sure of what to do, she asks me, and I assist her. If she is preparing to do any practical, she informs me, then, we discuss it before she actually goes to do it in class. (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10)

Although Ellah felt that her mentoring support for the BST seemed to be effective, she also highlighted the importance for her of having opportunities to participate in professional development to learn new ideas and strategies in the teaching and learning process. She believed that as senior teachers, they need to be equipped with the update information and elaborated:

It's been quite a while since I left college, so some of the information I have is a little out of date. Sometimes when BSTs are not very sure about something, and they ask me, I might give them the out of date information. Therefore, it would be good if the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) can update us by organising workshops so that they can update us on update information. So that we can also help others (BSTs) with the update information. It is difficult for all of us to attend, so at least one can represent us at a workshop. Workshops are important to update us. (Ellah, SST, Interview, 26/03/10)

The importance of mentors being professionally prepared before taking up mentoring roles rather than merely having someone designated to be a mentor is not enough according to Holloway (2001). If the mentor does not have the necessary skills and experience, the delivery of the mentoring support may not be effective because the skills for providing proper guidance are vital to the success of the beginning teacher. Andrews and Martin (2003) have further emphasized that “prospective mentors should participate in professional development activities to learn about the mentoring process and what is expected of them before assuming the role of mentor” (p. 8).

In considering the necessity for promoting professional development activities for mentors (in the case of Solomon Islands these are also the SSTs), Feiman-Nemser (2003) asserts that formal mentoring in which the need to nurture a beginning teacher is emphasized is a professional practice that can be learned. Mentors need to be provided with continuous opportunities for learning and problem solving. According to the NZTC mentor teachers “need some training and ongoing professional support for their role” (NZTC, 2010). Stanulis and Floden (2009) for example, suggest that mentor teachers should engage “in mentor study groups for six hours each month along with six full days of professional development during the school year” (p. 114). And a top ten list for being an effective mentor (Bowden, 2004) was reflected in the SST participants' comments in relation to their aspirations to be mentors or their current mentoring work. Factors such as establishing reciprocal collaboration through trust, offering a shoulder of support, sharing the contents of your toolbox, opening the treasure chest of community resources, providing on-the-spot answers, modeling effective strategies, reconsidering your own practice, being available over time, demonstrating

professionalism, and gaining new ideas and enthusiasm for the job featured in the responses of a number of the SSTs. Certainly the SSTs have emphasised the importance of mentoring being developed as a practice that needs to be intensive and sustained in nature (Stanulis and Floden, 2009).

It is a well researched fact that *professional development for BSTs* is crucial as they begin their teaching careers (Cameron, 2009) and was prominent in this study. For example, although she was not very well informed about how to design and implement an induction programme for BSTs, the principal of Opportunity College took the initiative to organise a professional development workshop for the teachers, but was specifically aimed at the BSTs. This principal recognised the importance of attending professional development programmes for all of those involved in beginning teacher induction. “In fact I remember during the one week break, I invited MEHRD officials from the teaching service division to come and conduct a workshop on the TSHB.....the school planned the workshop, and we invited them” (Mirrial, Principal, Interview, 07/04/10). And the principal of Faith College also invited officials from MEHRD to facilitate a workshop for her teachers but especially the BSTs. Officials from the Inspectorate Division of MEHRD facilitated the workshop:

Last year I invited officials from the inspectorate division of MEHRD. They came and talk about their expectation and the code of ethics for teachers. What they expect from the teachers and how the teachers should behave, and also how they (inspectorate) will assess probationers. (Betsy, Principal, Interview, 14/04/10)

This indicates that the provision of professional development opportunities is considered a key aspect of BSTs induction programmes by these principals and as Piggot-Irvine et al., (2009) have stated should be regular, focused and designed to meet the needs of beginning teachers. They have suggested that experienced teachers in the school and the BSTs have regular meetings to share ideas and resources, and discuss aspects of teaching (Fletcher, Strong & Villar, 2005; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). This notion of “professional discussion” (NZTC, 2010; Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009, p. 187) is critical to a beginning teachers’ professional learning and development. In addition, Stanulis and Floden (2009) have

highlighted the benefits of having after-school workshops, which include opportunities to “share ideas, resources, and advice” (p. 119). But they have also cautioned that such workshops have some disadvantages, especially in terms of timing as teachers may already be tired, or needing to do other things.

Professional development was considered by all of the participants in the study to be a highly desirable element of their own learning but unfortunately lacking, or at the least limited. It is essential that beginning teachers in particular participate in wider network with other beginning teachers, have opportunities to collaborate with teachers in their school and have contact with people from a variety of external organizations (Anthony, Bell, Haigh & Kane, 2007).

5.6 The influence of School Leadership Support

Wong et al., (2005) have reported that sound leadership for new teachers must be provided by school leaders, and to a certain degree by “all other school staff” (p. 381). The study showed both SSTs and secondary principals provided support and guidance for the BSTs in their capacity as school leaders. In this regard, both SSTs and secondary principals took into account the critical nature of their roles as professional leaders in the induction of new teachers (NZTC, 2010). The principal of Opportunity College mentioned that she had attended a ‘mentoring in leadership workshop’ conducted by the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and found the workshop beneficial:

I see this programme as, it really helps me as a leader, and it really lifts me up that I must go forward in order to support my teachers in schools. So I think that is one of the programmes that influence me. They really look down on leadership. How you should lead, or what are the qualities of a leader and so on. And also we look at how we should support teachers, because teachers do not reside in schools by themselves. They also have their own families, which will also contribute to how they will perform well in their duties in the school. So when you carry out that, I can see that it is also one area which if we have that kind of mentoring support for leaders, especially us the principals, I see it to be one kind of support which will be really beneficial. (Mirrial, Principal, Interview, 07/04/10)

This example of external support to enhance the practice of school leaders and teachers offered a kind of professional development opportunity able to be adapted to meet the needs of specific schools.

However, the level and kind of support which BSTs received from school leaders varied from school to school and was not an unexpected finding (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Some BSTs mentioned that they expected more support but did not receive much direction from the heads of their school. The BSTs sometimes felt they were not supported at all. Joftus and Maddox-Dolan's (2002) study found that 20 percent of beginning teachers claimed they received little or no support from their school and districts. And Hellsten, Prytula, Ebanks and Lai's (2009) study stated that new teachers sometimes experienced the feeling of being lost and experienced minimal contact with their school principals.

Yet the level of support provided by school principals at several schools appeared to be of a higher level. There were indications of better planning, systems and procedures in place, and good lines of communication. These are a few elements of good induction programme which Totterdell, Jones, Bubb and Heilbronn (2002) have termed "school management of induction" (p. 10). Thus it was that the principal of Learning College set standards and took a leadership role in ensuring that the BSTs in his school received adequate support from himself, the heads of departments, and the rest of the teachers as a whole. He elaborated on his support for the BSTs in his school:

When the BSTs come in, after I welcome them, the next person I see is the HOD. Always tell them that I'm on the supervisory role, and they have a very big responsibility to play in guiding and helping the BST, make a programme, help him or her. And then we also conduct departmental meetings. And that is, I just like to check every department, how they carry out, and...I create what we call the school academic committee...To make sure they plan, for example, like an internal assessment...we try as much as possible to balance the assessment....At every department in one semester, we only agree to give 3 assignments. Everyone must give 3 assignments. By that way, they can go down and help the BSTs. (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 26/04/10)

As a result of the level of support received by some BSTs from their school principals, from their SSTs and teachers in their schools, they were encouraged and had feelings of “success and satisfaction” (Hellsten et al., 2009, p. 722). This gave them opportunities to realise their potential in the teaching profession as they began their teaching careers. The BSTs were able to develop their confidence and began to reflect more frequently on their practice. They “gradually developed confidence in interrogating their own ways of thinking about teaching” (Kane, 2006, p. 360). For instance, the BSTs at Learning College highlighted that with the Tuesday weekly professional development programme in the school, and the principal’s personal interactions with other teachers, a collaborative environment was developed and sustained (Gilles, Wilson, & Elias, 2010). The principal elaborated:

I’m able to associate or interact with students and staff of this school. So I’m very happy with that...I think one most influential factor which helped me to develop as a leader in my career as a teacher is – my colleague teachers. We...discuss. Every challenge I face, we discuss them together... They encourage me to try and cope up with the things that we do in the school. (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 23/04/10)

Overall, the support BSTs received from their secondary principals, SSTs and teachers in their schools appeared to be determined by the “systems and the culture of support” ultimately led and developed by the school principals (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009, p. 182).

As overall leaders of secondary schools in Solomon Islands the principals strongly influence the induction programme for BSTs. The four secondary school principals demonstrated different levels and kinds of leadership in this respect. Regardless of the different levels and kinds of leadership support from the principals, there was also a common understanding that the role of leadership is important in the induction of beginning teachers (McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009).

The recent development of more formal and comprehensive teacher induction and mentoring programmes emphasises the role of principals and other school leaders

to be more than leadership (NZTC, 2010) rather than management as seems to prevail in the current Solomon Islands context. Nevertheless, it was not too surprising to note if principals in Solomon Islands secondary schools performed their roles in the induction of BSTs in a more managerial way. This may reflect the overall pattern of how these principals view their roles. In an earlier study by Malasa (2007) on the issues inhibiting the effectiveness of school leadership in Solomon Islands' secondary schools, it was highlighted that, "Solomon Islands' principals appear to be located in a managerial rather than a leadership paradigm" (p. 87). This means they put more emphasis on their management duties than their leadership roles, that is, they are more concerned with the control and application of resources (Doughty, 2001), or they mainly ensure that their schools run "smoothly on a day-to-day, or week-by-week basis" (Southworth, 1998, p. 8).

Given the Solomon Islands' principals' firm location in a managerial paradigm, they may not be able to provide the kind of professional leadership as a way forward for their schools (Doughty, 2001). In the context of the induction of BSTs, they may lack the skills to provide the necessary professional influence to enhance the capacity of their BSTs.

One of the reasons is likely the policy, context and school culture in Solomon Islands. According to a number of national education policy documents, Solomon Islands principals are expected to perform considerable managerial duties. For example, in the Solomon Islands Teaching Service Hand Book, one of the specified duties of the principals is to "produce school annual reports and to properly account for all school funds as described in the schools financial manual" (MEHRD, 2007b, p. 70). Furthermore, secondary school principals in Solomon Islands are school administrators (MEHRD, 2007b), which requires them to be responsible for the overall administration of their schools. Given this responsibility, they may be inclined to view their role in the induction of BSTs as someone responsible for the administration side of the induction of BSTs. Marable and Raimondi's (2007) study reported that the role of school administrators is significant in induction because they keep the inventory of teaching materials and are also responsible for the money.

Despite the view that Solomon Islands' principals appeared to be located in a managerial paradigm (Malasa, 2007) the findings of this study also revealed some elements of good principalship and leadership practices in the induction of BSTs. In other words, there are indications of the leadership roles of principals that demonstrated the professional practice of principals to enhance the professional development of BSTs. The principal of Learning College summarised his leadership roles in the induction of BSTs:

First of all, I see that BST or someone new to the profession as a very important person. Because he or she will be a new person in the field, so I make sure that I have a session with him or her... I will try to find out what he or she already knows about school in his or her training. And what are his or her preparations in mind. Before coming into the school, what are his or her ideas about carrying out his or her duties. So from that session I have with them, I can identify the areas which I think I should assist in...I try to come up with...a teachers handbook. Apart from the teaching service handbook, I try to create too a teachers handbook for this school...Some of its parts I already give out for the teachers, for example, one is work and professional code of conduct, and staff requirements. So when they arrive, I share with them, and also I must tell them that they are very important people in this profession. And they must have value in this profession. They must value themselves. They must also value their subjects. They must start to see and value their students. And they must also value the mission of the school. That is we are looking at the future of students, future of the community, future of the country...I must tell them that they must see them as teachers. That is on that one, and then I must also have a session with HODs. They must guide the BSTs. (Andrew, Principal, Interview, 26/04/10)

This strongly indicates that this principal's priority role in the induction of BSTs is to provide professional leadership. He exhibits the behaviour that Wong et al., (2005) have reported on by developing an induction programme that places great emphasis on "welcoming ceremonies at the school" (p. 380) which introduces the BSTs to the school so they begin to learn about the school and its teaching culture from the beginning of their careers.

One particular aspect that arose within the leadership data was the revelation of collaborative leadership (Long, 2009) in the induction of BSTs. This was mentioned by all four SSTs and the four principals who participated in the study.

The SST at Learning College had this to say about his collaboration with the teachers and the principal:

One of the factors which influenced me to come to this leadership role and try to help my BSTs is, just as those experienced teachers who stayed here at the first place. When I came here, I teamed up with them every time. And I learnt a lot of things from them. So for a CHS like this one, I think it is the main factor I know that really influenced me, especially from principal and come to me when I was a BST too at that time...I think the first support which I receive every day is from my principal. He is also a Maths teacher and been through this post, and now he is principal. Any time I need help which, I know, me and my colleagues do not meet, I will come and consult him. (Peter, SST, Interview, 23/04/10)

This notion of building a collaborative school culture (Patrick, 2007) in their school is similar to the induction programmes of Switzerland, Japan, France, New Zealand, and China (Shanghai) where collaboration is promoted (Wong et al., 2005). A key indication of a collaborative culture at Learning College was for instance, the introduction of the weekly professional development workshop by the principal in 2009, which came out as the result of his “systems-thinking” (Portner, 2005, p. 76) about the direction which he will lead his school into the future. Another example of a collaborative culture at Learning College were the principal’s regular professional visits to the various departments.

The findings show and confirm that for effective induction programmes to be developed in Solomon Islands secondary schools there are critical elements to be considered. Significantly the study has highlighted that with no national policy guidelines for teacher induction in Solomon Islands, there is little support for those participating in the induction process. At present therefore, beginning teacher induction is only taking place at the school level and is highly driven by the secondary school principals and to some extent the SSTs.

It is apparent that the development of a national induction programme is warranted and inevitable, and must focus on building a variety of learning opportunities and experiences to support beginning teachers during their probationary period.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This study explored the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands. The intent was to identify what the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands are, and what senior secondary teachers' and principals' views and experiences of induction programmes in Solomon Islands are.

While the nature and size of the study was limited, it provided significant insights into beginning secondary teacher induction in Solomon Islands. Nevertheless, the limitations should be taken into consideration to guide future research about beginning secondary teacher induction and in the interpretations of the findings. For example, the sample of four secondary schools and twelve participants was relatively small. Furthermore the study was carried out in community high schools in Honiara (the capital city of Solomon Islands). As community and urban schools, they are influenced by local customs, cultures and the surrounding communities (Dorovolomo, 2008), therefore the study may not represent the induction experiences of principals, senior secondary teachers and beginning secondary teachers in the provincial and national secondary schools.

Finally, the teaching subjects of the beginning secondary teachers who participated in the study must be taken into consideration. While English, Home Economics, Mathematics, and Science were the subjects taught by the BSTs, the findings may not represent the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers who teach other subjects.

6.2 Significant Findings

The findings of this study have identified that it is timely for Solomon Islands to further its consideration of the introduction of a national beginning teacher induction programme. While the cost of implementing such an expensive exercise is likely to be one reason for the ongoing lack of a national induction programme for beginning teachers at present, one could argue that it is not justifiable to use the financial capability of a country to determine the prospects of its teachers and ultimately its young people. As Wong et al., (2005) have pointed out, it is essential to have effective teachers in our schools but this can only become a reality if teachers have opportunities to engage in continuous professional learning. It is clear that Solomon Islands as a developing country values its teachers, hence this would seem sufficient reason to begin the design and eventual implementation of a national induction programme for all beginning teachers. Indeed the TTDO has documented in the MEHRD 2009 semi-annual report that the division is planning to design “an induction programme for newly graduates at SOE” (MEHRD, 2009d, p. 65).

It is indisputable that beginning secondary teachers, wherever they are in the world, will encounter barriers in their first years of teaching during their induction period. Certainly the lack of national policy guidelines for beginning teachers’ induction has been a contributor to the creation of these barriers in Solomon Islands. Currently teacher induction must be initiated by school leaders at the school level and then only if they are able to, or choose to design, develop and implement such policies. With beginning teacher induction only taking place at the school level it seems inevitable that barriers and other issues identified in this study will develop. Interestingly, the study highlighted mentoring as an important component of a beginning teacher’s induction programme although it appeared that for most beginning secondary teachers informal mentoring was occurring even if it was mostly of the ‘are you okay?’ type rather than focused and goal oriented.

As commented on in the discussion chapter, research has shown that mentoring is an important element of, and approach to the development and implementation of a beginning teacher induction programme (Black, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Owen, 2004; Langdon, 2007). Thus when considering the design of a national induction programme, it will be important that the TTDO considers mentoring as one of its critical components. As Langdon (2010) has emphasised, mentoring plays a significant role in enhancing the learning of beginning teachers.

The study also identified school leadership as having a key role in the induction of beginning secondary teachers in Solomon Islands but is also an aspect requiring much improvement. In order for secondary principals to have the required and relevant knowledge for developing effective beginning teacher induction, they need to be able to access ongoing professional learning opportunities for themselves and all other stakeholders involved in the induction process. In this regard, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has already realised this gap and has begun to design and develop some policy guidelines. An example of a recently completed policy document, is the secondary division's initiated *Policy Statement and Guidelines for Basic Education in Solomon Islands*. This policy statement and guidelines has also highlighted the TTDO's responsibility for developing and conducting continuous professional development programmes for teachers and school leaders (MEHRD, 2009c).

6.3 Recommendations

If the main purpose of an induction and mentoring programme for beginning teachers is “to support high quality professional learning so that the teacher can learn to develop fully effective teaching practices for the diverse learners they will be responsible for throughout their teaching career” (NZTC, 2009) then the findings of this study have a number of important implications for the development of Solomon Islands' beginning secondary teacher induction programmes. Recommendations for future practice in Solomon Islands are presented and discussed below:

First, national guidelines for teacher induction in Solomon Islands need to be developed. Subsequently all education authorities; provincial, church, and private education authorities, could develop teacher induction policies for their context using the national guidelines.

Supporting such a policy initiative by taking some kind of action is a second recommendation. This could take the form of officers from the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, particularly from the Teacher Training and Development, Secondary and Primary Divisions conducting ‘look and learn’ professional visits to several countries, which already have comprehensive and well designed induction programmes.

A fourth recommendation is for the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development to develop a project proposal seeking financial assistance for the funding of a pilot project for the development of beginning teacher induction programmes in Solomon Islands.

A final recommendation should those above come to fruition, is for the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, the School of Education of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, the provincial, church, and private education authorities, and any other relevant stakeholders to agree to work in collaboration to sustain future induction programmes.

The findings of this study suggest that teacher induction programmes should be available for all beginning secondary teachers, which then become part of each teacher’s sustained professional development programme. Structuring programmes which sustain intensive professional development where beginning teachers are able to observe others, be observed by others, and be part of networks in order to share, grow and learn in critical. As Wong (2004) has asserted, research “confirms that teacher and teaching quality are the most powerful predictors of student success” (p. 24).

It is intended for this study to add to a slowly growing body of literature about the induction experiences of beginning secondary teachers in developing countries especially in the Pacific region, and particularly in the Melanesian countries of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands. Furthermore, the findings have the potential to add to educators' understanding about the influence of school leadership and school culture in beginning teacher induction. This study may serve as a baseline for future studies, especially for other scholars from Solomon Islands and other Melanesian countries who would like to continue to research in the area of beginning secondary teacher induction experiences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information letter to Permanent Secretary MEHRD

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

Mylyn Kuve
The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development
P. O. Box G28
Honiara
Solomon Islands

Dear Mylyn,

SUBJECT: PERMIT TO DO RESEARCH IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now I am drafting my research proposal for the Master in Educational Leadership, which involves carrying out research and writing a thesis.

The title of my project is “Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers in Solomon Islands”. As the government agency responsible for granting research permits, I am seeking your ministry’s approval for me to conduct this study by visiting and collecting data from the selected secondary schools in Solomon Islands. According to my plan, I would like to visit 4 secondary schools (2 in Honiara City Council and 2 in the Central Islands Province). I am hoping to conduct my field trip in March/April 2010. I will await your response before contacting the concerned education authorities and the 4 schools.

I would be grateful if you would consider and grant the approval for my intended field trip.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 2: Information letter to the Head of School of SOE

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

Mrs Janine Simi
The Head of School
School of Education
Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
Panatina Campus
Honiara
Solomon Islands

Dear Janine,

SUBJECT: LIST OF 2008 SECONDARY GRADUATES

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now I am drafting my research proposal for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which involves carrying out research and writing a thesis.

The title of my project is “Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands”. One group of participants in my study would be BSTs who have spent one year in the teaching profession. In order for me to identify these BSTs, I would need the names of the secondary graduates from your institution in 2008. I am hoping to conduct my field trip in March/April 2010.

I would be grateful if you would provide me the list of the names of your secondary graduates in 2008, through the above address, or through my email (jb38@students.waikato.ac.nz).

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 3 – Information letter to the Director of TSD

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

Mr Rolland Sikua
The Director
Teaching Service Division
Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development
P. O. Box G28
Honiara
Solomon Islands

Dear Rolland,

SUBJECT: 2010 POSTING OF SECONDARY TEACHERS

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now I am drafting my research proposal for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which involves carrying out research and writing a thesis.

The title of my project is “Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands”. As the division responsible for the posting of teachers, I would like to request your division to provide me with the posting for secondary teachers in 2010. With the secondary teachers’ posting, I will be able to identify secondary schools in which BSTs who graduated from SOE/SICHE in 2008 are currently posted.

In particular, my study will be conducted in Honiara and in the Central Islands Province. Therefore, I am requesting your division to provide me with the 2010 secondary teachers’ posting for the two provinces mentioned. I am hoping to conduct my field trip in March/April 2010.

I would be grateful if you would send me the required information through the above address, or through my email (jb38@students.waikato.ac.nz)

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 4 – Information letter to the CEO of Honiara City Council

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

The Chief Education Officer
Honiara City Education Authority
Honiara City Council
Honiara
Solomon Islands

Dear Chief Education Officer,

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH IN YOUR EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now I am drafting my research proposal for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which involves carrying out research and writing a thesis.

The title of my project is “Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands”. The participants of my study will be BSTs, associate secondary teachers, and principals. As an education authority, I would like your office to identify 2 secondary schools that I should visit for my data collection. I am hoping to conduct my field trip in March/April 2010.

I would be grateful if you would consider my request and grant permission for me to visit and collect data from the two secondary schools.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 5 – Information letter to the CEO of Central Province

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

The Chief Education Officer
Central Province Education Authority
Tulagi Headquarter
Central Islands Province
Solomon Islands

Dear Chief Education Officer,

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH IN YOUR EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now I am drafting my research proposal for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which involves carrying out research and writing a thesis.

The title of my project is “Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands”. The participants of my study will be BSTs, associate secondary teachers, and principals. As an education authority, I would like your office to identify 2 secondary schools that I should visit for my data collection. I am hoping to conduct my field trip in March/April 2010.

I would be grateful if you would consider and grant permission for me to visit and collect data from the two secondary schools.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 6 – Information letter to the Secondary Principals

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

The Principal

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Dear Principal,

SUBJECT: INFORMATION AND INVITATION

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now, I'm drafting my research proposal, for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which will involve carrying out a research and writing up a thesis.

The title of my project is "Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands". The participants of my study will be BSTs, associate secondary teachers, and principals. Your education authority has selected your school for the study. The main method of collecting data is through semi-structured interviews. This means, participants will participate in interviews, at times convenient to them.

The data generated from this research will be used specifically for my Master in Educational Leadership Thesis, and other academic papers and presentations relating to my study. You are rest assured that all the information that you provide will be kept confidential. Furthermore, you will be asked to review any material collected and may add, change or delete any information if you wish to do so. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance, and then to my supervisor, Jenny Ferrier-Kerr, of the School of Education, at the University of Waikato, at the following email address; jfk@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (0064) (07) 838 4466, Ext 6665.

I would appreciate if you can complete the consent form attached to indicate whether you have accepted to be a participant in the study, or decline your participation.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 7 – Information letter to the Senior Secondary Teachers

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

The Senior Secondary Teacher
.....
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Dear Senior Secondary Teacher,

SUBJECT: INFORMATION AND INVITATION LETTER

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now, I'm drafting my research proposal, for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which will involve carrying out a research and writing up a thesis.

The title of my project is "Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands". The participants of my study will be BSTs, associate secondary teachers, and principals. You have been selected as one participant for the study, because of your experience as an associate secondary teacher. The main method of collecting data is through semi-structured interviews. This means, you will participate in an interview, to take place, at a time convenient with you.

The data generated from this research will be used specifically for my Master in Educational Leadership Thesis, and other academic papers and presentations relating to my study. You are rest assured that all the information that you provide will be kept confidential. Furthermore, you will be asked to review any material collected and may add, change or delete any information if you wish to do so. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance, and then to my supervisor, Jenny Ferrier-Kerr, of the School of Education, at the University of Waikato, at the following email address; jfk@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (0064) (07) 838 4466, Ext 6665.

I would appreciate if you can complete the consent form attached to indicate whether you have accepted to be a participant in the study, or decline your participation.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 8 – Information letter to the Beginning Secondary Teachers

1-73 York Street
Hillcrest
Hamilton
New Zealand
26th January 2010

The Beginning Secondary Teacher
.....
.....

Dear Beginning Secondary Teacher,

SUBJECT: INFORMATION AND INVITATION LETTER

Kia Ora, Greetings from New Zealand!

I am a student at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand. I have just completed a post-graduate diploma in Educational Leadership. Now, I'm drafting my research proposal, for the Masters in Educational Leadership, which will involve carrying out a research and writing up a thesis.

The title of my project is "Induction Experiences of Beginning Secondary Teachers (BSTs) in Solomon Islands". The participants of my study will be BSTs, associate secondary teachers, and principals. You have been selected as one participant for the study, seeing that you are one of the BSTs in the school. The main method of collecting data is through semi-structured interviews. This means, you will participate in a semi-structured interview, to take place, at a time convenient with you.

The data generated from this research will be used specifically for my Master in Educational Leadership Thesis, and other academic papers and presentations relating to my study. You are rest assured that all the information that you provide will be kept confidential. Furthermore, you will be asked to review any material collected and may add, change or delete any information if you wish to do so. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance, and then to my supervisor, Jenny Ferrier-Kerr, of the School of Education, at the University of Waikato, at the following email address; jfk@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (0064) (07) 838 4466, Ext 6665.

I would appreciate if you can complete the consent form attached to indicate whether you have accepted to be a participant in the study, or decline your participation.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

James Bosamata

Appendix 9 – Consent Form

Principal, Senior Secondary Teacher and Beginning Secondary Teacher Consent Form

Please read each statement carefully and put a tick in the box to show that you understand the research activities you will be involved in and the conditions before signing this form.

- My participation in the research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw any data that has not been transcribed.
- I, and my school will not be identified in any discussions or publications of the research.
- All the information pertaining to me will be destroyed five years after the completion of this study.
- The information about me obtained during the research will only be used for the purpose of the research study, published papers and presentations.
- My signed consent will be completed before the commencement of the interviews.
- I understand that I will be involved in semi-structured interviews, and that I may use the Solomon Pidgin (lingua franca) which I am comfortable with.
- I have read and understood the above research and guidelines and agree to participate in this research.

Name: _____

School: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 10 – Interview Schedule for Beginning Secondary Teachers

Semi structured Interview with Beginning Secondary Teachers

1. Can you describe the induction programme designed for you in the school?
2. Has the induction programme for you in the school been effective? In what ways?
3. How would you improve the induction programme for BSTs in the school?
4. Do you find it easy to translate what you learnt at the School of Education into the actual classroom teaching?
5. What are your responsibilities in your role as a beginning secondary teacher?
6. Tell me something you do in your role as a beginning secondary teacher which is or has been a rewarding experience.
7. What factors have contributed to or influenced your development as a beginning secondary teacher?
8. What are some of the challenges and problems you have encountered as a beginning secondary teacher?
9. Which of the challenges and problems you have mentioned have been most frequent or common?
10. Do you feel pressured by the requirements of the Solomon Islands National curriculum as a beginning secondary teacher? In what ways?
11. Who has supported you the most during your teacher induction? In what ways?

Prompts

- Tell me more about.....
- Can you explain.....? Or can you clarify?
- What do you mean by that...?
- Can you give an example of.....?
- Can you elaborate on the previous point
- In what ways.....?
- Why is it that.....?

Appendix 11 – Interview Schedule for Senior Secondary Teachers

Semi structured Interview with Senior Secondary Teachers

1. How long have you worked in this school?
2. What are your responsibilities in your role here, in relation to the induction of beginning secondary teachers?
3. Tell me an aspect of what you do in your role which is a rewarding experience?
4. How long have you been in this leadership role?
5. How would you describe the secondary teacher induction programme that is implemented in the school?
6. What are your values and beliefs of leadership, in relation to secondary teacher induction?
7. What are some of the challenges you encounter while providing leadership support to beginning secondary teachers?
8. How might the current secondary teacher induction programme be improved?
9. What factors contribute or influence your leadership support for beginning secondary teachers?
10. In your experience, what are the most common challenges and problems faced by beginning secondary teachers?
11. Who has supported you in your role to support beginning secondary teachers?

Prompts

Tell me more about.....
Can you explain.....? Or can you clarify?
What do you mean by that...?
Can you give an example of?
Can you elaborate on the previous point
In what ways....?
Why is it that.....?

Appendix 12 – Interview Schedule for Secondary Principals

Semi structured Interview with Secondary Principals

1. How long have you worked in this school?
2. What are your responsibilities in your role here, in relation to the induction of beginning secondary teachers?
3. Tell me an aspect of what you do in your role which is a rewarding experience?
4. How long have you been in this leadership role?
5. How would you describe the secondary teacher induction programme that is implemented in the school?
6. What are your values and beliefs of leadership, in relation to secondary teacher induction?
7. What are some of the challenges you encounter while providing leadership support to beginning secondary teachers?
8. How might the current secondary teacher induction programme be improved?
9. What factors contribute or influence your leadership support for beginning secondary teachers?
10. In your experience, what are the most common challenges and problems faced by beginning secondary teachers?
11. How would you describe your leadership role in supporting beginning secondary teachers?

Prompts

- Tell me more about.....
- Can you explain.....? Or can you clarify?
- What do you mean by that...?
- Can you give an example of.....?
- Can you elaborate on the previous point
- In what ways....?
- Why is it that.....?